



BLACKHAWK NEWSLETTER

BOD Meeting Update

The POA Board met on March 19, 2022, by teleconference. Art reported that the state and federal taxes have been filed, the 2021 budget reconciled with some budget remaining, and that the January and February financials have been approved and uploaded to the website. He called for a special meeting to discuss the delinquent properties and the liens that have been filed against them. The board also decided to do an itemized inventory of the Blackhawk assets to help determine how much funds should be kept in the Reserves.

Jim stated that the weather has temporarily halted all road work. At present, Team Rubicon is slated to arrive to help with mitigation April 22-24, and the EMC committee will be sending out a call for volunteers for help with the mitigating and for feeding the Rubicon team. The Board will also be updating the Policies and Procedures.

Access the links on the left for the full Minutes as well as the Financials.

Important Links

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

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Team Rubicon & "Holts the Line"

By Brad Brooks, President

We have the privilege of being served in April by a contingent of **Team Rubicon**, a volunteer service organization of veterans from all branches of our US military. Their mission here has been dubbed, "Holts the Line" after one of their leaders. The Blackhawk EMC and Team Rubicon have jointly planned for Team Rubicon to remove deadfall and ladder fuels and thin and trim up trees along the Shaded Fuel Break that is being created along Wapiti Drive, part of our Colorado Forest Service Grant, and their donated labor goes toward meeting our Grant requirements.

We also have the privilege of serving Team Rubicon while they are here by preparing, delivering, and serving them evening meals at the Walsenburg Community Center. The current planned dates for this work are April 22-24. If you would like to be part of the Blackhawk team to help serve these everyday heroes, please contact **Brad Brooks** for more information. It will be a lot of work, but you won't be disappointed – these really are the good guys!

Things You Need

To Know

The Blackhawk

Annual POA

Meeting will be

held on

July 23, 2022,

at 10:00 p.m.

At the La Veta

Mercantile

Blackhawk "Rules" of the Road

By Brad Brooks, President

Having received a continuous drumbeat of complaints from Blackhawk residents appalled by being run off the road by careless drivers on our roads (some even recognized the culprit), I was asked by a member of our Roads Committee to consider doing a quick summary of driving courtesies and habits that would alleviate some of our near misses on ranch roads, especially during the winter months. Basically, it comes down to slowing down, not day dreaming while driving, and exercising a little courtesy to our fellow ranch residents and others.

1. **Speed limits on the ranch are 20 mph**, and if you go faster, you will cause much wash-boarding on our roads that will force you to drive 20 mph! Cosmic irony! Don't forget that most of us moved here to get away from the unrelenting rush, rush, rush of cities. Driving slow on the ranch is a perk of owning property here.

2. **Who has the right of way on hills?** The vehicle that is traveling down the hill should yield to the vehicle traveling up the hill. Another commonly followed courtesy on mountain roads is the vehicle with the LOAD deserves the right of way, the vehicle without a load should kindly yield the right of way. LOAD means towing a trailer or other equipment, or carrying a heavy load in the bed of a pickup. Just commonsense right?

3. **Drive Aware!** Some of our residents are very anxious about driving on icy, snowy or muddy roads. Usually, they will take their half of the road out of the middle. When there is no oncoming traffic, no harm done. However, with the increase of traffic on Blackhawk roads in the last 20 months or so, this is certainly NOT a best practice. If you are unsettled by oncoming traffic and not traveling up a steep hill, simply pull over to the far side of your lane and stop. Let the oncoming traffic navigate past you. While I realize it is hard to take your eyes off the beauty of Blackhawk while driving, you can usually spot oncoming traffic before you are on top of each other if you are looking for it.

4. **Be Weather Aware!** Traveling in low-clearance vehicles with street tires or hauling trailers, RVs, or heavy equipment up Blackhawk roads on muddy or snowy days defies common sense. In addition, please do not schedule deliveries under such conditions! Save yourself and others both time and money by checking Blackhawk weather prior to hauling loads across Blackhawk roads.

We are all in this together; no one wants Blackhawk to become a Paradise Wrecked!

A Moment in Time

by Nancy Pasternak



Did you know that Fred Walsen, the founder of Walsenburg, was the first mayor and also opened the first coal mine in Huerfano County? Don Miguel Antonio Leon established La Plaza de Los Leones near the banks of the Cuchara River in 1858 near present day Walsenburg.

Walsen immigrated from Germany and arrived in 1870 and started a trading post. Walsenburg became the county seat in 1872, and the Walsen Mine was begun in 1876. Walsen leased some of his land west of town to the predecessors of the Colorado Fuel & Iron Company (CF&I). The Denver & Rio Grande Western (D&RGW) Railroad arrived from Denver in the summer of 1876 to haul out coal for its locomotive operations and to the CF&I steel mill in Pueblo.

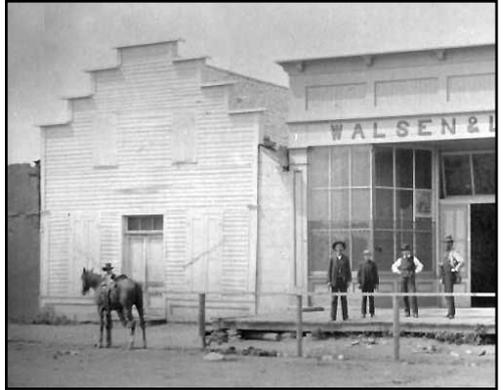
Working in the coal mines was very difficult in the early days.

There was poor ventilation, frequent

cave-ins, floods and explosions. Hundreds of miners lost their lives. Poor working conditions led to frequent strikes by the miners. The Colorado Supply Company store, a subsidiary of CF&I, sold goods to miners at the Walsen Mine camp. At some coal camps, miners were paid in "scrip" (not cash), and the scrip could only be spent at the company store.

The strike of April 1914 became violent and shots were fired between miners and mine guards. Tensions grew worse and several people in Walsenburg were killed. After the strikes and violence lessened a shaky peace came to the Walsen Mine as CF&I recognized the existence of the United Mine Workers union, and conditions were improved with pay increases and new homes built in the company town. The Walsen Mine was permanently closed in 1931 due to extensive flooding, and Walsenburg lost one of its primary sources of revenue. During its lifetime the Walsen Mine produced more than 12 million tons of coal over 55 years. The only remaining remnant of the Walsen Mine still standing is the power plant just west of Walsenburg on the north side of Highway 160.

The former Huerfano County jail built in 1896 became the home of the Walsenburg Mining Museum in 1994. The museum is located just west of the county courthouse at 112 West 5th Street. It is open to the public on Fridays, 10am to noon and 1pm to 3pm; and on Saturdays, 1pm to 3pm. It is suggested to call ahead to confirm the listed schedule at: 719-738-2840.



El Pueblo History Museum

by Susanne Bloomfield



The El Pueblo History Museum, located at 301 North Union Avenue, is a local museum and a History Colorado site that presents Pueblo's cultural and ethnic history. The site includes a recreated 1842 trading post and the archeological excavation site of the original trading post.

The museum hosts several exhibits, such as the *Borderlands of Southern Colorado* and the upcoming *Steel City Strike* that showcase the region's geo-

political border history and its connections of cultures, ethnicities, landscapes, industries, and religions. Other regular events include First Friday Art Nights, the House Museum Book Club, the Museum of Memory where communities can actively share their histories, and workshops, such as Indigenous beading.

The museum also offers traveling exhibits, and include 20th century photographs and art works that represent the region's history and inhabitants. *El Movimiento* depicts the struggle of Chicanos in the 1960s and 1970s as well as their music, the Bruja Brew Fest, and the annual Southern Colorado Quilt Show displays over 100 quilts in a variety of styles that also includes a quilt raffle.

In addition, History Colorado also features [online exhibitions](#), such as the Japanese *Internment in Colorado*, *Ute Tribal Paths*, *Colorado and the Fur Trade*, *La Gente: Colorado's Mexican History*, and *African American History in Colorado*.

The Museum is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.



BHR Weed Management

by Art Jackson

With Spring approaching, it's time to revisit weed management on Blackhawk Ranch. The management of noxious weeds on Blackhawk Ranch is enforced by the Colorado Noxious Weed Act. If left unmanaged, noxious weeds will rapidly overtake natural grasses and plant life, creating a danger to the wildlife habitat.

All property owners are responsible for the inspection and control of noxious weeds on their property. The BHR POA Board has assumed the responsibility for the road setback (30 feet from the center of the road, on each side) and has assigned this task to the Weed Committee. The efforts of our community with the help of the BHR Noxious Weed Management Plan has been very effective in controlling the spread of noxious weeds on BHR.

Twice per calendar year (Spring and Fall), the Weed Committee surveys the ranch roads for noxious weeds. With the help of volunteers, we spot spray noxious weeds using a common herbicide to manage growth. Property owners may rent a POA owner backpack sprayer to help control weeds on their own property. Please contact the Weed Committee chair for further information.

Common weeds on Blackhawk Ranch include [Canada Thistle](#), [Common Mullein](#) (bottom photo), [Houndstongue](#), [Musk Thistle](#), [Russian Knapweed](#), and [Scotch Thistle](#) (top photo). Noxious weeds can grow several feet in height and act like ground cover rapidly consuming large areas of land. Please visit the [BHRPOA website](#) for more information on noxious weed management on Blackhawk Ranch.

The BHR Weeds Committee is asking for volunteers to travel our roads and help spray the common areas for weeds. In addition, the BHR POA Board is looking for a new weeds chair. Please contact me at bhrpoatreas@gmail.com if you would like to volunteer.



Resources:

[Noxious Weeds | Blackhawk Ranch Property Owners Association](#)

[Colorado Department of Agriculture - Noxious Weeds](#)

[Noxious Weed Species](#)

[Colorado Weed Management Association](#)

[Huerfano County Noxious Weed Plan](#)

[Las Animas County Weed Management Plan](#)

[Blackhawk Ranch Noxious Weed Management Plan](#)

Meet Your Neighbors

by Melissa Miller

Don and Diane Wassom, owners of Lot #65 on Timber Drive, have been enjoying the beauty of Blackhawk Ranch since March of 2013. Nestled at one of the highest peaks in the ranch, the Wassoms have lovingly named their parcel "Raven's Roost." With a lengthy travel history, this duo were in search of a quiet spot to retire. Originally from Pennsylvania, Diane was a NICU / Labor & Delivery Nurse. Prior to that, Diane's competitive side revealed itself as a black belt in karate and a licensed pilot. She flew Search and Rescue planes for the Civil Air Patrol, even earning Airman of the Year!

Equally as successful, Don, originally from Utah, had a long career in Infectious Diseases: Immunology and Immunogenetics. Much of their travel has been through work – from bumping elbows in a lab at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, with BHR President, Brad Brooks, to running a research lab in Rochester. The Wassoms and their children even spent multiple years living in Switzerland, where Don was the Vice President of Research for a medical research company. Prior to his career in medical science, Don also served as a Captain in the Air Force.

The couple has two grown children, Sarah and Derek. Sarah and her husband, now living in Wisconsin, have

two sons, ages 14 and 7. Derek and his wife still live in Switzerland. They have 3 children (two boys and 1 girl) ages 6, 4 and 1.5. Diane and Don are (im)patiently waiting to visit and meet the youngest grandchild, born during the travel restricted midst of the pandemic.

From falling in love in Tweetman's Western Dance Hall in upstate New York to finally settling into retirement in Southern Colorado, the 41 years Don and Diane have spent together so far have been fueled, in their words, by an "irreverent sense of humor," which still shines through today. The Wassoms now spend their time watching the wildlife – turkeys, deer, fox, and ravens – on their property with their three semi-tame cats, Shotgun, Sherriff, and Sam. Out of all the places they have traveled Diane has visited 22 countries, and Don, 44!), the couple thoroughly enjoys the solitude and serenity BHR has to offer.

