



BLACKHAWK NEWSLETTER

Board of Directors Update

Important Links:

- [Blackhawk Website](#)
- [Blackhawk Facebook](#)
- [Covenants](#)
- [Driveway and Building Compliance Forms](#)
- [Change Contact Information](#)
- [March 21, 2020 Minutes/February Financials](#)

The Blackhawk Board of Directors held a meeting by teleconference on May 9, 2020. The full May Minutes and the April Financials can be accessed through the link on the left.

Jim Nance reported that the Road Committee received three bids for road work for 2020, and Mike Ferrero was hired.

Brad Brooks stated that the Colorado State Forestry Service grant has been approved, but is on hold due to Covid-19, and Team Rubicon's participation has also been delayed due to the pandemic.

Susanne Bloomfield reported that she subscribed every owner with an e-mail address to receive "Announcements" that are time sensitive regarding ranch emergencies, activities, scheduled road work, etc. Nancy Pasternak has been working on new owner packets, which will include welcome rear view mirror hangtags and a map of the ranch. Yellow BHR Hangtags will also be included in the Annual Meeting packets for everyone. Art Jackson has updated the BHR owner directory on the website. If you have a change of contact information, submit it on the website (see left).

BHR News Briefs

* Check out the newest additions to the BHR website: Trusted Contractors, BHR Properties for Sale, and a Contact Information Change form.

* The Gate Committee will be submitting sketches and approximate costs of their designs for the front entrance and will meet later this month. The plan was to submit designs to Blackhawk owners in the Annual Meeting packet for their vote. Again, Covid-9 has thrown a curve in this design planning process.

* The Weed committee has been spraying weeds along the roads in accordance with Colorado law, the BHR POA Policies and Procedures, and the weed management plan. It is the owners' responsibility to manage noxious weeds on their own properties. This spring, Houndstongue is a problem on various places on the ranch. Please visit <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/agconservation/noxious-weed-species> or reach out to Art Jackson and the weed committee for more information.

Things You Need To Know

Because of COVID-19, the BOD has set the Annual Meeting date to Saturday, August 8.

Currently, groups larger than 10 people are prohibited from meeting in Colorado, and currently, neither of the usual Aguilar or Walsenburg sites are accepting reservations.

More information will be given in an Announcement and in the Annual Meeting Packets as to whether we will hold our Annual Meeting at some outdoor venue, or if it will be held virtually, using ZOOM.

Nominations for the Board of Directors

by Brad Brooks, BOD President

This year, due to resignations of two previously elected board members, both serving the last year of their term, the POA Board is now comprised of Brad Books, Susanne Bloomfield, Art Jackson, Nancy Pasternak, and Jim Nance. Nancy and Jim very graciously consented to fill the open 1-year slots left by the resignations.

So, the board election scenario for 2020 yields 3 open slots: 1) Art Jackson was elected to fill a 1-year slot in 2019; 2) Nancy Pasternak graciously accepted our request to serve a 1 year term to fill an open 1-year slot; 3) Jim Nance graciously accepted our request to serve a 1 year term to fill an open slot.

These slots will be filled by vote in our regularly scheduled election at the 2020 BHR Annual meeting. Any members of the BHR POA in good standing are eligible to run for these slots. As president of the board, I want to thank Art, Jim and Nancy for their extraordinary service to the BHR Ranch and gently remind them that they too are eligible to run for these open slots.

If you are a member of the Blackhawk Ranch POA in good standing and are interested in putting your name forward for one of these open slots, please submit a short bio and statement of intent to be considered for one of these slots by July 1st 2020 so the POA BOD can assemble your information into the Annual Meeting Information Packet that will go out to all Blackhawk POA members in early July.

Fire Mitigation Works!

On May 26, an alert resident noticed a smoke plume on Four Mile Canyon Road and reported it to EMC Chair. 911 was called, a resident drove to the entrance to lead the fire trucks to the fire, and nearby neighbors were called to contain the ground fire until the fire department could arrive.

A lightning strike two days earlier was considered to be the culprit. The fire had been smoldering in the duff around the base of a tall ponderosa and had ignited as the temperature and wind rose, and the humidity dropped.

The resident was not at home at the time of the fire, but because the owner had done an excellent job of mitigating the Gambel Oak, small cedars, and low branches that would provide a ladder to the tree crowns, the fire was quickly contained. Had the trees, underbrush, and grass not been mitigated, the fire would have spread more quickly, perhaps threatening the house.



Summer Fire Warnings

By Brad Brooks, EMC Chair

Regrettably, the spring and summer of 2020 are predicted to yield no respite to a 2-year drought in this region of Southern Colorado. As we all begin to be more active on our land, please remember that we are subject to a county-wide (both Huerfano and Las Animas) Stage 1 Fire Ban. In fact, there is talk at the county level of moving to an even more restrictive Stage 2 Fire Ban. Under the present Stage 1 Fire Ban the following activities are prohibited:

- * Building, maintaining, attending or using a fire or campfire except within a permanent constructed fire grate in a developed public / commercial campground.
- * Smoking, except within an enclosed vehicle or building.
- * Sales, possessing discharging or use of any type of pyrotechnic device.
- * Operating a chainsaw, blasting, welding or other activities which generate flame or flammable material for any purpose



other than mitigation or recovery work. Those engaged in permitted mitigation or recovery work must have fire suppression equipment on hand; chemical fire extinguishers (5lb minimum), shovels, rakes, spark arrestors, water, etc.

Many of our neighbors on the Blackhawk Ranch are from places beyond Colorado and the Rocky Mountain west. Each of us needs to be aware of the current drought and severe wildland fire potential in our region. So far this year, we have had one fire (lightning related) and one smoldering event (Charcoal Barbeque related) on the Blackhawk Ranch. Both were tracked down by your Blackhawk neighbors and extinguished before significant damage could occur. We have been lucky... so far. If you have any questions related to fire activities, or you believe you have sighted a smoke plume on the ranch, please contact Brad Brooks (Emergency Management Committee Chair) @ 719-252-5621. Enjoy your time on the Blackhawk Ranch, but if you see something, say something!

A Moment in Time

By Nancy Pasternak

The Denver & Rio Grande Western (D&RGW) Railroad arrived in La Veta with its narrow-gauge line in July of 1876 with plans to head west over the mountains and on to the silver mines at Creede and Silverton. Construction continued westward toward Veta Pass, and the summit of 9,300 feet was reached in June of 1877. The line was completed west to Fort Garland in November of 1877.

The growing D&RGW built standard gauge (four feet and eight inches wide) tracks into La Veta in 1890. The narrow-gauge line (three feet wide) existed for 22 years, but by 1899 the D&RGW was hauling so much freight that it was a huge inconvenience to transfer freight from standard gauge cars to narrow gauge cars in La Veta for the journey over the pass. Railroad surveyors found a route for the standard gauge rails at Middle Creek Pass, just a few miles south of Veta Pass. This new route was named La Veta Pass. The new line had a maximum grade of 3 percent compared to 4.7 percent on the narrow gauge and eliminated a mile off the old route.

The old railroad route over Veta Pass became a road. Visitors can still drive over it and see the restored “Uptop Ghost Town,” which contains the 1877 depot museum, dance hall, and “chapel-by-the-wayside.” Uptop is located 15 minutes west of La Veta. Take Highway 160 to County Road 443 (CR 443). The dirt road reaches an elevation of 9,000 feet. Once you reach the summit, you can continue and rejoin Highway 160 on the west side of La Veta Pass, or go back the way you came.

Today you can experience daily train rides with the Cumbres & Toltec Railroad from June 13 to October 18,, departing from either Chama, NM or Antonito, CO. There are also “special train” events that include live entertainment and dinner. For more information contact 888-286-2737 or info@cumbrestoltec.com.

Know Your Neighbors

By Pat Henry

Robert and Tara Burke, owners of Parcel 99 on Meadow Spur, are one of the newer residents on Blackhawk Ranch. Tara was originally from California, and Robert was raised on a dairy farm in the Adirondack Mountains of New York. They met in Ft. Worth, Texas, in 2007. He was planning to attend a “dining in,” a formal military party, and he wanted a date. Tara’s daughter had recently registered her on an early dating site. “We saw each other that night, and that was it. We have been together since then,” says Robert. They married in 2009.



The couple began considering a move out of Texas to somewhere cooler and less congested. They visited an aunt and uncle in Florence, Colorado, and when they returned home, Robert began searching the internet for acreages in Southern Colorado. They traveled back to Colorado and put an offer on a parcel near Weston in 2016. However, they just weren’t sure that property was “the place.” Their real estate agent told them of a parcel on Blackhawk Ranch that was just coming on the market. “We looked at it and looked at each other, and we knew that this was it,” said Tara.

The couple have finished their home that rises from a ridge. Taking a page out of Joe Weivoda’s book, Robert has cut down trees and opened up their view of the East Peak and the plains below. They have a lovely porch with a large picture window where they treasure the view each day. Since retiring from 30 years of military service, Robert enjoys catching different qualities of light in photographs. Tara is the bookkeeper for the RE-1 school district, and she has been instrumental in coordinating free breakfasts, snacks, and lunches to all Walsenburg and Gardner children during the pandemic. She is currently working to expand these services through the summer. The *Huerfano World* featured her in an article, calling her a “food service hero.” Tara’s son lives with them and now works as a CNA at the Veteran’s hospital.

The two appear peaceful with their little rescue dog, relaxing into their Colorado lifestyle.