

May 5, 2021



BLACKHAWK NEWSLETTER

BOD Meeting Update

The Blackhawk Board of Directors met by video-conference on May 1, 2021. The Treasurer reported that as of March 31, BHR has \$64,539.38 in the “reserve” account, and \$60,323.45 in the “general operating” account. There is a balance of \$19,690.52 in unpaid dues that are in the process of being collected. The Roads Chair reported that grading and road base application occurred on the “flats area” located at the bottom of the “T intersection” to the first low water crossing on Four Mile Canyon Road in April that covered 4/10 of a mile for \$11,000.00. He has plans to have all roads and spurs graded this year, weather permitting. A one-year pilot program beginning in June for owner rental of the chipper (with restrictions) was approved. The full minutes can be accessed through link on the left.

Important Links

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

Blackhawk Ranch Website

By Susanne Bloomfield

The newly updated [BHR website](#) offers important information for owners. The Home Page includes weather and road conditions in Colorado and on the ranch itself as well as a Ranch map to download and a digital, topographical map. Fire Danger warnings as well as meeting dates are kept updated.

In the password protected POA Resources tab (contact me if you need the password), owners can read the latest minutes and financial reports, contact your neighbors in the Owners’ Directory, and check out recommended Contractors if you need work done on your parcel. The Resources tab includes emergency contacts as well as local and county resources. The Committees tab lists committee members and information on committee activities.

Firewise Day

By Brad Brooks

The photo accompanying this story represents 100s upon 100s of hours of work by past and present individual Blackhawk POA members as well as past and present POA Boards and Committees. It represents at least 5 grants written, applied for and received from State and County agencies. Most importantly, it represents the power and effectiveness of a unified community.

The sign represents our Certification – and national recognition – as a Firewise Community. Blackhawk Ranch was one of the first ranches in our area to receive this certification. On May 15, 2021, we will be gathering as a Firewise Community to kick off our summer community mitigation days. We will have an outside speaker, Paul Branson, Huerfano County Wildfire Liaison, who will be speaking to us on the importance of the Firewise Certification to the Blackhawk Ranch. **BUT** this is a **working mitigation day as well**, and Paul will be joining us as our “Guest Sawyer” and working right alongside our community volunteers.

This is where you, our Blackhawk neighbors, come in. This is a call for fire mitigation volunteers that day, working to mitigate a section of Wapiti Drive beginning at 9:00 a.m. on May 15, 2021, until around noon. Bring your work gloves, loppers, and eye/ear protection! No experience is necessary, just the willingness to do physical work.

After May 15, we will be gathering every other Saturday at the same time and location as we continue to work on the CSFS grant written and received by our POA Emergency Management Committee. This grant is a matching grant that enables our Blackhawk community to develop Wapiti Drive as a shaded fuel break and emergency exit out of the Ranch. Even more strategic, a shaded fuel break along both sides of Wapiti Drive “protects” our western border and allows the area to be quickly converted to an active fire line, protecting the rest of Blackhawk from wildland fires coming from the west. Please note, we usually have more fun together in these workdays than you might imagine, and it is so awesome to see what we accomplish on those days.

We look forward to doing this together with you!

Things You Need

To Know

The Emergency Management Committee will be holding a Firewise Day for the whole BHR community on May 15.

ALL OWNERS are encouraged to attend this event, not only to help protect our Ranch from fires and learn how to protect your own homes but also enjoy talking with your neighbors.



A Moment in Time

by Nancy Pasternak

Did you know that “Mother Jones,” the most famous female labor activist of the nineteenth century, was jailed in Walsenburg in 1913?

Mary Harris Jones was born on August 1, 1837, in County Cork, Ireland, and immigrated to Toronto, Canada, with her family at age

five, prior to the Irish “potato famine” with its wave of Irish immigrants. She married George Jones, a member of the Iron Molders Union in 1861. They had four children, and in 1867 her entire family died in a yellow fever epidemic. Mary dressed in black for the rest of her life.

Jones moved to Chicago to support herself as a seamstress, but she lost everything that she owned in the Great Chicago Fire of 1871. She found solace at Knights of Labor meetings, and in 1877, she took up the cause of working people. Jones focused on the rising number of working poor during industrialization, as wages shrank, hours increased, and workers had no insurance for unemployment, health care, or old age.

Jones first displayed her oratorical and organizing skills in Pittsburgh during the Great Railroad Strike of 1877. She took part in and led hundreds of strikes, pausing briefly to publish *The New Right* in 1899 and a two-volume *Letter of Love and Labor* in 1900 and 1901. A beloved leader, the workers she organized nicknamed her “Mother Jones.”

Beginning in 1900, Jones focused on miners, organizing in the coal fields of West Virginia and Pennsylvania. She traveled to Colorado to organize coal miners in the strike of 1903. Jones was forcibly removed to Kansas, and the state militia and coal mine owners’ private security had little trouble suppressing the strike. Ten years later, another strike was raging in Southern Colorado; however, she had been banned from returning to the area. Knowing that detectives in train stations were watching for her, Jones avoided detection with the help of railyard workers, who secretly put her on the train in Denver and let her off before she reached the Trinidad station. The state militia found Jones in a Trinidad hotel room and took her to a converted military prison. Jones was imprisoned for over two months with no visitors, no charges ever filed against her, and no legal representation ever provided. She was taken to see Governor Ammons, who authorized her release and told her not to return to Trinidad. One-week later, Mary secretly boarded a train to Trinidad, only to be arrested by Bill Reno, “Rockefeller’s chief detective,” sitting across the aisle from her. She was jailed in the cellar of the Huerfano County Court House for 26 days.



Be Aware

by Nancy Pasternak

Before you burn a pile of brush or tree limbs on your property, you must contact the Huerfano County Sheriff’s Office at 719-738-1600 and advise them when you plan to burn. You also need to notify a Board member about your plans. In Las Animas County, you will need to contact the Fire Chief in Aguilar to get a fire permit in addition to notifying the Sheriff and BHR. Contact information can be found on our ranch website at www.blackhawkcranch.org. You should burn only on a day or morning when it is calm and not windy. Check the BHR website to see if burning is allowed that day. It only takes a gust of wind to blow fire embers into nearby trees and grass to ignite a forest fire. We have a very dry climate in Southern Colorado, so if there is a county-wide fire ban, you cannot have any “open fires” at all, including camp fires. The Board also imposes fire bans for numerous reasons including “high wind days.” Another alternative to burning would be to chip your branches or transport them to the Walsenburg Transfer Station.

A “word of advice” regarding commercial deliveries and owners towing RVs or personal trailers during the winter and spring seasons. Please check our ranch website for road conditions and weather forecasts. It is not advisable to have commercial deliveries if the ranch roads are snowy and/or icy. Our “thawing and freezing cycles” cause dangerous driving conditions, especially in the shaded and steep areas of our roads. There have been numerous accidents over the years as vehicles towing trailers have “jack knifed” and blocked the road or have slid off of the road causing rerouting of traffic until the accident area was cleared, sometimes hours later. If the road is damaged, owners could be held responsible for repairs. The nearest tow truck service is in Walsenburg, 16 miles away. During the winter months, Timber Drive is not a safe route due to the steep incline. On Four Mile Canyon Road, there is a stretch through the canyon area between Timber Drive and Wapiti Drive that has caused numerous accidents, as vehicles have lost traction on a steep stretch that is a bit deceiving in length and grade. Another alternative would be to park your trailer at the mailboxes off of the county road until conditions improve, or delay the commercial delivery by a few days.

BHR Weed Management

by Art Jackson, Weed Chair



Colorado requires property owners and Property Owners Associations to manage noxious weeds to prevent the spread of invasive weeds on our properties. If left unmanaged, noxious weeds will rapidly overtake natural grasses and plant life, creating a danger to the wildlife habitat.

Each spring the BHR Weed Committee surveys the ranch roads and road easements for noxious weeds. With the help of volunteers, we spot-spray noxious weeds, using a common herbicide as a primary means of management. Property owners are required to manage noxious weeds inside their own properties. Our management plan and the efforts our community members has been very effective in controlling the spread of noxious weeds on BHR.

Common weeds in our area include Hounds-tongue and various Thistles identified by purple or red flowering tops. Some of these weeds can grow several feet in height and act like ground cover, rapidly consuming large areas of land.

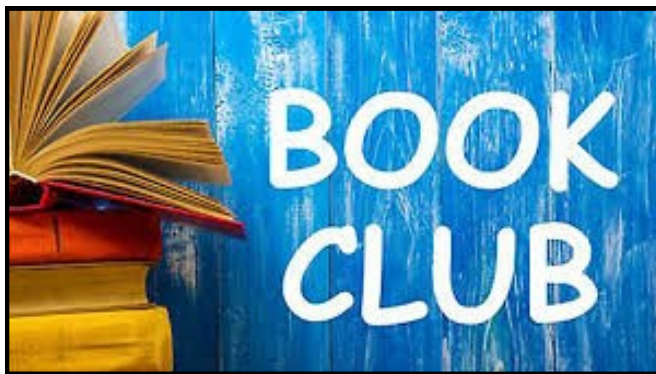
The BHR Weeds Committee is asking for volunteers to travel our roads and help spray the common areas for weeds. Please contact me at bhrpoatreas@gmail.com if you would like to volunteer.

Resources: [Colorado Department of Agriculture, Huerfano County Noxious Weed Management Plan](#), [Las Animas County Weed Management Plan](#).

BHR Book Club & Men's Club

by Marian Brooks

Every month, the women of Blackhawk Ranch gather to discuss a book chosen by the members, enjoy refreshments, and catch up on each others' news. The men, too, get together, usually in a shop or garage, to socialize. The Book Club and Men's Club began in 2015 and has been meeting regularly for six years—even virtually during the pandemic. Everyone on the Ranch, residents and nonresidents alike, are invited to join, whenever they can, even if it is only once or twice a year. The book and meeting place will be posted on Facebook.



The next Book Club/Men's Club will be held on Friday, May 21st at 4:00 p.m. at Ray and Carol Ryan's home on Lot #112 Bear Paw Spur. The group will be reading *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society* by Mary Ann Shaffer.

Ray will host the guys (please bring your own drinks).

On Friday, June 26, the groups will meet at Brad & Marian Brooks, #118 Corey Spur (off South Mountain) at 4:00 p.m. The Book Club will be discussing *Timeline* by Michael Crichton. Brad will host the guys (please bring your own drinks).

Again, this is an open invitation to everyone and offers a great opportunity to meet with your friends and neighbors.

Meet Your Neighbors

by Susanne Bloomfield

Ray and Susie Butters, owners of Lot #48 at the north end of Wapiti Drive, purchased their land in 1997. On their trip from San Diego to attend Ray's 40th high school reunion in Denver, they had 23 locations identified to look for property. They wanted mountain terrain, trees, and privacy. When they visited Trinidad and met with Land Properties, who brought them to Blackhawk Ranch, they fell in love with the acreage, purchased it, cancelled the remaining property searches, and went straight to the reunion.

Ray is a retired Navy Senior Chief Petty Officer. On October 3, 1958, Ray enlisted in the Navy and became a Sonar Technician, specializing in detecting and interpreting various underwater sounds and activities, including enemy vessels.

His first assignment was to the USS Bugara (SS 331), a WWII diesel electric submarine, where he spent 3 ½ years. Ray's next three "Boats" were brand new nuclear fast attack submarines. This was during the peak of the Cold War, which was a challenging time with high demands on the Submarine Force. It was not unusual to be away from home for more than ten months out of the year. Although most everything that submarines did was classified, Ray has a lot of fond memories. One was when the Bugara pulled into Hakodate Japan, the first American submarine to visit Hakodate since the war. The community welcomed the crew warmly, and the schools were closed for two days in a row, so the kids could tour the Boat. The kids brought little tiny gifts to give the crew, usually hand made. They all wanted to practice their English. The day that the Boat left, the pier was so packed with people, it looked like it would collapse.

The last four years of his Navy career, Ray was on Shore Duty at the Fleet ASW Training Center Pacific where he trained young sailors in the basics of being a Sonarman. Ray served in the Navy for twenty years. After leaving the Navy, he was employed at McMahon Engineering Services for ten years. Next, he worked for Horizon Technology Inc., also in San Diego, for twelve years. When HTI's owner sold the company, the job market was very slim. That's when Ray decided it was time to retire. He sold his house and moved to Tucson, Arizona, where he and Susie married a year later in 1998.

Ray and Susie met in 1979 when Susie came to work at McMahon Engineering Services where Ray was the Engineering Support Department Manager. She was a typesetter, setting type for technical books and even working on some top-secret documents. Later, she became employed as a secretary for General Dynamics, also in San Diego. However, in 1991, when the missile division was sold to Hughes Aircraft Company, as part of the sale, she moved to Tucson, Arizona. She worked with some great engineers from GD, met new ones, and had one saying to all of them on the status of the offices or making coffee, fixing Xerox machines or printers: "Who was your mother this time last year?" That first summer, the temperature was 117 degrees; moreover, that was a long way for Ray to commute to see her.

Ray and Susie were married at Davis Monthan Air Force Base in 1998 in the oldest chapel on the base. Ray was in his Dinner Dress Blues and Susie was a beautiful Southern Belle with a long train trailing from her dress and a broad-brimmed sun hat. They planned their wedding thoroughly but agreed that whether or not it went as planned, their goal was to have fun, and they did. Susie's Mother, aged 91, walked her down the aisle to give her to Ray. She turned 92 the following day.

They spent a year designing the house of their dreams and another six months trying to get a drawing package together. They had met a general contractor at a Property Owner's Association Annual Meeting, and he agreed to build their home. The bottom floor would be Styrofoam forms with concrete and rebar, and the second floor would be Structural Insulated Panels.

In 2001, they moved to Blackhawk. Expecting to live in the bottom floor of their house, they were surprised to find that the only progress was that the frost footers were in the ground. With assurance from their contractor that the house would go up fast, they set up their tent and lived in it 3½ months until the bears ran them out. They then bought a motor home, fired the contractor, and became the Owner/Builder. They lived in the motor home for about 18 months while they were building their home. Instead of going through another winter in the motor home, they moved into the house with only studs as walls and built it around themselves. They hired only 4 or 5 subcontractors for specialized work. Ray loves working with wood, and their home is truly a work of art. Susie loves art, also, and is an avid reader.

Both Ray and Susie have served on the BHR Board of Directors, Ray for 2 two-year terms and Susie for one two-year term. They have been Weed Chair and Road Chair and have served on the Emergency Management Committee. And, yes, they are still building their house. The photo is from an Annual Submarine Birthday Ball held a few years ago.

