



Blackhawk Ranch Newsletter

April 2016

FIRE MITIGATION REMINDER

The dates have been set for the 2016 Community Fire Mitigations. They will be held on the first Saturday of every month beginning at 8:30 from May through October. An Appreciation Supper will be held the evening of October 1 for all of those who have participated.

Not only will property owners be helping make Blackhawk a safer place, but each hour a volunteer works counts as \$23 toward our matching funds for the grants we have received.



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Welcome Spring !

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Feedback as well as suggestions
for articles are welcome!
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Ranch Road Report



fourth of March, we took delivery of the road grader attachment and have used it a total of 8.8 hours. We plan to grade more of the POA roads when we next get sufficient moisture to make it worthwhile. At the price we paid last autumn for road grading, those 8.8 hours would have cost us a minimum of \$1,000.00.

The POA took delivery of our new tractor early in the year, too late for the first snow of the season. It is a Massey Ferguson and has 100 horsepower with four-wheel drive. The tractor came with a rear blade, bucket, and snow plow. The latter has been used for a total of 29.2 hours to date, which has saved us \$1,168.00. On the

The members of the road committee have volunteered their time for these activities in order to keep our costs down. Those members are Paul Kimball, Joe Weivoda, Roger Buttignol, Ray Butters, Terry Bloomfield, and Rick Brandenburg.

Black Gold in Huerfano County

Although La Plaza de Los Leones was established in 1858 by Don Miguel Antonio, it wasn't until 1870 that Fred Walsen and his bride, Emilie Sporleder, arrived to open a trading post and purchase land around the settlement. He renamed the town Walsenburg in 1872, and four years later, he leased land west of town to a predecessor of Colorado Fuel & Iron Company (CF&I). The Denver & Rio Grand Railroad soon arrived to ship out the coal to the steel mill in Pueblo. According to one [web source](#), 94 mines have operated in Huerfano county. The mines near or on Blackhawk Ranch include the Caprock, Hezron, Lester, Midway, New Pryor, Old Rouse, Primrose, Pryor, Rugby, and Viking Mines.

"[Coals Mines in Huerfano](#)" explains that CF&I purchased the Walsen mines and later opened the Rouse mine in 1888. By the turn of the century, the company employed over 15,000 men, producing over a million tons of coal in 1898. However, when the Rouse mine closed, the tonnage fell to almost half for several years; the mid-1920s were the peak years for Huerfano County. During its early years, CF&I launched a Sociological Department charged with improving coals camps like Rouse, introducing education for the children, especially the new innovation of kindergartens, social and industrial training for the workers, and night classes for immigrants to learn English, as well as providing reading rooms and libraries, art exhibits and lectures, and classes for women to learn crafts and homemaking skills.

To learn more about this intriguing history, a visit to the [Steelworks Center of the West](#) in Pueblo would be very worthwhile. Future newsletters will go into more detail on this subject.

TOTEM POLE ON BLACKHAWK RANCH

PAT HENRY (Lot #146)



“I have always been interested in crafts, especially creative and even eccentric ones,” explained Pat Henry about the totem pole gracing her front yard. The idea came many years ago while traveling with her husband, Dave Petet. They both became intrigued with the cultural icons and purchased a book titled *How to Make your Own Totem Pole*. However, it wasn't until four years after she lost her husband that Pat, encouraged by artist and friend Mary Stading, began the project. Creating the totem pole in the solitude amidst the pines of Blackhawk Ranch became a healing process for both Pat and for Mary, who had just lost a grandson. Mary's son, Paul Brunner, a frequent guest of Pat and Dave, helped with the project.

Totem poles originated with Native Americans of the Northwest, Alaska, and Canada and serve many purposes: entrance portals for houses, memorials to honor a deceased chief, or a way to record a clan history. However, they were never considered as spiritual or as objects of worship. Today, native people still raise new totem poles, merely as artistic presentations or to honor deceased relatives, celebrate family history, or record an important event in their lives.

Each symbol carved on a traditional totem pole has a meaning, and all of the carvings on Pat's pole are symbolic for her, too. The crest for the National Guard where Dave served for 28 years as well as the carving of the wolf were for him because he loved the wild creatures and enjoyed visiting the Colorado Wolf and Wildlife Center.

The black squirrel honors the rare Abert's species native only to this region but is a frequent visitor to their acreage. The flowers are Pat's favorite, the sunflower from her former home in Kansas and the Indian Paintbrush which flourishes here. Other carvings also have special meanings about Pat and Dave's relationship.

In order to preserve the artistic pole, Mary cut the log along the back to let it breathe, coated the base with tar before setting it in cement, treated the whole pole with linseed oil, and placed a special cap on top, which includes some of Dave's ashes, to protect it from the elements.



BLACKHAWK BOOK CLUB

The members of the Blackhawk Book Club have been meeting monthly to share their thoughts on a wide variety of books. So far, the group has enjoyed *Go Set a Watchman* and *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee, *Orphan Train: A Novel* by Christina Baker Kline, *One Thousand White Women* by Jim Fergus, *The Alchemist* by Coelho, *The Martian* by Andy Weir, *In the Heart of the Sea* by Nathaniel Philbrick, and *Plainsong* by Kent Haruf. Debi Patch even arranged a special showing at the Fox theater in Walsenburg of the movie *The Martian* for the club members and others from Blackhawk Ranch.

The following books and hosts have been chosen for the summer. The meetings are held at 3:00 p.m. with the host providing snacks and beverages. Residents and non-residents alike are invited to attend! The La Veta Library will be supplying bags of books each month with multiple copies to share among the members.

April 6—*Doc Susie* by Virginia Cornell hosted by Lee Kimball

May 11—*Hotel on the Corner of Bitter & Sweet* by Jamie Ford hosted by Cissy Severance

June 8— *Murder at the Brown Palace* by Dick Kreck hosted by Debi Patch

July 6—*The Girl on the Train* by Paula Hawkins hosted by Susanne Bloomfield & Di Wassom

BOOKS and FRIENDS



You Can't Have Too Many