



PINE NEEDLER

A PONDEROSA COMMUNITY CLUB NEWSLETTER

2009 PONDEROSA BOARD OFFICERS

President: Bill Griffin
Treasure: Steve Geho
Vice President: Ann Ashford
Secretary: Peter Smith
Director of Operations: Jeanne Whitlow
Association Manager: Mary Cox
Office Manager: Chelcie Strode
Office: (509) 763-0320

JULY 2009

The Ponderosa Community Club publishes the PINE NEEDLER quarterly. Letters and submissions are welcome! Mail to the NEEDLER at 21100 Cayuse, Leavenworth, WA 98826; or phone the PCC Office, 509-763-0320; or visit the NEEDLER online at the Ponderosa Website: www.ponderosacommunityclub.org.
Tim Olson and Lois Pendleton, co-editors

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PONDEROSA COMMUNITY CLUB
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Ponderosa Community Club Mission Statement

The Ponderosa Community Club's mission is to create and maintain a safe and welcoming community which enhances recreational and residential living through active membership participation, visionary leadership, and commitment to sustainability and harmony with the natural environment.



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Bill Griffin, President

On behalf of the Board I thank all those who attended our May 24 Annual Meeting. (Would you believe SRO on such a beautiful day?!) Your comments on things past, your suggestions on things to come, and the expression of your concerns clearly demonstrated the depth of your concern for the Ponderosa and provided the Board the benefit of your brainpower. We have much food for thought as we look to tomorrow.

I would like to thank Gina Wilkins for the advice and counsel she provided me, and for the wisdom she shared with the Board during the past 19 months. When we found ourselves with more good candidates than we had positions, Gina resigned in favor of another candidate. She had already served two years on this Board, plus several years on prior Boards and countless volunteer hours on committees and in various capacities. With mixed emotions I see her leave the Board, while knowing she is only a phone call away.

I thank Peter Smith (Treasurer and newly-appointed Secretary) and Jeanne Whitlow (Operations Director) for their dedication to "a new way of doing business", and for their willingness to serve another term in order to put the refining touches on projects in progress. Ann Ashford (Treasurer now Vice President) is a recent addition to the Board via appointment, this being her first Annual Meeting and having only attended two regular Board meetings before that. New, but not bashful, I see good things coming from her. And welcome to Steve Geho (newly-elected Treasurer), who brings many talents to our Board which will be of great use to the Ponderosa.

To all members, we thank you for accepting new directions with equanimity (but not silently). We are grateful for your support and, especially, for your having taken the time to vote.

And, so we end what I characterize as a good year and we begin what I believe will be an even better one.

TIMELY REMINDERS FROM THE BOARD

We now we enter the dry time in Ponderosa, with it comes the potential for wild fires. Members need to be informed of the conclusions of The Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) created through the joint efforts of Chelan County, various fire districts and communities such as ours.

1. In the event of a major wildfire, our homes would not be considered by firefighters as safe to defend.
2. The primary consideration of the Fire District is protection of the residents and the safety of the firefighters (i.e. evacuate everyone).
3. The condition of Primitive Park Road (Camp 12) is such that evacuation of residents would be problematic. The very best solution to this problem is a deep and continuing understanding by every Ponderosa resident of the ramifications of their action/inactions:
 - 1) Do you follow the basic safety procedures required by the Fire Department when burning outdoors?
 - 2) Have you taken steps on your property to keep ground fires out of the trees by limbing up, and minimizing ladder fuels?
 - 3) Do you and your guests know the fire siren sequence which signals the need for an emergency evacuation? (Available as refrigerator magnets)
 - 4) If the siren goes off, will you have prepared yourself to be calm enough to drive from the Ponderosa without doing something panicky that blocks the road?

The possibility of a major fire is serious stuff; the life you save may be your own!

For keeping up-to –date on the “Water Project”, the best source is to go to the website and click on "Water Project". Read the "Spreadsheet Assumptions" and then click on the links for “Description of Project" and "Map of Project". There will soon be a link to the spreadsheet.

Keep in mind that you can save the Ponderosa postage expense if you join the ninety members who now access the PINE NEEDLER on the website. Contact the office by email (ponderosaoffice@cpucafe.com) or phone (509-763-0320) to have your name added to the list.

Members have occasionally complained about uncontrolled dogs. According to the Wenatchee Humane Society's website, the following is the law in Chelan County.

"Supervision law applies to your dog when off your property in all of Chelan County outside of city limits. Dogs do not need to be on leash, but you do need to be with them and have voice control of them when off your property. Streets and sidewalks are public property. Note: aggressive dog behavior is not considered proper supervision. Barking and whining habitually throughout the day or night is not allowed. The Chelan County Sheriff's Department handles these calls."

The Animal Control phone number is: 509-662-9577.

BOARD RESERVES POOL FOR MEMBERS ONLY

Dear Ponderosa Member:

On May 24, 2009, the members approved the following:

“Ponderosa’s swimming pool and clubhouse should be used ONLY BY MEMBERS, THEIR FAMILY AND THEIR GUESTS. Persons who compensate members through any exchange of money, goods, or services for use of their property are TENANTS AND NOT CONSIDERED TO BE GUESTS.”

On June 13, 2009 the Board approved the following method of implementing the above policy:

Beginning July 1, 2009, tenants of rental properties within the Ponderosa Community Club, Inc., will not be allowed entry to the swimming pool.

The first attempt by a tenant to use a member’s security card in order to gain entry to the pool will result in no entry and a warning.

The second attempt by a tenant to use a member’s security card in order to gain entry to the pool will result in no entry and deactivation of the member’s security card for the remainder of the year.

If you rent your property you should be certain that your tenants understand they are not allowed entry to the swimming pool and clubhouse beginning on July 1, and you should NOT provide your security card for your tenant’s use.

If you advertise your rental property you should remove all references to the use of Ponderosa’s swimming pool and clubhouse.

Of course, your family and your guests (i.e. persons who do not exchange money, goods or services for use of your property) are welcome to use all of Ponderosa’s facilities.

Sincerely,
Bill Griffin, President
425-582-8418
wgriffin206@comcast.net

Ponderosa Community Club Association Manager Report

by Mary Cox
April - May, 2009

We've had a busy spring! Here's an update:

- * Some Riata homeowners have questioned the March policy decision not to snowplow upper Riata Road for safety reasons. We are looking at potential alternatives.
- * Helped with the Fire Dept Burn Day on May 16.
- * Cut down hazardous dead trees in the greenbelt.
- * Swept the streets to rid them of sand from the winter.
- * Assisted with the Greenbelt Committee workday.
- * Installed fiber and high speed internet at the Ponderosa Office.
- * Continued work with the Cascadia Conservation District on the possibility of obtaining funding and/or onsite help to revegetate the riverbank to prevent erosion. Call the office if you want to participate.
- * Repaired or replaced multiple water service valves.
- * Prepared and opened the swimming pool on May 23. The pool is open from 10am-10pm every day except it's closed on Tuesdays. Rick Chappell will be helping with the pool maintenance and security again this summer.
- * Prepared the grounds for summer use and installed new playground equipment.
- * Our security company, Moon Security, repaired two of our Clubhouse/pool video cameras and ensured the rest of our security system is functioning well.
- * Continued work on the Riata Road damage issue – this is an ongoing project in which we're working with the DNR and the developers.
- * Bob and Nancy Melson are overseeing the painting of the exterior of the Clubhouse. Painting will occur beginning June 15.
- * The Clubhouse windows will be washed after painting is complete.
- * We'll have the dust control application done on gravel roads in early July.
- * Proceeded, at the direction of the board, with one foreclosure for past due homeowner's dues.
- * Chelan County owns a Ponderosa lot and has not paid the assessments. They will be auctioning the property – hopefully by August 1, 2009. We learned that state law precludes the County from paying homeowner association assessments, so we will not get any of the dues owed since 1997 when the County took ownership.
- * Worked with the LeMaster & Daniel accounting firm as they prepared our annual financial review and 2008 tax return. These are complete and are available in the office.
- * Renewed a CD for 9 months at Cashmere Valley Bank for 2.08%: \$61,000.
- * Analyzed the 2008 expenses and prepared recommendations for the preliminary 2010 budget.
- * Identified, mapped, and documented all 23 properties owned by the Ponderosa Community Club. The next step is to determine if we should change the tax status to reduce property taxes.
- * Prepared for and participated in the annual meeting on May 24.
- * Worked with our ombudsman on complaints from homeowners.
- * Nancy Melson trained us on the pool card system. Did a review of the open cards to ensure only current members in good standing have valid pool cards.

BUILDING AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE IMPROVES CLUBHOUSE

By Nancy Melson Buildings and Grounds Committee Chair

The Building and Grounds committee has been hard at work choosing paint colors for the Clubhouse. The good news is that it is not mustard color (even though we still had a can or two left over!) The end result should be beautiful all year long—reflecting the colors of the seasons.

We have been doing research on how to preserve and restore the Dudley Carter carving in front of the Ponderosa Clubhouse. He was a famous Northwest artist and died in 1992 while planning a family picnic for his 101st birthday. He created monumental wood sculptures with an ax and was an artist-in-residence in King County beginning in 1987 when he was 96 years old. It has been suggested that the entire piece be put in concrete footings so that pests and rot will not ruin it. We have found a photograph of the original piece and hope to have it restored to its original colors. If you are a contractor who could help with this or an artist who could help with the painting, we would appreciate your help and advice. You may email Nancy at nbmelson@nwi.net

The Playground is busy much of the time! The new crawl tube is a nice addition. We still have plans for the

handmade "Soundscapes". If this sounds interesting, you could choose one of the plans to make for the Playground and the Building and Grounds committee will pay for materials. Again, email Nancy at nbmelson@nwi.net

We are working on acquiring some small tables and chairs for the deck area so that you can relax and picnic overlooking the pool. The deck area is open to members at all times unless the Clubhouse is reserved (the deck is included in the reservation). [Please remember that eating in the pool area is not OK...food wreaks havoc on the filters.]

Enjoy the grounds and the playground and the recreation areas. Have a great summer. Let us know if there are things you would like to see added inside or out.

A Sense of Community

Jeanne Whitlow, Operations Director

"It takes a village...", "We are all in this together...". These sayings illustrate the need for a sense of community by all of its members in order to be successful, thriving and cohesive.

There have been suggestions in our Annual Meeting and in a subsequent Board Meeting that our dues be revised so full-timers pay more than part-timers. Quoting from "Frequently Asked Questions" on Ponderosa's website:

"Since full-timers use more of our facilities, why do they pay the same Dues and Assessments as part-timers? Historically, full-timers fill more of our volunteer positions and do more of the upkeep of Ponderosa facilities than part-timers. In addition, full-timers keep an eye on things day to day, which provides a measure of security and control to all of us. If per capita statistics could actually be kept on usage, it is likely that part-timers actually use more of our facilities, there being so many more of them."

"My lot does not have water on it / My family does not use the pool(and other variations), why do I have to pay for these facilities? The Costs of operating Ponderosa facilities are spread among all members because there is no practical way of determining and assessing an individual's use. This method of "taxation" is no different than in any other municipality: You may not use the city's parks, bike paths, emergency medical services, schools but you are required to pay for them as a community necessity."

Each of us in the Ponderosa is enjoying the benefits from those who went before us and paid for the things we are now using. Let's continue in that spirit.

NEWS from the "FIELDS"

Hope you have noticed the spring cleaning along Camp 12 on your way into the Ponderosa. Just past the Ponderosa reader board (which will announce our next work party - you're invited - we could use the support) on the uphill side of the road is a trail undergoing a transformation. Why? The reasons are many and we all benefit from the results of improvement on this new trail and all our greenbelt trails.

First and foremost is the protection of our assets. Dead branches that extend to the ground, downed trees, and an over abundance of pine needle layers create the potential for severe fire damage. Obviously, this damage won't be selective to our greenbelts; it threatens our homes and property as well. Believe me, we have many, many ACRES of common held land that are in dire need of care with few volunteers and a yearly budget that barely scratches the surface.

Secondly, our enhancement of the greenbelts (including trail building and maintenance) gives our members access to these areas and several locations for "river recreation".

Lastly, a clean, green Ponderosa helps support the quality of life we've all come to enjoy in our growing community. I'm sure you'd agree that our playgrounds, picnic areas, trails, and improvements also help to promote healthier property values.

I understand the reasons why much of the work is left undone: Time and money. We're all busy! Many of us come to the "Pondo" to escape meetings, crowds, and "additional" commitments. We're also trying to carve out time for improving our own properties and homes. Our increasing costs and dues make it difficult to increase budgets in these tough economic times. So what do we do?

We do what we can. Recently, we've connected with a local group that looks for service projects as a way to help their communities. They've completed their first work project (along Camp12) and our committee has voted to have them return for four additional projects. As a token of our appreciation, we gave them a donation that they use to support

their projects and events. I say win, win. If you're too busy (at this time of your life) but would like to contribute to this effort, consider your own "donation" to these ongoing efforts. Our greenbelt budget will thank you!

It's great to know the members are out there. Kind words of thanks or a "Thumbs Up" from a passing car, and board support go a long way in keeping this committee up and running. Keep your eyes peeled for coming improvements (including a new "Vine Maple" trail) this summer. As always feel free to contact me with your thoughts concerns, and questions @steve_malmstead@hotmail.com.

With "green" regards,

Steve Malmstead, Greenbelt Chair

P.S. Remember to keep pulling that invasive knapweed when it raises its ugly head on your property. If you're not sure what it is or what it looks like, drop by the office to see a picture or ask Mary Cox for more info!

Our Fire Hydrant System

by Mike Bunney, Co-Fire Chief Chelan Fire District 4

The issue of our new Fire Engine and its ability to be used with our existing water system was a topic at the last annual meeting. Several comments were made regarding the Engine and the fact that its pump was too strong and would collapse the water mains when connected to a hydrant. Please let me set the record straight. The Fire Engine's pump is a standard pump size that all Fire Districts in our area use. We recognize the limits of the Ponderosa's water system and train our firefighters on how to best utilize this system and still provide excellent Fire Protection to our owners. One of the best ways that we do this is by deploying what we call a porta-tank. This is a portable tank in which we dump our Water Tender's 2000 gallons of water and use the Engine to draft (or suck) the water out of the porta-tank, through the Engine's pump and onto the fire. This procedure accomplishes several key benefits: First, we can pump a larger volume of water through the Engine and supply several hoses at one time. A large house fire needs a lot of water to extinguish the fire, this method will provide that volume of water. Second, as neighboring districts arrive with their water tender's, they dump their water into our porta-tank and replenish the volume of water. Lastly, this procedure does not put any strain onto our existing water system. If we do connect to our hydrant system when fighting a large fire, it is to add to the porta-tank's volume of water.

I also want to mention that when used properly, we can and do connect directly to our hydrant system to fight smaller fires. The firefighter who is controlling our pump panel is careful on how much water is pulled from the hydrant system. Our Engine carries 1,000 gallons of water. This amount is used up rather quickly and we use the hydrant system to replenish the water on the Engine's tank.

The Fire Department would love to have a bigger water main system, but we can still provide excellent Fire protection using the methods that I have mentioned above until that newer system is installed.

Chelan County Fire District #4 Auxiliary

Marlene Glover/Mary Funke, Co-Chairs

We would like to thank everyone that helped with the burn pile event and chili feed. It was a huge success and the money we made is being used for Wildland boots and anything else our fire fighters need. Thanks are also sent to the gals that baked the wonderful brownies. And special thanks to Bruce for the delicious chili. This is a fun event and the fire department always appreciates the help and donations.

This is going to be a dry summer, so please be very careful with your campfires and watch around the neighborhoods for unattended fires. Call 911 or any fire fighter, if you have questions. Thank you again and be safe.

4th of July Events Highlight Ponderosa's Social Calendar

by Marisha Robinson, Social Committee Chair

On the 4th of July we will be having the annual parade and barbeque. I do need volunteers for this event. The parade is set to begin at 10:30 with the BBQ and ice cream to follow. I need 5 volunteers for sign ups and judging. The parade categories will be Most Original, Most Patriotic, Funniest, Cutest, Smallest, Biggest, Grandest, Youngest, and Oldest. Judging will take place immediately following the parade and prizes will be handed out during the BBQ. There will be gift baskets for the float prizes this year.

Right after the parade there will be lots of chocolate, vanilla, and strawberry ice cream cones. I need 4 volunteers for

this table, please. For the BBQ there will be burgers, hot dogs, potato salad, macaroni salad, pie for dessert, and lots of bottled water. I am trying to keep it simpler this year with the food.

So...while I am looking forward to this event, I am also hoping that I get the volunteers that I need. I need 5 for sign ups and judging (I will also provide these volunteers with disposable cameras). Then I need 4 volunteers for the ice cream cones. Please contact me via e-mail misha4pc@yahoo.com or phone 509-763-0462.



GINA WILKINS

EXTRAORDINARY BOARD MEMBER

When it comes to service on the Ponderosa Board, I cannot imagine a member coming close to matching Gina Wilkin's contributions, "being there in difficult times", her wisdom, and, not least, perseverance. Gina and her husband, Dean, moved here full time in 1979. Since then, Gina has served on the board in the eighties, in the nineties, and most recently from 2007 to 2009. When asked why she has been on three boards, she answered, "This is my home. I have a vested interest in how this place is run." In the interview, Gina reflected on the past, today, and the future of the Ponderosa.

"In the eighties we lacked management talent. We didn't know what we were doing. It was tough and stressful." Gina gave examples. "For instance, all minutes were hand written. The secretary was totally responsible for the newsletter. The M & O was required to live in the Ponderosa. The caretaker was on the job twenty-four seven (handled member complaints as well as maintenance) and there was continuous conflict with the board. The board didn't have an office and files were kept in a closet or travelled with board members. Often the board consisted of cliques with single agendas and they made no attempt to follow the guidelines in the bylaws and operation procedures."

Fortunately, Gina says that positive changes have come to the Ponderosa. "We have a professional manager overseeing the Ponderosa and supervising caretaker responsibilities; we have an office manager skilled in Quick Books and she keeps our records accessible and up to date. These changes have freed up the board to focus on establishing governing procedures, and has allowed the board to become leaders rather than micro-managers of the Ponderosa. The board has established job descriptions for our employees."

Another significant change Gina cites is the advantages that technology has brought to us. "The board is capable of having executive sessions via conference calls; a new device helps in the keeping of accurate minutes; pool cards monitor users, and most of the members can be informed of current developments through emails."

Gina has some thoughts about current issues in the Ponderosa. "We have to keep on top of real estate issues; the bylaws and operation procedures need to be rewritten to reflect the way we govern ourselves. The development of adjoining areas has caused erosion. The process of replacing water mains and chip sealing roads needs to be addressed. And, the board needs to work at establishing harmony between the needs of residents to ensure that we have a peaceful environment not disrupted by members and renters who do not respect our community."

How does Gina see the future? "We need to maintain a qualified staff and be willing to provide a fair wage for their services. We need to educate the members to understand the cost of operating the Ponderosa in a responsible way. We need to consider the use of our facilities in light of an increasing population and consequent demands. We need to be aware that in addition to replacing water mains, down the road we may be looking at the state requiring a sewer system."

In conclusion, Gina noted, "I will miss serving on the Board with Bill, Jeanne, and Pete. I have appreciated serving with them!"

Gina has served us very well! All members of Ponderosa need to be grateful for her work!

Off-Road Vehicles in the Ponderosa

By Mary Cox, Property Manager

Many Ponderosa homeowners enjoy riding ATVs and motorcycles on Ponderosa roads and observe the road rules. However, we have received many complaints in the past month from homeowners and our neighbors about off-road vehicles and motorcycles trespassing on private property in and around the Ponderosa.

Please respect the rights of others and do not trespass. The only place vehicles should be ridden is on Ponderosa

roads. In addition, no vehicles are allowed on Ponderosa Greenbelts or trails – this includes under the power lines – we don't want sparks from vehicles starting a wildfire! Everything else is private property – it need not be posted “No Trespassing”, “Private Property”, or have a fence or gate to be private property.

As a reminder, here are the Ponderosa road rules for all vehicles:

- * All traffic signs shall be obeyed, including 15 mph speed and one-way signs.
- * Helmets are required for operators and passengers of motorcycles, ATVs, go-carts, and snowmobiles.
- * All motorized vehicles shall be in compliance with Chelan County noise abatement regulations, and must be equipped with appropriate headlights and taillights when operated between sunset and sunrise.
- * Parking on roads and cul-de-sacs is prohibited. Violators will be towed at their own expense.
- * Violations of these Rules may result in fines.

Driving violations that constitute reckless driving should be reported to the Chelan County Sheriff's Department by dialing 911. Other violations may be reported to the Ponderosa office – please note the violator's name, type and location of violation, date and time of occurrence, as well as the name of the vehicle owner and/or sponsoring member.

Bear Problems

By Mary Cox, Property Manager

The number one reason for conflict, (95% of the calls to offices) are the result of irresponsibility on the part of people: Access to trash, pet food, bird feeders, and improper storage of food while camping make up the majority of the calls. If you live in areas where black bears are seen, use the following management strategies around your property to prevent conflicts:

Don't feed bears. Often people leave food out for bears so they can take pictures of them or show them to visiting friends. Over 90 percent of bear/human conflicts result from bears being conditioned to associate food with humans. A wild bear can become permanently food-conditioned after only one handout experience. The sad reality is that these bears will likely die, being killed by someone protecting their property, or by a wildlife manager having to remove a potentially dangerous bear.

Manage your garbage. Bears will expend a great amount of time and energy digging under, breaking down, or crawling over barriers to get food, including garbage. If you have a pickup service, put garbage out shortly before the truck arrives—not the night before. If you're leaving several days before pickup, haul your garbage to a dump. If necessary, frequently haul your garbage to a dumpsite to avoid odors.

Keep garbage cans with tight-fitting lids in a shed, garage, or fenced area. Spray garbage cans and dumpsters regularly with disinfectants to reduce odors. Keep fish parts and meat waste in your freezer until they can be disposed of properly.

Only plant material should be placed in compost bins.

Remove other attractants. Remove bird feeders (suet and seed feeders), which allow residue to build up on the ground below them, from early March through November. Bring in hummingbird feeders at night. (Better yet: plant and bird-friendly landscape and don't use feeders.) Harvest orchard fruit from trees regularly (rotting fruit left on the ground is a powerful bear attractant). If you have bear problems and do not use your fruit trees, consider removing them. Do not feed pets outside. Clean barbecue grills after each use. Wash the grill or burn off smells, food residue, and grease; store the equipment in a shed or garage and keep the door closed. If you can smell your barbecue then it is not clean enough. Avoid the use of outdoor refrigerators—they will attract bears.

For more information, the following is a link about “Living with Black Bears” from the Department of Fish and Wildlife: <http://wdfw.wa.gov/wlm/living/bears.htm>

OUT AND ABOUT IN AND AROUND PONDEROSA

By Pam Nicklas

Summer has arrived. The river is still high and the mosquitoes are few and far between. It's time to get out and enjoy our paradise. The Greenbelt trails are handy. You can get a map at the office. If you want more adventure try one or both of the following hikes. If you are up for a hike you should try Dirtyface Mountain Trail. This is a 9 mile round trip, it offers the adventurous hiker beautiful views of lake Wenatchee and the surrounding woods. You can get directions at the Lake Wenatchee Ranger Station. They are open Thursday through Saturday 8:00 am to 4:30 pm. For a short 2 mile round trip hike try the Old Pipeline Bed in Tumwater Canyon. It offers views of the Wenatchee River and sandy beaches for tired hikers to rest their feet. From Leavenworth travel 1.7 miles west on Hwy. 2 and turn left at the public fishing/picnicking area. Hike across the bridge there and head upstream.

Local Summer Events

- * Leavenworth Summer Theater starts with the Sound of Music on July 3rd
- * Singin' in the Rain opens July 15th
- * Pirates of Penzance opens July 29
- * Icicle Creek Music Festival starts July 11; runs through August 2
- * Leavenworth Wine Tasting Festival , August 22
- * Leavenworth Fall Music Festival, September 5th
- * Quilts in The Village, September 9-13
- * Wenatchee River Salmon Festival , September 19-20
- * Washington State Autumn Leaf Festival, September 25-27



Nancy Melson, Ponderosa Community Volunteer and Chairperson of the Building & Grounds Committee

By Lois Pendleton

Nancy Melson started out her residency in the Ponderosa like many of us: She was a part-timer. She and her husband Bob came over the mountains primarily for weekend recreation. They didn't know many people in the community except for their immediate neighbors. They loved it here and hated "packing up to leave" on Sunday evenings. So, also like many of us, they decided to sell their other house and make the Ponderosa their one and only home.

Unlike many of us, Nancy dedicates hours and hours of volunteer time to the community she loves and lives in. She started by volunteering to be on the Building & Grounds committee. As a retired special ed teacher, she was particularly interested in working on the playground. "It just felt uninviting," she said. "And, my classroom was so awesome. I knew if I just started working on it, the playground would become an environment that kids wanted to be in."

The playground renovation started in the summer of 2006. Following hours of outdoor-play research and many trips to town to pick up supplies, the playground now features a new sand volleyball court, horseshoes, a bright red crawl tube, and plenty of benches for parents to sit and watch the young ones play. Future improvements on the drawing board include enlarging the basketball court, replacing the old worn hoop, and adding pickle ball lines to the new concrete pad.

Bob Melson was hired as a consultant by the Ponderosa Community at the end of 2007, while Nancy continued volunteering her time. She started seeing other areas that needed improvement, like the Clubhouse. Nancy loves the Clubhouse. She and Bob had a "Christmas in July" wedding there in 1999. Since then, she and Bob have been instrumental in making it a comfortable, special place for family reunions, wedding anniversary celebrations, and children's birthday parties. "It just feels good now," Nancy exclaims as she rattles off the continuing schedule of improvements. (Take a look at the new exterior paint job going on as we go to press!)

Nancy Melson is a living definition of a dedicated community volunteer. We should all be grateful for the improvements that she and Bob have facilitated to make our neighborhood a better place to live. And, perhaps follow their example by getting involved with a community project.

(Photos caption note)

Nancy stands next to the side-car motorcycle in the "new" playground—a stationary vehicle reminiscent of the real thing she and Bob love to tour on.

"Call Me Irresponsible, Call Me Unreliable . . ."

by Mary Bunney

Isn't it nice that people in the Ponderosa recycle--that we can put out old computers, tvs, sofas, recliners, appliances, auto parts, tires, etc. on the street in front of our properties and maybe have someone come along and be able to use them. BUT shouldn't there be some rules about putting something out on the street for sale or free? Shouldn't there be a time limit you can leave it out in front of your property so it doesn't look like leftover trash or junk? I think the limit should be about 1 weekend or 1 week. Then if it is not taken away by someone else, it should be time for the owner to be RESPONSIBLE to get rid of the stuff themselves or put it back out of sight in their houses or yards.

As a Ponderosa neighbor of mine once said: "If it is free, we probably don't want it." So let's all try to look at our properties from our neighbors', visitors' or an appraiser's perspective, and remove our so called treasures. Junky looking property affects all of our property values and we don't want them to go down any further. We also don't want our neighbors to be unhappy just because we have been IRRESPONSIBLE, LAZY OR FORGETFUL. Remember one person's treasure looks like junk to another person. Let's make the Ponderosa a place where we can be proud to live!

Summer Fun and Reminders

Jeanne Whitlow, Operations Director

With summer brings a need for reminders to help our staff and facilities. Please shower before entering the pool initially and after each application of sunscreen. Our pool water becomes very murky and overtaxes our filters when people do not rinse before entering the water.

When showering please limit the use to a one minute shower to conserve water and not flood our septic system. Constant long showers may result in a pool closure for a day toilet our system drain.

Be aware of your speed on the roads. I personally witnessed a near-miss accident when an ATV was going too fast on the wrong side of the road as a car was turning into the same lane. We want all of our members and guests to be safe.

If a facilities problem arises such as a water leak anywhere in the Ponderosa please alert our Association Manager or caretaker. We would rather be made aware of a problem twice than not at all. Your vigilance will save work and further damage.

Have a safe and happy summer!!!!!!

A Ponderosa Garden in Progress

by Damaris Bartlett

Tom and I bought our home in 1989 and we have been adding to and subtracting from our garden ever since!

I've always been careful to not use pesticides and have relied on feeding plants every year, or so with a good compost (I've been happy with the Plain Hardware Eco Compost Tote bag). I also add steer manure, or chicken manure to my garden areas. In all the 40 years I've been gardening, I've learned that having good soil is essential to healthy plants. Also, when I first got started in gardening, I read that you kill all the beneficial insects when you spray with insecticides, so it was a no-brainer to follow this advice—no insecticides.

Last year, we moved here as permanent residents and did a very extensive landscape change to our garden, which I will describe later.

In the beginning, the beauty of the trees around us, along with the natives that volunteered themselves very generously, made the bulk of the garden and still does along the perimeter of the two sides of our property. We planted several Blue Spruces and they have added color and beauty with minimum maintenance needs.

As weekenders, we could not be here to care for the plants as often and didn't have a watering system for years. Basically, I watered the individual plants that looked a bit dry and that's it. Most of my garden work consisted of a couple of weekends of raking and burning pine and fir needles and general weeding.

As the years passed, we added a water-wise watering system that made it possible for me to add more plants. The following are some of the plants that I found did very well on neglect and flowered faithfully:

Cone flowers, Iris, Blue Fescue grass, Joe Pye Weed (not like a weed at all), Tulips (Something eats the Daffodils, but not the Tulips, which have been flowering for many years in my garden), Monarda, Anemone Blanda, Sedums, Perennial Geraniums, Lamb's Ears, Yarrow, Daylillies, Scottish and English Moss, Heuchera, Russian Sage, some Sedges and even Japanese Maples (but keep away from snow from roofs!), Corkscrew Willow, and many more!

I have many natives that flourish in my garden, but I don't know their names, except for the beautiful Honeysuckle Vine. These natives are a very important part of the eco-system here and are maintenance-free. I encourage you to weed around them and let them grow and beautify your garden. If you need help identifying them, there are several of us here in Ponderosa who could help you find them on your property.

When we decided to live here permanently, we realized that through the years, the firs and pines had blocked a great deal of the sun in our yard and being 206ers, hungry for sunshine, the first thing we did was take out trees. This was done by a professional and we were selective about which ones we took out, so now we have sunshine in our back yard! We didn't plant grass, so we had to be careful of how we designed the yard. We love fires, so we had a 20 ft. circular, aggregate patio with a fire pit in the middle put in.

Butting out from the fire pit, we designed organic shapes around the pit which I planted with plants that do well here and Tom created a beautiful water feature that adds a really peaceful effect to the garden. We also had a cobblestone patio added to connect the patio from under our deck to the firepit patio. We then installed wide paths of 1/4" basalt rock, which we had to have brought over from the Westside because we couldn't find it here.

We have greenbelt behind us, so we put an arch with stone steps exiting our yard to the greenbelt and are helping to keep the greenbelt behind us cleaned up. We need to take some plants out that are not native, to comply with the requirements of the Greenbelt Committee that we plant only natives and only with permission. This makes perfect sense and we are glad to do this. We plan to purchase native plants from a Derby Canyon Nursery in Peshatin, which is only opened on Fridays.

We live on Pinto and recently I asked the Board and Greenbelt Committee if I could take care of our triangle weed patch which has our street sign on it and I was given permission to do so. I have a source for dirt and will work with Ken to make sure what I do doesn't get in the way of the plow in the winter. I'm really excited about the prospect of beautifying Ponderosa in my own small way and encourage any of you who can, to do the same. This is such a wonderful place to live! Tom and I consider ourselves very fortunate to make Ponderosa and Plain our home.

See you around! I'll be the lady riding her golf car around with a big smile on my face.
Life is Good!

EDITORIAL

INEVITABLE AND AVOIDABLE

By Tim Olson

I don't know who is the most naive – the child or the adult. I understand both of their needs and I have very few doubts that eventually these different needs will collide. It won't be pretty.

The child: Maybe four years old and not wearing a helmet, is having a great time on that little four wheeled racin' machine that doesn't even have a flag fluttering behind it. Wowie! Better than a video game. This is the real thing. Here comes that brushy corner. Take it wide and I can keep the foot to the pedal. How fast can I take it? Oh . . . oh!

The adult: Am I glad to leave the clouds behind and to get off that dangerous highway. Only down this hill and a few blocks further. I can unload, settle in, uncork a bottle, lean back and take it easy. The sun always shines over here. And I really do need to go to the bathroom. Oh . . . oh!

The child, at the very least, is seriously injured; the driver is shaken to the roots and worried about having sufficient insurance coverage; the parents are guilt ridden and have no idea whether their insurance will cover them or not.

The parents will most likely discover that their home owner's insurance policy does not cover what has occurred unless they have a specific rider clause. Inevitably, a lawsuit will take place and everyone will be sued, from the deeper pockets of the Ponderosa to the pockets of the adult driver.

Let's presume here, that the adult driver is obeying all the rules. Travelling fifteen MPH, not talking on the phone, stopping at stop signs. Washington, however, is a comparative insurance state. What that means is that responsibility

for the accident can be spread around. Say the suit is for twenty million, and a minor piece of evidence exists that the driver can't account for in the court proceedings. The court finds the driver 5% or 10% accountable. You do the math and then throw in the court costs.

The responsibility for this tragedy can also be spread around, but it begins with parents taking responsibility for their children, making certain that all precautions are taken, and accompanying them on any "road" adventures. All drivers of any vehicle used for any purpose must obey the speed limit and be alert for any surprise. The Ponderosa, too, must be certain to have the necessary rules in place and to make every effort to enforce them.

The sad, sad part of this is that this tragedy is avoidable. It doesn't need to happen here.