



Picacho Hills
Property Owners Association
PO Box 51
Fairacres, NM 88033

NEWSLETTER

Volume 24 No. 2

OCTOBER, 2008

www.pichachohills.org

David Zeemont

President, Picacho Hills Property Owners Association

September 8

As we emerge from our rather unusual rainy season this year, I would like to focus on three things that may affect our quality of life here in Picacho Hills.

The first is our ongoing struggle with the rate increase proposed by our water and sewer utility, Picacho Hills Utility Company. The case has finally moved into its last phase, being heard by the Commissioners themselves. The case has been conducted up until now by a Hearing Examiner, who collects testimony and recommends a decision to the Commissioners, who act on it and set rates. Under New Mexico law, a decision must be made within a year of the actual filing. By the time you read this, the decision may have been handed down, as the Hearing Examiner has submitted her findings (over 100 pages of them), and all sides have also submitted their "Exceptions to the Recommended Decision". It is PHPOA's position that the current rates are adequate and no increase is necessary, when the rate base is combined with the impact fees contributed by developers. While the Hearing Examiner's recommended decision came nowhere near the rates applied for by the utility, it is our contention that what was allowed PHUC is still far in excess of what is required to run the utility at a reasonable profit.

I attended the first, foreshortened hearing before the "full" (I use quotation marks because only three out of the five Commissioners were present) Commission in Santa Fe in August, and although the proceedings were cut short, I was heartened by the interest that two of the Commissioners took in the facts of the case. I even got to appear briefly before them, following which PHUC counsel objected to everything I said and filed a formal complaint.

I'd like to thank our principal expert, Paul Gradwohl, and our attorney, Anastasia Stevens, for their tireless efforts. One of the PHUC's attorney's main strategies has been to discredit Paul's testimony and attack him personally. This attorney filed motion after motion and subjected Paul to a full day's deposition with the aim of striking his testimony. All to no avail, as the Hearing Examiner rejected every one of his motions. Paul has withstood all this with remarkable character and good humor. (I would have tried to rip the guy's lungs out, which is probably what he was angling for).

I would also like to thank those of you who have contributed money to our legal expense fund, over and above the annual dues. So far, we've received over seventy-two donations and contributions from two homeowner's associations on behalf of their members. We've added over one hundred new members since the announcement of our plans to fight the rate increase. While much more money will be needed, we at least have the means at hand to continue our fight.

The second event is the commencement of the Picacho Hills Master Drainage Study, commissioned by Doña Ana County. Many residents attended the public meeting conducted by the engineering firm of Bohannon, Hueston Co., and while the proceedings seemed a little chaotic (I think they were overwhelmed by the turnout), the goal was to encourage residents to identify major drainage problem areas and submit them in writing, as well as to introduce the firm.

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Inside This Issue

Fall Cleanup • Upcoming Events
Directory Updates • Covenant Reminders



Art in the Garden 2008

Sylvia Bizzell, Membership Director

Picacho Hills held its first Art in the Garden Saturday May 10, 2008. It was a wonderful community event, and the windy spring weather cleared for our artists, residents and guests as well as our gardens! Over 100 people participated and Picacho Hills Property Owner Association would like to thank **all** who made this possible. PHPOA extends great appreciation to the Picacho Gardeners, Picacho Hills Country Club, and the following sponsors: Picacho Mountain, Desert Sage, Kent Byers of State Farm Insurance, and Dona Ana Title Company for their generous donations of bottled water to our guests and residents. Mr. Jesse Sanchez of Citizens National Bank, Grace Quiros and Mr. Charles Dunn of Picacho Hills Country Club also deserve special thanks for their generous offer of helping with coffee, Danish and tea in the morning and light appetizers in the afternoon. The event helped boost membership to 432 – **over half of our community.**

My personal thanks goes to Jan Harrison. Her vision, unselfish devotion to this effort, and constant good humor kept the wheels rolling. Thank you!

Our next Art in the Garden is scheduled for September 12, 2009 and is being planned by our Picacho Gardeners. Please check our next newsletters for more information.

And finally, if you attended and had the foresight to take some pictures, I would be so appreciative if you could forward your photos in jpg format to Nancy Fuller at thefullers2@comcast.net to upload onto www.picachohills.org.



Newcomers Social

Rebecca McNair, Director

If you have moved into Picacho Hills since February 2008, save the date of **Sunday, February 15, 2009**. This will be our 4th Annual **Newcomers Social**. Hospitality Representatives and all newcomers are invited to the event sponsored by the Picacho Hills Country Club and the Picacho Hills Property Owners Association. Enjoy Chef Darrell's wonderful appetizers and complimentary wine. Get acquainted with other residents, learn more about your neighborhood, city and the Picacho Hills Country Club.



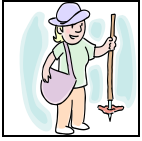
What's Happening?

Visit www.picachohills.org for a complete listing of events in our neighborhood. Click on the [Meetings & Events](#) link for information on upcoming and on-going activities.



Banish the Barrel Blues

Please remember to retrieve your trash barrel as soon as possible after it is emptied. Store it in your garage or other out-of-sight location. Bagging your trash prevents loose items from scattering and littering the neighborhood.



Be a Litter Git 'er

John Kutney, Director, Community Improvement, Roads and ETZ

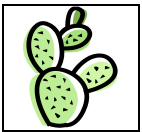
We need **you** to participate in the **Fall 2008 Clean-Up Day, Saturday October 11th** (in conjunction with New Mexico's "Keep Las Cruces Beautiful campaign"). We will begin **7:30 at 1380 Via Norte**. Trash bags, gloves, grabbers, donuts, coffee and water will be provided. Please come and get acquainted with your neighbors and help make our community sparkle.



Keep Picacho Hills Beautiful

Rebecca McNair, Director

Three years ago the PHPOA started the Adopt-a-Road Gang. These volunteers augment the fall and spring Picacho Hills Clean Up. Due to wind, construction debris, mindless litter and this summer's downpours we have much work to do. Marauding weeds make it even more difficult to find the soda and beer cans and the Styrofoam cups. There are plenty of areas that could stand a little tender loving care. Call Rebecca McNair at 526-9369 and volunteer to help keep our community neat and tidy. Good neighbors create good neighbors!



A Second Life for That Old Cactus

Rebecca McNair, Director

The Picacho Hills Cacti Adoption area has been set up and is now open. Leave cactus cast-offs in the upper parking lot of the Country Club. Place them on the islands and they will be replanted to add curb appeal to our streets and to reduce erosion.

A THOUSAND THANKS TO THE VOLUNTEERS WHO MAINTAIN THE GARDENS AT OUR ENTRANCE: JODIE BIXBY, ELLEN MARTIN AND DIANE NELSON



What's in a Name?

Bruce Coryell, Editor

Picacho Pulse? Picacho Peek? Rio Ramblings? Tee Times? How about **NOT the Sun-News?** Thanks to Emery Borsodi, Margie Herberger and Sharron Stepro there are now many alternatives to that prosaic moniker **Newsletter** on our banner. Please stay tuned while we ponder pithy permutations of "picacho," "peak," "platitudes" and "ponderings."



Concerning the Covenants

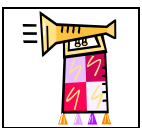
Franklin McKay, Director, Covenants, Safety and Security

As I write this we are in the midst of the monsoon season in New Mexico, and we all know what that means for all of us in Picacho Hills: weeds, blowing sand and general landscape damage. Some of these become issues as far as covenants are concerned. We are not only responsible for our own property, but also the areas that are between our property and the street. Please take care of that area also, so our community looks well kept to residents and visitors alike.

I have received a number of complaints from residents concerned about overgrown weeds, temporary structures (e.g., canvas carports), unauthorized vehicles, etc. and have tried to deal with them in a neighborly fashion. I have had good response on several of the complaints, and not good response on some. It is always an uphill battle to deal in a fair way with covenant violations. If you have not read the covenants that cover your home and area and have questions about them, please feel free to call me and I will get a copy for you. Some violations may be so serious that legal action will be necessary.

My phone number is 527-4750. Please feel free to call me with any concerns or suggestions you might have that will strengthen adherence to the covenants. Also if you are concerned with a violation, I will try to work with the offending homeowner.

Can you see your house number from the road? In the middle of the night? If not, imagine how difficult it would be for emergency responders to find you when you need them the most! Take time now to make sure your house number is plainly visible, day and night.



Advertise at www.PicachoHills.org

Sylvia Bizzell, Membership Director

Would you like to tell the community about your pet sitting or house sitting service? How about your gourmet cooking classes or piano lessons?

Our PHPOA website will advertise your business free for three months! The first 10 PHPOA members to respond by Oct. 27th will have their flyer information uploaded onto the new **Neighbor-to-Neighbor** page where it will be viewable until February 3, 2009. Please e-mail your information in a Microsoft Word document to Nancy Fuller at thefullers2@comcast.net.

Links to community volunteer services such as El Caldito, La Casa, Dona Ana Literacy, Jardin de los Ninos and United Blood Services will soon be set up under the **Resources** option on the home page.



From the President

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David Zeemont

President, Picacho Hills Property Owners Association

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Remember, the mission of the Picacho Hills Master Drainage Study is two-fold: to identify problem areas and to recommend solutions. Of course, no funds have been allocated to implement their suggestions; that struggle is for a later date. Two more public meetings are mandated by the contract, so please watch for those announcements.

Lastly, The City of Las Cruces Public Works Dept. and the State Department of Transportation have commissioned a study to re-design I-10 exit 135, the so called "Jackrabbit Interchange" junction with West Picacho Ave. While \$500,000 has been allocated for the study, no money has been set aside to implement the design. Several factors are seen as making this study necessary, not the least of which is the projected extension of Barcelona Ridge Road westward through the Picacho Mountain sub-development to the interchange. Other factors include the construction of the High Mesa extension of the "Pete Domenici Highway" from Santa Theresa to the interchange, as well as the continued development of the West Mesa Industrial Park. This interchange would also serve as the terminus for a Las Cruces by-pass.

Thank you again for your support.

Dave



Dave Zeemont and Ronnie Wright of Coronado Ridge accept a plaque of appreciation for PHPOA's sponsorship of "Picacho Hills Salutes the Aggies" in August. They are flanked by Command Sergeant Major Reginald Daniel (left), NMSU Athletic Director McKinley Boston (with plaque) and Colonel Gary Giebel of White Sands.

Residents of Picacho Hills who would like to contribute to our fund for legal representation to help us fight the large water rate increase filing before the NMPRC are welcome to do so by sending a check to: **Treasurer, Picacho Hills Property Owners Association, PO Box 51, Fairacres, NM 88033.** Please indicate on your check that you are contributing to our fund.

YOUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2008/2009

| | | | | | | | |
|----------------|-------------------------|----------|-------|-----------|-----------------------|----------|-------|
| | | | Until | | | | Until |
| President | Dave Zeemont | 523-0913 | 2010 | Directors | Bruce Coryell | 541-0876 | 2009 |
| Vice President | Sylvia Bizzell | 524-9273 | 2009 | | John Kutney | 525-8470 | 2010 |
| Secretary | Anna Leuenberger | 525-1052 | 2010 | | Franklin McKay | 527-4750 | 2010 |
| Treasurer | Larry Goforth | 527-1707 | 2009 | | Becky McNair | 526-9369 | 2009 |

Standing Committees

| <u>Budgets/Planning</u> | <u>Committee Chair</u> |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| Community Improvement/Roads/ETZ | John Kutney |
| Covenants/Safety/Security | Franklin McKay |
| Directory | Bruce Coryell |
| Fund Raising | Open |
| Hospitality | Becky McNair |
| Membership | Sylvia Bizzell |
| Newsletter | Bruce Coryell |
| Nominating | Open |
| Utilities | Dave Zeemont |

Members

| |
|--|
| Dave Zeemont |
| Franklin McKay |
| Nancy Fuller |
| Bob Oheim |
| Pat Anderson |
| Hospitality Representatives |
| Howard Cohen, Board members, Hospitality Committee |
| David Rodger, Nancy Fuller, All Board members |
| Paul Gradwohl, Franklin McKay |

HOSPITALITY REPRESENTATIVES

Did you know these folks hand deliver 850 Picacho Hills Newsletters three times each year?

| <u>Street or Area</u> | <u>Representative(s)</u> | <u>Street or Area</u> | <u>Representative(s)</u> |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Alhambra Court | Ellen Martin | Pueblo Gardens | Polly Dias |
| Barcelona Ridge Area | Sharron Stepro, Sylvia Bizzell | Pueblo Vista | Marlys Kleppe |
| | Cindy Oheim, Eva Jane | Ranchos de Picacho | Nancy Fuller |
| | Cheyre, Revae Swenson | Spanish Ridge | Terry Bates, John Illis |
| Bright View Road | Sherrri Dodson, Julie Mueller | Tuscany Dr. | Clare Kapner |
| Butterfield Ridge | Suki Duran | Via Campestre | Becky McNair |
| Calle Vista Bella & | Elaine Childs | | Joan Sheehan |
| Barcelona Ridge Rd to 6995. | | Via Emma | Mary Mulvihill, |
| Camino Blanco 6704 - 6756 | Jan Hall | | Carla Clark |
| 6740 - 6848 | Doris Walker | Via Norte 1130 - 1413 | Mary Ellen McKay |
| 6894 - 7146 | Diane Nelson | 1415 - 1600 | Jean Windels |
| Camino Nuevo Mejico | Renee Smith, Ruth Olmick | 1601 - end | Marilyn Hansen |
| City Lights | Sandra Weber | Via Rubi, Via Turquesa & | Phyllis Taylor |
| Cordova Circle. | Pat Anderson | Via Diamante | |
| Coronado Ridge | Jan Severson, Kathy Mayer, | Villa Chiquita | Barbara Moon |
| | Carrie Gaddy, Hilde Lee, Judy | Vista del Reino | Marilyn Hansen |
| | Miller, Joyce Gautheraut, | Vista de Oro | Becky Fuller |
| | Patricia Felhauer, Ronnie | | Anne Fanelli |
| | Wright, Laura Smart | Vista del Cerro 1305 - 1412 | Marion Mills |
| Desert Blossom & | Carole Coryell, Julie Mueller | 1432 - 1590 | Vacant |
| Deer Ridge Court | | 1595 - 1676 | Mary Ann Waddell |
| Fairway 18 | Pat Bigard | Vista del Monte | Frances Stevens |
| Renoir, Morisat, Matisse | | Vista del Valle | Sue Brown, Denise Marta |
| Baudin, Sisley, Bazille | Joyce Langenbahn | Vista Hermosa | Elaine Jevli, |
| Fairway Village 1300 - 1399 | Pat Retig, Carmen Hoekstra | | Victoria Tann, |
| 1400 - 1499 | Janet McIntyre | | Alice Cerola |
| 1500 - end | Robin Cohen | | |
| Las Casitas | Rosemary Chaffee, Sandy Miles | | |
| Murano Estates | Lu Bucci | | |



Directory Updates

NEW TO THE DIRECTORY

| | | | | |
|-----------|------------------|----------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Baymiller | Scott | 541-6939 | 8100 Constitution | sabaymiller@yahoo.com |
| Black | Paul & Lynn | 523-1803 | 6545 Vista de Oro | LFB595@yahoo.com |
| Braddi | Louis & Joyce | 526-1685 | 8030 Constitution | louisbraddi@hotmail.com |
| Burke | Laurie | 525-1555 | 1204 Vintage Court | mlburkelcnm@msn.com |
| Ciotti | Joe | 640-2582 | 1250 Vista del Monte | |
| Davis | James & Erin | 522-5783 | 8084 Constitution | ejhdavis@hotmail.com |
| Dolan | Thomas | 524-1356 | 8065 Constitution | kseemoe@msn.com |
| Dunn | Joe & Susan | 541-5561 | 6662 Vista del Reino | JOELLEE@NMSU.edu |
| Eddings | Douglas & Russel | 524-7445 | 8072 Constitution | Deddings@aol.com |
| Hallock | Brian & Denine | 526-9738 | 8046 Constitution | bdsaction@Gmail.com |
| Hamilton | Roger & Vicky | Unlisted | 1401 Fairway Village | orangedog@Q.com |
| Kight | John | 647-4481 | 8076 Constitution | jkight444@yahoo.com |
| Coletta | Lynetta | | | |
| Krantz | Philip & Janet | 647-2274 | 6780 Cordova Circle | janetkranz@Q.com |
| Sargent | John | 527-5667 | 1509 Vista del Cerro | Rminks5667@msn.com |
| Minks | Rose | | | |
| Reddish | Rob & Helen | 526-0005 | 8152 Constitution | rreddish2@comcast.net |
| Schutte | Jeffrey | 908-0077 | 6814 Via Campestre | schuttejands@msn.com |
| | Sally | 688-7352 | | |
| Taylor | Larry & Karen | 523-3293 | 1216 Sonnet Court | hendusue@msn.com |
| Vondrak | John & Barbara | | 1510 Vista del Valle | |
| Warthen | Wade & Patricia | 521-4963 | 1212 Sonnet Court | wawarthen@aol.com |
| Young | Randy & LeeAnn | 526-9813 | 1208 Verona Ct. | geckoslc@comcast.net |
| Zamora | Joe & Tina | 525-9111 | 8088 Constitution | ema@zianet.com |

CHANGES

| | | |
|----------|--------------------|---|
| Allen | Michael | Add EMAIL: mallenp@msn.com |
| Manta | Deanise | |
| Benson | Steve | Change EMAIL: sbenson87@yahoo.com, Remove El Paseo Add 11568 E. Quartz Rock Rd. Scottsdale, AZ 85255 |
| Carson | Gerald & Carol | Change address: 6615 Butterfield Ridge |
| Clifford | Timothy | Change phone number: 521-3588 |
| De Luca | Carlo & Gail | Correct spelling Carlo to Carl |
| Johnson | Jill | Change phone number: 635-2490 |
| Jordan | Michael & Jennifer | Add EMAIL: micjorda@nmsu.edu |
| Kramer | Lorne & Kena | Correct Phone 719 310-8960, Add 5270 Broadmoor Bluffs Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80906 |
| McKeown | Kim & Anne | Correct spelling |
| McClure | Barry & Gwenda | Change phone number: 647-8303 |
| McQuinn | Dana & Sandra | Change EMAIL: DMCQ@hotmail.com |
| Miller | Edward & Judith | Change EMAIL: edwardj.miller@comcast.net |
| Rettig | Cliff | Remove P.O. Box |
| Russell | Warren & Jennifer | Change EMAIL: warren.russell@farmcreditbank.com |
| Schultz | Cheryl | Add EMAIL: cascooks@comcast.net, Add 5674 Dunlap Ave N. Shoreview, MN 55126 |
| Sowards | Tommy & Barbara | Add EMAIL: sowardstb@msn.com |
| Stack | Edward & Kathlyn | Change P.O.Box to P.O. Box 790 Fairacres, NM 88033 |
| Wood | Terry & Patty | Change address: 140 Via Chiquita |

DELETIONS FROM THE DIRECTORY

| | | |
|-----------|------------------|----------------------------|
| Cruz | Charles & Sandy | 6814 Via Compestre |
| Ikard | Robert & Suzanne | 6662 Vista del Reino |
| Kelly | Terence & Susan | 6780 Cordova Circle |
| Pritchard | Barbara | 6545 Vista de Oro |
| Sharp | Brett | 1250 Vista del Monte |
| Trout | Ron & Nancy | 8076 Constitution |
| Way | John | 1401 Fairway Village Drive |
| Webber | William & Marine | 8152 Constitution |