



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

NEWSLETTER

Volume 25 No. 2

OCTOBER, 2009

www.pichachohills.org

David Zeemont

President, Picacho Hills Property Owners Association

September 20

Recently, I attended an impromptu meeting of some business people who are involved in Picacho Hills. One of the persons there was a realtor who stated that she had made an informal count and that there were currently 67 homes for sale in Picacho Hills. Without offering any previous numbers or comparisons from months past, she felt that this was a large number, and that they were afraid that Picacho Hills was losing its pre-eminent place among desirable communities in Las Cruces. She also stated that some potential home buyers were concerned about our struggle with Picacho Hills Utility Company, and that the recent publicity over the shut-down of the wells was having a bad effect on the market for houses here. Others at the meeting felt that my newsletter messages spent too much time emphasizing the problems we face in Picacho Hills, and that I should spend more time "accentuating the positive" (a notion that the PHPOA Board brought up at our last meeting). Moreover, some board members related that they had received responses from residents who chose not to join the Association because they were afraid that they would in some way become personally responsible for the legal bills that the Association has incurred.

*I also received a phone call from someone who was looking to buy a house on Vista Hermosa. He had read the "Sun-News" story, and was concerned about the utility situation and the number of houses for sale. I'll tell you what I told him and what I've always maintained - **Picacho Hills is by far the best place to live in Las Cruces!** My wife, my dog and I love it here. Moreover, using a value of nine hundred occupied residences, the number given by the realtor is only a little over seven (7) per cent, which, given the tenor of our economic times, I would imagine compares favorably with any other community in the Las Cruces area.*

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WE'RE GOING GREEN!

As you know, the Picacho Hills Property Owners Association Newsletter is available on-line at <http://www.PicachoHills.org>. If you would prefer to view it on-line rather than receive this "dead tree" addition three times each year, we will notify you by e-mail when each new edition is posted to the site. One click on the link in your e-mail and you'll be reading the neighborhood news on your PC.

Simply send your request by e-mail to brucory@aim.com



Community Improvements

John Kutney, Community Improvements Chairperson

Our sign at the entrance to Picacho Hills Drive from Route 70 has lost ten letters over the past few months, suggesting vandalism rather than wear and tear. The letters have been replaced but I request that we all become vigilant and report any suspected vandalisms at this corner.

For those waiting for the **Traffic Light** at our entrance, you may be seeing “red” at this time. There is again a delay due to State funding. No specific date has been provided by the county at this time.

The County has repaired several streets in the area and has a major project planned for the **Via Norte** area including curbing and resurfacing. Other projects may be considered depending upon available funds. As we are all aware the State and local budgets have been trimmed due to reduced revenues.

Your PHPOA board is considering some beautification projects as well. The intersection of **Barcelona Ridge Road** and **Picacho Hills Drive**, particularly along the northeast side, is a prime candidate. The main entrance at Route 70 needs improvement, but this will have to wait until the traffic Light is installed. We are always open to other suggestions.

Doña Ana county’s **Master Drainage Plan** is now on their website. You may access it at http://www.donaanacounty.org/flood/docs/Picacho_Hills_Drainage_Masterplan.pdf



Check Your Membership Status on our Website

Larry Goforth, Treasurer

A new feature has been added to **www.picachohills.org** to help residents keep track of their PHPOA membership status. At the home page, click on the **Members** link to reveal two other links, one each for two consecutive calendar years including the present one. Click on either of these links for a list of memberships current for that year as of the date shown. Both lists will be kept up to date.

One purpose of this feature is to reduce the number of duplicate membership applications and dues submitted. In each of these cases, several options are given to handle the situation, including returning the check. Residents who have no access to the Internet can always contact me at 527-1707.

Vendors have been displaying their wares from time to time in vacant lots along Picacho Hills Avenue. Responses to this issue vary from “southwestern quaintness” to “appalling”. The applicable Doña Ana County ordinance states that:

- The selected spot must be a commercial area
- The vendor must have the permission of the property owners or the County.
- The vendor must have a permit to sell the merchandise



From the President

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Additionally, unlike the situation in Talavera, where the wells actually ran dry a few months ago, and water had to be trucked in by the City of Las Cruces, Picacho Hills Utility Company owns more than enough water rights to service the needs of residents for the foreseeable future, as well as a first class sewage treatment system. Our argument with them is not over the plant in service, but over their rate structure and what we see as their desire to have the current rate payers foot the bill for expansion of the system, as well as the many questions regarding the finances of the company and its management, as well as PHUC's horrible attitude as respects its customers.

At the risk of sounding overly optimistic, it appears that the Public Regulation Commission is beginning to lean towards our position, not the least part due to the turnout by residents at the recent open meeting with Commissioners Jones and King, as well as the open investigation by the Utility Staff, also here in Las Cruces. Their recent rulings have been most favorable to our point of view, and I'm hoping that the many issues will be resolved in the near future.

The quality of life here in Picacho Hills is constantly improving. If you participated in the recent "Art in the Garden" tour, you were able to see the beauty of many of your neighbor's homes. Further, the management of Picacho Hills Country Club remains committed to improving all aspects of the facility. You don't have to be a golfer to see how the landscaping of the course has improved. The County Public Works Department has announced that they will soon start on a complete re-surfacing of Via Norte, and attempt to solve the erosion problems at its juncture with Via Campestre, (alas, it does not appear that a traffic light will appear on Picacho Ave anytime soon, however the County indicated that they will spend their budgeted portion on improving the intersection). There also have been very successful erosion control projects in Coronado Ridge and Picacho Mountain, as well as a new management team in place at Blanco Development, LLC. And finally, PHPOA, in addition to its other activities, will attempt to encourage and coordinate a "Neighborhood Watch" program throughout the area. Let any other sub-division match that!

Thank you for your support.

Dave

KEEP PICACHO HILLS BEAUTIFUL!

Get involved in the **Fall Cleanup** Saturday, **October 17th**

Stop by the McKay residence, **1380 Via Norte** between **7:30 and 11:30**

Free coffee and rolls to get you off to a good start!



NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Neighbors Helping Neighbors

As neighborhoods go in Doña Ana County, Picacho Hills is not regarded as a high crime area. However, in the past couple of years a number of incidents have been reported, mostly acts of vandalism but occasional theft and burglary. Our relative remoteness and the single entrance and exit road have been advantages. A further advantage can be achieved at minimal cost: involving the participation of residents in an organized volunteer effort to watch our neighborhoods.

The PHPOA Board invited the Doña Ana County Sheriff's department to give a presentation on the Neighborhood Watch program. We learned about the effectiveness of this program in other areas and we received some materials to help us organize our own effort. Anyone interested in helping to get this project underway can contact a PHPOA board member. Your involvement would be greatly appreciated.

Across the nation crime is of concern to citizens in cities, suburbs, towns, and rural areas. Increasingly, citizens and law enforcement professionals realize that neither one can eradicate crime working separately. Neighbors and other concerned citizens, working cooperatively with law enforcement, can have a positive effect. Home burglaries, in particular, can be minimized when community residents take steps to make their homes less attractive and vulnerable to burglars.

Ask anyone whose home has been burglarized... the shock and helpless anger accompanying the discovery that an intruder has entered one's home is not easily forgotten. The damage may be minimal or major, the losses slight or catastrophic. The incident may or may not have involved injury to a family member – yet one hard fact remains: another statistic has been added to the ever-growing list of burglarized homes. The burglar won again – and no doubt vanished without a clue leading to his arrest.

Chances are good that a home burglarized today is located in a neighborhood where one vital prevention tool is missing: an active NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH group. This community-based organization of citizens working together with law enforcement has become the key to preventing burglary nationwide.

Neighborhood Watch is not just about crime. It's "Neighbors helping Neighbors". Organizing a neighborhood watch provides you with the opportunity to get to know each other. Some groups have "pot lucks" as a part of their meetings. Make your meetings both informative and a social event.

Sheriff Todd Garrison is committed to Community Policing and supporting Neighborhood Watch groups throughout the County. Programs are supported by the Doña Ana County Special Deputy Commission, a volunteer organization working under the direction of the Sheriff. Members of SDSC provide training, materials and crime statistics to assist residents with Neighborhood Watch programs.

Contributed by Jeff Jansen
Doña Ana County Sheriff's Department

YOUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2009/2010

			Until			Until
President	Dave Zeemont	523-0913	2010	Directors	Bruce Coryell	541-0876 2010
Vice Pres.	John Schwebke	527-0238	2010		Kay Frye	524-7112 2011
Secretary	Anna Leuenberger	525-1052	2010		John Kutney	525-8470 2010
Treasurer	Larry Goforth	527-1707	2011		RoseMarie Levasseur	526-9253 2011
					Franklin McKay	527-4750 2010

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Budget & Planning	Larry Goforth	Hospitality	Kay Frye
Community Improvement	John Kutney	Membership	RoseMarie Levasseur
Covenants/Safety/Security	Franklin McKay	Newsletter/Web Site	Bruce Coryell
Directory	Bruce Coryell	Nominating	(open)
Fund Raising	John Schwebke	Utilities	Dave Zeemont

HOSPITALITY REPRESENTATIVES

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



Picacho Hills Property Owners Association

FALL CLEANUP

**Come join your neighbors at Picacho Hills' semi-annual Clean-up
in conjunction with the City of Las Cruces.**

Saturday, October 17th • 7:30 to 11:30 AM

**We will meet at 1380 Via Norte (McKay residence) to pick up trash
bags, work gloves, and assigned zones.**

Coffee and rolls will be available upon your arrival.

Questions? Contact John Kutney at 525-8470 or john.kutney@comcast.net

A dumpster will again be located on Via Norte at Vista Hermosa. Please: no toxic materials or batteries!

*** Good Neighbors Create Good Neighborhoods ***



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