



BLACKHAWK NEWSLETTER

BOD Meeting Update

Important Links

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

The BHR Board met on June 19, 2021. Art Jackson, treasurer, reported that there is over \$18,000 in unpaid dues, and lien letter notices have been sent to owners with unpaid dues. Jim Nance, Road Chair, reported on the new road base on Four Mile Canyon Drive, and his work on safety issues on Timber Drive as well as Four Mile Canyon Drive. He is also inspecting and inventorying all culverts. EMC Chair, Brad Brooks, stated that two mitigation days have been held on the grant area on Wapiti, and Team Rubicon has been rescheduled for August 6-8. Brad also reported that resident Dillon Miller, a Colorado State Trooper, has agreed to serve as co-chair of the Security Committee. Access the link on the left for the full Minutes as well as the Financials.

Compliance

By Nancy Pasternak

We've had close to 40 Blackhawk parcels exchange hands since May of 2020. New owners should familiarize themselves with our covenants and county regulations regarding construction of buildings and driveways. We have a Driveway and Building Compliance form that can be found on our ranch website under the "Committees" link, then clicking on "Compliance." Send the completed form to the Compliance Chair for review and approval. Our covenants require a minimum square footage of 1,000 feet for a house. In Huerfano County, you can build or purchase anything under 200 square feet without a county issued building permit. However, you cannot build a structure more than 200 square feet without constructing a home first.

A copy of our Compliance form must also be given to the building inspector before a building permit will be issued as we are a "property owners association," and the county requires proof that the Board and or Compliance Chair has approved the form. Request for a "variance" may be made to the county commissioners with a stipulation that a home must be built within a year following completion of the outer building. Las Animas County does not have these requirements. Homes on the ranch must be installed on a permanent foundation, have a pitched roof, have brick, wood, or siding on all exterior walls from the bottom of the soffit to the top of the exposed foundation, and conform to the State of Colorado Uniform Building Codes, as pursuant to our covenants.

Things You Need To Know

The 2021 BHR POA Annual Meeting will be held at La Veta Mercantile on July 24 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:45.

Coffee, water, and baked goods will be served.

New Blackhawk Entrance

The front entrance to Blackhawk Ranch is growing closer and closer to completion, and it has been a huge group effort. First, the original, deteriorating adobe walls were razed by several BHR volunteers. Next, Stone Mason ,Joey Moore, completed the pillars and rails, resident Roger Buttignol refinished the signs and created a wooden bulletin board in the shape of the Spanish Peaks, and contractor Joe Camacho sand blasted and painted the metal gates and rails.

The last stage of the Entrance will be xeriscaping the entranceway. Because of the poor soil, lack of water, cattle, and the Colorado sunshine, a rock border seemed most appropriate. Rocks have been hauled onto the east side, but more work needs to be done on the west side. It was suggested that one way to include all residents in the new gate project would be to have interested property owners add rocks from their own properties to be placed behind, under, or in front of the signs. Commemorative rocks could even have a special name painted on the bottom. All rocks should be predominantly flat and of a size that is moveable by hand, so they can be rearranged if needed. Add your special rocks soon!

Work continues on the placement of the various signs. In the future, money will be budgeted for complementary entrance signs at Braden's Point and Howard's Draw.



A Moment in Time

by Nancy Pasternak



Did you know that this year is the [Santa Fe Trail Bicentennial](#) and part of the trail went through Trinidad, Colorado? Between the years 1821 and 1880 the Santa Fe Trail was America's first international highway. It was first and foremost a commercial route between the United States and Mexico.

In 1821 William Becknell was the first merchant to successfully complete the journey from Franklin, Missouri to Santa Fe. Cloth of various kinds was the major item of trade along with other sewing tools and notions like needles and thread, and hand tools. Unlike the Oregon Trail, which was an emigrant route, the Santa Fe Trail was the highway of merchants traveling with goods to sell in between Missouri and Mexico, crossing several counties in southeastern Colorado, including Baca, Bent, Crowley, Kiowa, Las Animas, Otero, and Prowers. This portion of the trail through Colorado was known as the "Mountain Branch".

The trail began in Missouri and traversed across Kansas and through the northwestern panhandle of Oklahoma into New Mexico. Trade and use of the trail increased as the Civil War raged in the eastern United States, but by the mid-1860s, the "iron rails" of the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad had won the race for the right of way through Raton Pass. Soon after wagon use of the trail as a means of long-distance transportation of goods and individuals proved inefficient, thus closing this chapter in the history of the Santa Fe Trail.

Today, travelers along the trail can experience 1840s life as a trader at Bent's Old Fort near La Junta, Colorado, or find wagon wheel ruts and walk sections of the trail at Comanche National Grassland. Find more experiences at <https://canyonsandplains.org/santa-fe-trail/>.

The keystone event of the 200-year celebration, the 2021 Santa Fe Trail Bicentennial Symposium, will take place in La Junta September 22-26th. Living history, tours and speakers will tell the story of the trail. For more information and to register, visit www.2021sfts.com. The commemoration continues in Trinidad from September 27 – October 3, 2021. For more information contact 719-846-9512 or marty.hackett@trinidad.co.gov. You can also explore the old trail by car on Highway 50 and 350 by following the Santa Fe National Historic Trail highway signs, from Lamar, Colorado to Trinidad.

Wildflowers on Blackhawk Ranch

By Marian Brooks

With our wetter spring this year, we have had a great opportunity to observe beautiful wildflowers on the Blackhawk this season. There are many varieties of wildflowers on our ranch, such as Western Wallflowers, Wild Blue Flax, Milk Vetch, Indian Paintbrush, American Vetch, and Penstemon, to name just a few. There are multiple varieties of some of these.

Identifying wildflowers is not an exact science. Wildflower books, Apps for your smartphone and iPads, and online internet searches can be used to narrow down different types of wildflowers. Type "Colorado Wildflowers" into Playstore or the Apple App Store. Some Apps will even allow you to take a photo and identify the wildflower. Wildflowers can be identified by color, month of bloom, and Growing Zone Ranges, such as Plains (3500-6500), Foothills (6500 to 8000), Montane (8000 to 10,000), Subalpine (10,000 to 11,500) Alpine (above 11,500). If you are interested in planting wildflowers, seeds can also be purchased that will grow well in our area.

Below are three wildflowers blooming now on the Ranch: Sugarbowls (*Clematis hirsutissima*), Wild Blue Flax (*Linum lewisii*), and Western Wallflower (*Erysimum capitatum*).

These are only a few of the many wildflowers on the Blackhawk Ranch and a reminder that we live in a place of great beauty, if we stop to see the small things.



Fire and Blackhawk Ranch: Beginning the Learning Curve

by Brad Brooks

If you are new to Blackhawk, welcome! You have moved into an interesting niche of Colorado referred to as a Wildland-Urban Interface, or WUI. WUIs are a complex interplay of longitude, latitude, topography, elevation, weather, forests, and fauna that is always intriguing, challenging, and changing. While every Colorado WUI is unique, wildland fire is a constant issue in nearly all of them. Blackhawk Ranch has had several fires (some large and some small), in the last 24 years. Given the 20 year drought this area has suffered, this is not surprising. There are many aspects of Wildland Fire and Fire Mitigation that are important to understand on the Blackhawk. You may be surprised to learn that there are other entities that have a role in our understanding of fire conditions on the Blackhawk and have a say in what we do about them.

First, both the State of Colorado, as well as the counties in which Blackhawk land is found, can declare Fire Bans. There are stages to these Fire Bans, with each stage progressively restricting activities of residents of the counties with regard to fire and activities potentially able to cause fires. There are also monetary fines for any resident violating these restrictions. In June, there were nearly two dozen counties and eight Colorado National Forests reporting fire bans, but fortunately neither Huerfano nor Las Animas counties were involved.

Second, the National Weather Service can declare a Red Flag Warning based upon severe fire weather conditions (high winds, high temperatures, and low humidity) in our area. This type of Fire Weather Warning also significantly restricts many activities that could potentially ignite wildland fires or the intentional ignition of fires.

Third, the Blackhawk Ranch Emergency Management Committee (EMC) maintains fire condition monitoring and posts signs at the north and east entrances to the ranch. Fire conditions beyond MEDIUM (i.e. **HIGH and EXTREME**) also include signs stating specific fire restrictions for Blackhawk. A red flag will also be posted at the Blackhawk entrances in the case of a Red Flag warning. Both **Red Flag Warnings** and **Fire Bans** will also be posted on the Blackhawk Website and the Blackhawk Face Book page.

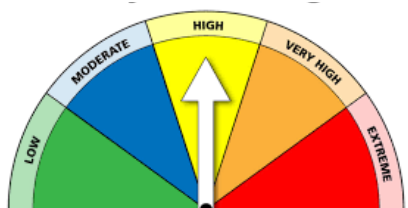
It should be obvious that any time a Blackhawk resident lights an open fire on the ranch, they are not only entertaining a risk to their property, but also creating a risk for all properties on the ranch. We all should take this very seriously and only undertake this activity after thoroughly reviewing the current weather conditions and with plenty of water and shovels on hand to control the fire. Additionally, if you decide to ignite a fire larger than a small camp fire on your property, you must first notify the Huerfano County Fire Protection District (HCFPD) and the Blackhawk Ranch POA Emergency Management Committee. HCFPD is legally entitled to issue fines for not notifying them in this regard.

We have all made significant investments in the Blackhawk Ranch, so let's do our best to make sure that an uninformed act does not diminish the enjoyment, value, and beauty of our land and homes! Finally, it is important that all of us also be vigilant for smoke plumes and/or the smell of smoke on Blackhawk. If you see something, say something! If you have any questions, please contact Brad Brooks, EMC Chair at 719-252-5621.

National Fire Danger Rating System

Fire Danger Level: Low

When the fire danger is "low" it means that fuels do not ignite easily from small embers, but a more intense heat source, such as lightning, may start fires in duff or dry rotten wood. Fires in open, dry grasslands may burn easily a few hours after a rain, but most wood fires will spread slowly, creeping or smoldering. Control of fires is generally easy.



Fire Danger Level: Moderate

When the fire danger is "moderate" it means that fires can start from most accidental causes, but the number of fire starts is usually pretty low. If a fire does start in an open, dry grassland, it will burn and spread quickly on windy days. Most wood fires will spread slowly to moderately. Average fire intensity will be moderate except in heavy concentrations of fuel, which may burn hot. Fires are still not likely to become serious and are often easy to control.

Fire Danger Level: High

When the fire danger is "high", fires can start easily from most causes and small fuels (such as grasses and needles) will ignite readily. Unattended campfires and brush fires are likely to escape. Fires will spread easily, with some areas of high-intensity burning on slopes or concentrated fuels. Fires can become serious and difficult to control unless they are put out while they are still small.

Fire Danger Level: Very High

When the fire danger is "very high", fires will start easily from most causes. The fires will spread rapidly and have a quick increase in intensity, right after ignition. Small fires can quickly become large fires and exhibit extreme fire intensity, such as long-distance spotting and fire whirls. These fires can be difficult to control and will often become much larger and longer-lasting fires.

Fire Danger Level: Extreme

When the fire danger is "extreme", fires of all types start quickly and burn intensely. All fires are potentially serious and can spread very quickly with intense burning. Small fires become big fires much faster than at the "very high" level. Spot fires are probable, with long-distance spotting likely. These fires are very difficult to fight and may become very dangerous and often last for several days.

Meet Your Neighbors

by Melissa Miller

James (JP) Angelillo and Debra Wilson bought Lot 169 on Cougar Trail in March of 2021. Coming from Parker, Colorado, both retired in December of 2020. They were in search of a property to retire to with their dogs Dylan and Molly. They wanted a home that brought peace and serenity but was still close enough to all the necessities. With the help of their real estate agent, they stumbled upon our lovely ranch. Upon walking through the front door, Debra said “Yep!” and they bought their home the same day!

JP, originally from Michigan, had his sights set on Colorado life for quite a while. He spent 40 years in the AV (Audio Visual) industry and was able to transfer to a Westminster office with the company he had been working for in 2017, allowing him to bring his Colorado dream to reality. AV is obviously a passion for JP. His work ranged from specializing in virtual reality for the automotive industry to creating Healthcare Simulations for Medical Teaching Centers.

Debra is originally from Pennsylvania, though she spent 10 years of her life in California before settling in Colorado in 1994. She has spent 35 years as a massage therapist, paired with teaching yoga and fitness. Debra also taught piano and ran a recording studio. She still tickles the ivories and practices yoga daily. There may be more yoga instruction in her future – stay tuned!

Debra has a son and daughter-in-law who live in Denver, as well as a daughter, daughter in law, and a two year old grandson in Castle Rock. JP has a daughter in Michigan and a son in Aspen. JP and Debra, though not technically married, are the epitome of a true COVID love story. Meeting in 2019, they had a number of fun dates before the world started shutting down. Reminiscing, JP told me about the uneasy

feeling of being in Europe for work and first hearing of the virus spreading. Upon arriving home, they decided to join households, and JP moved in with Debra.

Through the lockdown, they say they have lived a lifetime together in the short year when we were forced to quarantine and minimize outside interactions. They credit this unusual situation to the “been together forever” picture they portray. Though JP and Debra each had completely different plans for their retirement prior to meeting, they believe they are exactly where they were meant to be. To paraphrase a beautiful story they shared with me, JP and Debra are living a truly “Unconventional and Extraordinary” life!

