



BLACKHAWK NEWSLETTER

Important Links

- [Blackhawk Website](#)
- [Blackhawk Facebook](#)
- [Covenants](#)
- [Driveway and Building Compliance Forms](#)
- [Contact Information](#)
- [BOD Meeting Minutes and Monthly Financials](#)

Editor: [Amber Laugesen](#)
Reporters: Anne Ebie, Susanne
Bloomfield, Nancy Pasternak

**Message from Blackhawk Ranch
POA President**

by JP Angellilo

Greetings to all our BHR Residents, Board Members and Committee Chairpersons. I hope that your summer was enjoyable, and you were able to experience the Blackhawk Ranch and all its wonderment.

Recently we had a BHR Board meeting with the current and new board members. Let me take a moment to introduce the new board to you. Current board members continuing for their second year - JP Angelillo, President; Returning members - Nancy Pasternak, Secretary/Compliance Chair; Jim Nance, Road Chair; New Members - Anne Ebie, Vice President(replacing Paul Brunner); Carol Ryan, Treasurer. Thank you to all existing and returning Board Members for your sincere dedication to the BHR. If you see any of the BHR Board members say thank you. They are gems.

Thank you to everyone that attended the BHR Annual Meeting this year. Hopefully it was informative and possibly even entertaining. We so appreciate all the residents that take one day out of their year to attend and share their input, ask questions and mingle with their neighbors.

Also, thank you to our guest speakers this year: Ross Hallihan, Mitigation and Planning Specialist from Huerfano County and Jeannette King, our rancher who grazes her cattle on the Ranch, which helps considerably in vegetation mitigation and giving us a well-deserved break in our property taxes.

- I want to repeat something from my opening comments from the Annual Meeting. Life without our BHR Volunteers.
- Roads would be impassable due to snow in the winter.
 - Our roads would be muddy and ungraded during the snow and rain.
 - We would have no Emergency Management Committee, therefore no fire safety training, mitigation days to create fire breaks, no Chipper for resident use. . . And so much more.

Your volunteers, both on the BHR Board and the Committees, serve you, the residents. Some of our goals include making the BHR safe for everyone; creating an enjoyable environment for all; offering educational opportunities via the EMC to inform residents of measures you can take to create a risk averse experience living nearly off grid.

Another goal of mine is to hold quarterly “Meet and Greets” at either a home in the Ranch or a local Walsenburg establishment. Residents will be invited to sit with some or all of the Board members and/or Committee Chairs and discuss issues in the BHR or suggest ideas that we could implement or just get to know each other.

Lastly, another goal is to send out an update bi-monthly to all residents, after our Board Meetings to inform you of what we are working on.

Thank you on behalf of the BHR Board, the BHR Committee Members and to the spouses of our Board and Committee members who help each of us fulfill our duties daily. A special thank you to Amber Laugesen for publishing our BHR newsletter and to Rayann Brunner for conducting our resident interviews. We’re here for you and welcome your thoughts and suggestions.

Blackhawk Ranch Board of Directors Working Session Update

By Anne Ebie

After each BHR Board of Directors (BOD) Meeting, I will be sending out a briefing on what we are working on. This will help everyone to understand and keep abreast of what is happening behind the scenes.

We held our most recent BOD meeting on Saturday September 21, 2024. Attendees: JP Angelillo, President; Anne Ebie, Vice President; Nancy Pasternak, Secretary/Compliance; Carol Ryan, Treasurer; Jim Nance, Road Committee Chair; Kelly Alcorn, Snow Removal Captain; Art Jackson, outgoing Treasurer (assisting with transition to new Treasurer).

Topics discussed:

1. Treasurer's Report, Carol Ryan – The new treasurer, Carol Ryan is in the process of taking over the role from Art Jackson. They will work on the 2025 budget together.
 - a. Current operational account balance is \$78,905.77 with \$67,209.16 in reserve.
 - b. We are over budget this year on legal fees, The Board might request some funds be transferred from the EMC budget of \$10,000. Art suggested that the Board review the 'reserve study' report.
 - c. A dues increase was discussed as inflation since our last increase years ago has impacted the ability to maintain the roads. Nancy advised this would require a majority vote of property owners.
 - d. Carol is looking into Zelle, an online tool, as an option for dues payments.
2. Roads Report, Jim Nance, Chair - Jim reported that he has approximately \$28,000 to spend on the roads before the end of 2024.
 - a. He would like to apply road base on Four Mile Canyon from Brodmore towards Cougar Trail and some areas of Wapiti and Bear Spur that tend to get wet. He would also like to do some grading on South Mountain.
 - b. Jim needs volunteers for the TRASE (tree removal and safe evacuation) project. He has identified 12 areas/ locations that contain egress problems that would be problematic during an emergency evacuation, plus the second emergency exit off Brodmore Spur.
3. Weeds Report, Susanne Bloomfield, Chair - The rainy spring and summer coupled with the sunny days caused the mullein to go crazy. The conscientious members of the weed committee battled them all summer and into the fall. We all saw an increase in the first year Mullein plants, probably those lying dormant waiting for just such a year. Our hope is that we nipped them in the bud before they can come back next year bearing seeds. This summer we used a whole bottle and half of Milestone. Thanks to the quadrant weed leaders Terry and Susanne Bloomfield, Ron Lovely, Art and Wendy Jackson, Brad and Marion Brooks, and roaming weed enforcer, Crickett Sutter.
4. Compliance Report, Nancy Pasternak, Chair - Nancy reported that she has received a Building and Driveway compliance form from Bret Yetter, Parcel 109. She will meet with him before any work begins for approval of the location of the dwelling and driveway. Nancy also advised that she will be meeting with Dean and Pam Arfsten, Parcel 151 next week to review their Building and Driveway compliance form.

5. Communications Report, Anne Ebie, Chair -
 - a. Anne reported that the next ranch newsletter will go out to the owners on October 15th.
 - b. The Board unanimously approved the recommendation of not allowing owners access to the owners' directory unless they have consented to sharing their "contact information" for the directory.
 - c. It was suggested that a survey be sent to the owners to solicit their input (pros and cons) on how to improve the Annual Meeting.
6. EMC Report, Brad Brooks, Chair -
 - a. Reviewed the after action report for the South Mountain fire:
 - i. Interviews with Huerfano County Fire Protection District Fire Chief Larry Archuleta
 - ii. Fabrication of a working-prototype firefighting trailer. Jim Nance asked if the POA should consider purchasing a trailer to haul water for fire mitigation/ranch fires or buy an old fire truck? This subject will be explored by the EMC committee.
 - iii. Permission to pilot radio collaboration with HCFPD for BHR callouts web based I_AM_RESPONSING application used by both HCFPD and LVFPD
 - iv. Wildfire Containment training session with CK Morey
 - v. Wildfire water storage initiative, as residents have asked Brad to explain what they need to utilize the rain/snow water collected in their private above ground tanks for fires.
 - b. BHR Chipper - The community fire mitigation on August 15th was cut short because the chipper's fuel pump failed. Paul Kimbell ordered replacement parts and fixed the chipper, but it was discussed whether the chipper should be sold because the maintenance has greatly exceeded the rental income. The vote was 3- 2 in favor of keeping the chipper, but we will look at increasing the rental rate.
 - c. Progress is being made on our CWPP. We have secured the HCFPD Fire Chief as a signatory, and we are working on both State and Federal Forest Service signatories.
 - d. Art and Wendy Jackson have undertaken building a working prototype of a widened cul d sac adjacent to their property.
7. Security Committee Brad Brooks, Acting Chair - Huerfano County Sheriff's Office (dispatch) contacted the EMC regarding a resident who was repeatedly calling 911 claiming that four people were on his property flying a drone in the early morning hours of 9/17/24. The matter was discussed, and the Sheriff's staff received the assistance they needed. Incident date 9/17/24 ~02:30
8. Old Business/ Pending Items - JP Angelillo advised that he and Nancy will continue to meet with Jeanette King, (cattle lease holder) to draft a new lease agreement with her before the next grazing season begins.
9. New Business
 - a. Snow Removal Contract – Kelly Alcorn, Snow Captain, reported that she is looking for a new snow removal business for the 2024/2025 season, as the previous provider declined to sign a new contract for the upcoming winter. The Board suggested that she contact Chris Dotter to ascertain if he might be interested in plowing again if his concerns were mitigated. Jim Nance and Brad Brooks will

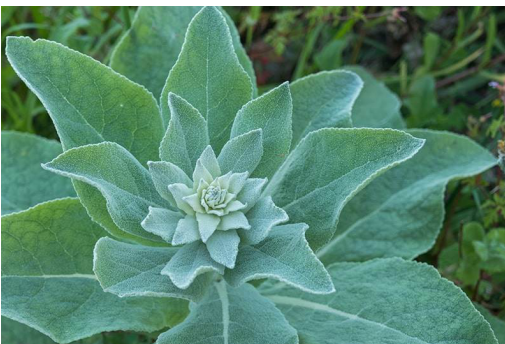
assist Kelly in compiling a “no plow list” of areas that are not traveled during the winter months.

- b. Nancy mentioned that it might be time to revisit the feasibility of adding a second cluster of BHR POA mailboxes next to the current BHR POA boxes, as there have been more people moving to the ranch as full- time residents. Max Vezzani owns the land where all of the mailboxes are located. Nancy will contact him for permission to add the second cluster. JP Angelillo will contact the Walsenburg postmaster for permission, if Mr. Vezzani gives his consent.
- c. JP Angelillo has met with the owners of parcel 141, Fred and Jeanne Lochner, regarding the “disc golf course”. An agreement addressing their concerns is in progress.

Two Sides of the Common Mullein

By Susanne Bloomfield, Invasive Species Manager (aka Weeds Chair)

Since we became full-time Blackhawk residents in 2010, my husband and I have considered Mullein, or *Verbascum Thapsus*, as a pesky weed, littering our beautiful land. Colorado and many other states consider it as an invasive species. We have been continually attempting to eliminate the plants on our property, but since becoming the Invasive Species Manager, I have declared all-out war on the weeds.



The Common Mullein is a biennial, meaning that it grows for two years. In the first year, it produces a large rosette of furry leaves. The second year, a single, erect stem, from two to eight feet tall with yellow flowers, appears between June and August, blooming a few at a time throughout the summer. Typically, the plant is one of the first to grow in any disturbed land, such as roadsides, cleared home or camp sites, and mitigated or overgrazed areas. It thrives in full sun and requires little rainfall, for its velvety leaves absorb and hold moisture. Fortunately, it is intolerant of shade. Mullein reproduces by seeds, and it can either self-pollinate or cross-pollinate. Montana State University and Wisconsin Horticulture explain that EACH mature plant can produce 200-300 seed capsules that can yield between 100,000 to 240,000 seeds, which can remain viable for 35 to 100 years. The USDA states that each flower on the stalk is only open to pollination for one day—from just before dawn to midafternoon. Most seeds fall within sixteen feet of the parent plant, and they cannot compete with established native vegetation. Because of this “seed bank,” mullein is difficult to eradicate. Archeologists have even discovered mullein seeds in Denmark soil samples from 1300 A.D. that still germinated! Even after a devastating fire, mullein can reappear. Its deep taproot also helps it survive drought, and because of its hardiness, it overwinters even in the coldest climates.

Several options exist for managing mullein. Before seed production, pulling the plant out by hand when the ground is moist or cutting it with a hoe beneath the crown when the earth is dry proves most effective. In dense infestations, however, an herbicide, such as



Milestone that the POA uses, is most practical. However, it must be applied with a surfactant, like Cornbelt Premier 90, to aid in the penetration of the chemical through the hairs on the mullein leaves. Most people add a blue dye, such as Laser, to mark the plants that have been sprayed. Mowing is not effective, for the rosettes reappear and increase in number, and if a seed head has already appeared, it must be removed, bagged, and discarded.

Recently, I have discovered that mullein has a secret life. According to Greek legends, the gods gave Ulysses a stalk of mullein on his odyssey to defend himself against the wiles of the enchantress Circe. During the Middle Ages, the plant was believed to be able to repel demons and sorcerers.

I had known that mullein was not native to America but to Eurasia. According to MSU, early settlers imported it, using it in the mid-1700s as a medicinal herb and as a piscicide, for it contains a chemical poisonous to fish. Settlers would crush the toxic seeds and broadcast them across the water, causing fish to stop breathing and making them easier to catch. One of the earliest records of its spread across America is in 1905 in Boulder County, Colorado. The plant thrived and now can be found in all 50 states plus southern Canada. Although most livestock avoid the plant, mullein can also be important in elk and deer winter diets.

I also did not realize the many purported health benefits of mullein. According to Dr. Khan in Healthline, “Native Americans and colonists used it for various purposes, from helping with coughs and breathing to healing wounds.” The USDA states that “common mullein leaves and flowers, capsules, alcohol extracts, and flower oil are available for medicinal use in the United States, and a 2002 study of common mullein extracts revealed antibacterial and antitumor properties. Everyday Health explains that drinking mullein tea can support digestion and even help relieve constipation, soothing gastrointestinal inflammation. Plant Conservation Alliance reports that it can be a remedy for coughs and diarrhea. Although I could find no reports of toxicity, some possible side effects exist. Mullein can cause an itchy skin irritation called “contact dermatitis,” supposedly caused by the tiny hairs on the leaves. Some sites warn that small children, pregnant and breastfeeding women, and people with severe liver or kidney disease should not take mullein leaf or mullein leaf supplements. However, according to WebMD, “there isn’t enough reliable information to know if mullein leaf, flower, or root are safe or what the side effects might be.”

Still another use of mullein is as a natural toilet paper, giving it the nicknames of the “Fisherman’s Friend” and “Cowboy Toilet Paper.” Hikers, too, can insert it as insoles for their weary feet, and Colonial women rubbed the leaves on their cheeks to redden them.



In the name of scientific inquiry, I harvested some of the soft rosette leaves, dried them, and brewed some mullein tea. I can report that it has a very mild, herbal flavor and is a palatable drink. With a dollop honey, the tea is even flavorful. I experienced no side effects, and it actually soothed my stomach . . . or maybe it was just the warm water.

If you want to learn more about mullein, check out the [Colorado Department of Agriculture Fact Sheet](#) or the [USDA](#).

Blackhawk Ranch Book Club

By Anne Ebie

Blackhawk Ranch is blessed with a tight-knit community featuring many social events throughout the year. One long running tradition is the Blackhawk Ranch Book Club, which has been active since 2015.

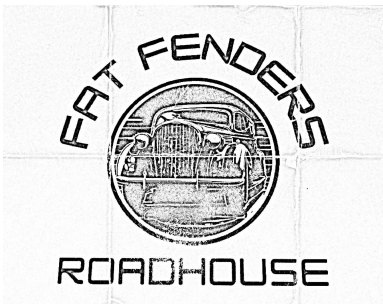
Generally the book club meets once a month at the house of a volunteer host. The host also gets to choose the book to be discussed for their month, and all book club attendees are asked to read the book before the event. The host typically provides some refreshments, sometimes themed to the chosen book, although that is not a requirement. Guests are also asked to bring snacks or drinks as well.

Often the book club gathering is accompanied by a “Beer Barn” party for those who wish to attend the event but choose not to read the book. Attendees are asked to bring their own drinks. Details of the location of the Beer Barn will be shared at the time the monthly book club is announced.

The BHR Book Club is open to any literary minded resident, please contact Rayann Brunner at rayannbrunner@gmail.com or (719) 209- 2270 to be added to the mailing list to receive communications regarding next books to be read, locations and to volunteer to host.

Fat Fenders Roadhouse

by Nancy Pasternak



There's a new restaurant in Walsenburg - Fat Fenders Roadhouse (as in old “muscle cars”). It is located at 503 West 7 th Street, near the railroad tracks and is open 5pm to 9pm, Wednesdays through Saturdays. The bar opens at 3:00pm. They have a friendly atmosphere and comfortable environment.

They offer very generous portions at very reasonable prices. The most expensive item on the menu is their 14-ounce “steak of the day” for \$23.00. They also feature half pound sirloin burgers, large spaghetti plates with either meatballs or Italian sausage, burritos, several types of salads, pulled pork sandwich with bourbon sauce, red and green chili, grilled chicken Caesar salad, a few appetizers and more. Many of those entrees are \$14.00 and under. There is also a daily dessert tray.

There is a full bar service, and two pool tables. The bar area is located near the front entrance with tables and bar stools for seating options. There is a bigger dining room past the bar.

The owners, Maude and Jeff Hutcheson, have more than 50 years of restaurant experience between them. Jeff has acquired a Michelin star for his cooking. He is also an artist and the paintings decorating the walls are his works of art. The Hutchesons operated a restaurant in Brighton, Colorado; and another restaurant in the Highlands area of Denver featuring northern Italian cuisine.



So why not stop in for a “cold one”, a cup of coffee and dessert, or stay for a delightful meal? You'll be glad you did!