



BLACKHAWK NEWSLETTER

BOD Meeting Update

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Art Jackson, treasurer, reported that the end-of-year 2020 expenditures came in slightly under budget. With the help of the new POA accountant, Tammy Smith, and Carol Ryan, BHR owner and CPA, all the financial statements from PMI have been reconciled. All BHR accounts have been transitioned to 1st National of Trinidad in Walsenburg. Other business included updates on the CSFC grant and the emergency water tanks, the placement of new Neighborhood Watch signs as well as safety signs for problem roads, and a discussion on lien tracking and the filling of liens on properties which are delinquent in payments. Future plans include discussions on updating the BHR Policies and Procedures as well as the POA insurance plans.

Team Rubicon is Coming “Serving” Those Who Serve Us on Blackhawk by Brad Brooks, President

I am excited to share with you that the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) grant that we applied for and were awarded in 2020 is now rolling in spite of Covid-19 delays. To refresh your memory, this grant is a matching grant that will allow us to create a Shaded Fuel Break along our western border on Wapiti Drive. This will improve the emergency egress for those who live along Wapiti and also create a potential Fire Control Line in the case of a forest fire encroaching from the west. This will create a battle line that can potentially protect the rest of Blackhawk. This mitigation work will be part of the overall mitigation strategy and work planned in the grant.

As part of that CSFS grant, we petitioned Team Rubicon (<https://teamrubicon.usa.org>) to assist us with mitigation of the dense forest where it is the most steep on both sides of Wapiti Drive. Their mission on Blackhawk will begin (weather permitting) on Friday March 19th and end on Sunday March 21st. Team Rubicon is composed of US Armed Forces veterans, who donate their time during national emergencies and SOMETIMES even help folks like us.



Huerfano County will take care of their billeting, some of their meals, and their transport while here. They are not paid for their time and travel, but we will need to take on some of their mission support in the following areas:

- (1) Provide two evening meals for up to 40 men and women veterans.
- (2) Provide Chipper and supplemental Swamper Support during their mission
- (3) Prior to their arrival, mark in detail the mitigation boundaries and trees to save

As you might expect chipper support and tree marking will require folks who are familiar and trained to do those activities. However, where we REALLY, REALLY need your help will be in joining those of us who will be planning and delivering the one or two evening meals currently planned for Team Rubicon. For those of you who are “old timers,” or those who have just moved in, this is a great opportunity to get plugged into a very ambitious project where your effort will have a great impact on this project and a long-term impact on our fire mitigation efforts on the Blackhawk. Having met a few of the Team Rubicon planning team, I bet you are going to love these folks.

*Things You Need
To Know
If you wish to
volunteer to help with
the Team Rubicon
mitigation—flagging,
chipping, or helping
feed the Team—
contact Brad Brooks:
719-252—5621*

A Moment in Time

by Nancy Pasternak



Did you know that Huerfano County is named after a nearby geographical landmark? Located about ten miles north of Walsenburg and east of mile marker 60 off of I-25 is a cone shaped butte and pioneer landmark named el-huerfano, “the orphan,” by a Spaniard and appeared in Spanish reports as early as 1618. The odd formation rises 150 feet above the valley floor, all alone out on the prairie. The

Huerfano Butte is a volcanic plug, a large neck of volcanic rock much thicker than a dike. However, geologists describe it as a plug of alkali basalt that has been shaped by monzonite, a softer material. This is why the southern side of the butte is dark colored (basalt) and the northern side is lighter colored (monzonite).

The butte was also a landmark for many Native American tribes, including the Comanche, Apache, Kiowa, Ute, and Navajo. By the beginning of the 1800s, French fur trappers began arriving in the state. The Huerfano Butte served as a marker on the Taos (trappers) Trail leading them north to the trading posts on the South Platte River, over the Sangre de Cristo pass to the San Luis Valley, and on to Taos. It also helped traders and pioneers locate the Huerfano River and the trading posts on the Arkansas River. In 1853, John C. Fremont’s expedition passed Huerfano Butte while searching for a western rail route and included US Army Captain John W. Gunnison, a surveyor for the transcontinental railroad. In the early 1860s, the butte was the location of a stagecoach station between Pueblo and Trinidad.



When you take Exit 60, you will find a stone marker describing this geological wonder. As you stand there, try to visualize the sights and sounds of the Indians hunting pronghorn and buffalo on the plains, the creaking of Conestoga wagons pulled by teams of oxen carrying pioneers in search of a homestead and new way of life, and traders guiding “mule trains” of pack animals loaded with wares to barter or sell. This is our county’s namesake, the “Huerfano Orphan”.

Front Entryway Progress

By Susanne Bloomfield

The mason, Joey Moore, completed his work on the front entry, and Roger Buttignol has refurbished the original Blackhawk sign on the right side and created an outline of the Spanish Peaks on the left side to serve as a bulletin board. Unfortunately, cold weather and snow have hampered further progress by volunteers. The rails and gate still required a couple of coats of paint, the glass announcement frame and map holder will be attached to the bulletin board, the metal “BHR Covenant” sign will be repositioned, and some maintenance-free landscaping will be completed. Future plans include similar, smaller entries on both Braden’s Point and Howard’s Draw.



Know your Neighbors

by Pat Henry

Kelly Anderson and Chris Conart, Lot #49, are the new owners of the log house on Wapiti Drive built by the Bucanans.

Kelly grew up on two acres with horses in Tampa Bay, Florida, while her husband, Chris, grew up in the suburbs of St. Louis. The two first met at a speed dating event. They dated for a while, but then Kelly decided to travel to the Philippines. When she returned, she received an unexpected call from Chris, and they began seeing each other again. This eventually evolved into the two of them eloping while on a trip to Jamaica in December 2015.



Chris is currently working on his Master's degree and is employed as a software architect. The couple moved to Denver for his job. Kelly has an undergraduate degree and had worked in real estate but found the Denver market flooded with agents. She quickly made friends with a woman who was a high school math teacher. When Kelly expressed her interest in always wanting to be a math teacher, Kelly's friend recommended that she look into getting certified to teach business to get her foot in the door. Kelly received her certification and began applying to schools in Colorado with a staffing agency. They found the Trinidad position among a few others far from Denver. Chris was very supportive and assured her that "they would find a way to make it work."

Kelly's first interview was by Zoom for a job teaching business at Trinidad High School. "I was very relaxed because I did not really want that job, so I chattered away, and they offered me a job two days later." She accepted because she felt so warmly welcomed by the other teachers and staff. When the couple began looking to rent in Trinidad, they found no options. When they saw their current home, they said it looked like they were "on top of the world."

Adapting to rural living has been a stretch since their well went dry, and they learned they'd have to keep a fire going to have a warm house. Nonetheless, the couple is increasingly pleased with their choice and with the community of Blackhawk Ranch.