



PINE NEEDLER

A PONDEROSA COMMUNITY CLUB NEWSLETTER

2009 PONDEROSA BOARD OFFICERS

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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.

A DECISION TO BE MADE

By Bill Griffin, President



Health clubs and yacht clubs are members-only clubs. Once a membership is purchased the members cannot sell or transfer their rights to use those facilities to someone else. The Ponderosa Community Club is also a members-only Club (Bylaws Article 1.1). Purchase of land within the Ponderosa creates the membership. Membership conveys rights to use Ponderosa's roads, water and water system, greenbelts, playgrounds, clubhouse and pool, but not the right to sell or transfer those rights-to-use to others in exchange for money, goods, or services. And yet, this is done every time a member rents Ponderosa property, for it transfers to the public the member's right to use our facilities.

The County's zoning code allows short-term rentals and other activities within the Ponderosa. For example (among dozens of others):

- 11.93.130 Animal boarding facilities.
- 11.93.170 Guest inns.
- 11.93.195 Home-based businesses.
- 11.93.230 Junkyards/automobile wrecking yards/impound lots.
- 11.93.240 Mineral extraction
- 11.93.360 Sanitary landfills.

The zoning code has lumped the Ponderosa in with other "rural" areas as though there is nothing unique about a members-only community dedicated to recreational residences. This does not mean the Ponderosa must accept these uses. There are things we can do if we wish to. Right now we find ourselves like the frog in the pot with the heat being slowly turned up. Do we do something now, or is "warm" still okay?

I submit that short-term rentals are not good for the Ponderosa because they destroy the members-only character of our community by introducing an element that has little or no understanding of our needs, that have no vested interest in maintaining the properties they are using or in preserving the peace of the neighborhood. They move in for a brief time, enjoy themselves and move on to the next place. Their neighbors do not know who, how many, or for what purpose these transient users will occupy the residence next door.

We have the right to petition to change the zoning code and to employ our own means of mitigating or eliminating what the County allows to be done here if we choose to do so. This question should be put to the membership for a vote:

SHOULD THE PONDEROSA BOARD OF TRUSTEES CONSIDER LEGISLATION TO CONTROL, REDUCE, OR ELIMINATE SHORT-TERM RENTALS WITHIN THE PONDEROSA BOUNDARIES, SUBJECT TO MEMBERSHIP APPROVAL OF SPECIFIC ENABLING LANGUAGE?

As President I am not allowed to propose such a motion. It is time for the members to make their wishes known.

Special OCTOBER 10th Member's Meeting, 1PM in the Clubhouse

By Ann Ashford, Vice President

Hello Members! This note is meant to invite you to a very special member's meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to talk about rental houses and their involvement in the Ponderosa Community Club. We would like to talk about the negative and the positive experiences that you have had with renters, landlords, and rental properties. We would like to discuss how they benefit our community and change our community. Please think about the experiences you have

had personally, and come ready to discuss and share your concerns and praises. We would really like to hear from full time residents, part time residents, rental landlords and any members of the Club who have opinions. This is meant to be an open time to discuss everything that is happening with rentals, without the time constraints of a board meeting. The Board has a lot of decisions to make regarding the rules of the Ponderosa Community Club and we need your help to understand where we should focus our time, and which issues are not as big of a concern to the members. Please remember that each member has a right to do whatever they choose with their own property. We, as a Board, cannot change that. We just need your input to steer us towards the real issues at hand. Thank you so much, and we look forward to speaking with all of you at the meeting.

Ponderosa Community Club Association Manager Report **June – July 2009** by Mary Cox

Summer has been a busy time. Here is an update:

- Thanks to Buildings & Grounds Committee – they managed the painting of the exterior of the Clubhouse – painting looks great and was completed July 1st!
- The Clubhouse windows were washed on July 10.
- Updated and added new information to the *New Member Packet*.
- Participated with the Greenbelt Committee in the creation of a proposed set of Greenbelt Rules. (Included in this issue of the Needler.)
- The DNR and DOE are requiring plans from the developers, by July 31, to prevent future Riata Road flooding. We will have a chance to review the plans.
- Used the road grader and backhoe to grade Spur and upper Bridle roads.
- Dust control applied to all dirt roads July 9.
- Repaired some rain damage on lower Bridle road.
- Reviewed our paved roads with an engineer to determine maintenance needs.
- Tested and brought more wells on-line for the summer.
- Repaired a water main break and replaced a faulty distribution valve on Saddle.
- Upgraded the water system by adding an additional water distribution valve by the booster pump. This will enable us to affect fewer homeowners when we have to turn off the water for repair.
- Repaired an accidental breakage of the water main on Riata by an excavator.
- Installed a new water service on Camp 12 Road.
- Replaced faulty water service valves.
- We are asking the Department of Health to increase the total number of “water service connections” assigned to the Ponderosa from 581 to 595. This should cover any future expansion of water services. Gathered data on July 4 and July 21.
- Repaired the underwater lights in the pool.
- Implemented the new swimming pool policy of no renter usage of the pool.
- Some Riata homeowners have questioned the March policy decision not to snowplow upper Riata Road for safety reasons. We are looking at potential alternatives.
- Chelan County PUD is removing tree limbs and trees that are hazardous to the power lines. Reviewed their plans.
- Had Cascade towing remove an illegally parked vehicle.
- Responded to a number of complaints: late night noise, vicious dogs, illegal fires, speeding, trespassing by off-road dirt bikes, and stolen landscaping lights. If you see, or are the victim of, illegal activity – please report it to the sheriff!
- July 15th was the deadline for paying the second half of homeowner dues for 2009. If you haven’t yet paid your dues, please send a check straightaway!
- Reviewed our financial processes with the Ponderosa Treasurer.
- Worked with two of our vendors to obtain discounts.
- Proceeded, at the direction of the board, with one foreclosure for late dues.
- Chelan County owns a Ponderosa lot and has not paid the assessments. They plan to auction the property by about September 1, 2009.
- Worked on three property line issues, one easement issue, bylaws review, and Chelan County zoning regulations.

Don't Forget – Ponderosa Office Has New Email Addresses

On June 19, the Ponderosa Office switched over to Northwest Internet and got new email addresses:

Mary Cox - pccmgr@nwi.net

Chelcie Strode - pccoffice@nwi.net

Paul Johanson - pccpaul@nwi.net

We retained our old email addresses so we didn't miss any messages during the transition, but we will be closing our old email addresses on August 31.

Please use our new addresses so we can be sure to get your messages!

BENDS IN THE RIVER

Confused about what you can do and can't do in Ponderosa? Read on.

by Tim Olson

I'm interested in all the fuss about rentals in the Ponderosa. Is there enough dissension to cause what is apparently a divided Board to call for a special all members meeting that was initially scheduled for September and is now moved to October? Why a meeting just on rentals? Granted that there are a few problems with overcrowding the pool, rudeness, illegal fires, late parties, ignoring our greenbelt rules and stuff like that going on, but that's not exactly new in the Ponderosa. After all, renting out your place is only one of the businesses in the Ponderosa. We have several businesses operating here: excavation, snowplowing, small engine repair, contractors, handyman, massage therapy, logging, and the list could continue. For better or worse, each of them has an impact on Ponderosa in some way. I certainly have made good use of them, and for the most part, have been served very well. On occasion they have helped me out far more rapidly than any service I could have found outside the community. Why is this meeting happening at all? What can be resolved? Then I read the President's column and I think about a whole bunch of possibilities that had never crossed my mind. "Sanitary landfills?"

How did we get here? A developer founded the Ponderosa in the 1960s and then turned over the responsibility to the members. A list of restrictive covenants came along with that transfer and they are perfectly clear on the matter. It is the number 1 Covenant, "All lots in this plat shall be used for residential, camping, or recreational purposes only." This covenant makes no room for any businesses at all. I checked on another private development similar to ours. They still have it that way. Residences only; no businesses. Period. Depending on your perspective, fortunately or unfortunately, the original covenants (except for Division 1), all lapsed after 20 years and whether through negligence or whatever, they were neither revised nor renewed. Voluntary covenants have been suggested but they require one hundred percent approval or they don't pass. Not likely to happen here. It didn't take long for folks to know that "anything goes in the Ponderosa." It also became a headache for ensuing Boards as some members, not knowing that the covenants no longer had any clout, would expect the Board to act as if they did. Sometimes, board members wouldn't even know they had expired and some members and board members went through plenty of hassle as a result.

These hassles culminated in the spring of 1997 when the Chelan County Commissioners requested the PCC Board to appoint a committee to develop zoning codes for the Ponderosa to be approved by the Chelan County Commissioners. These zoning codes for the Ponderosa would replace the lapsed covenants. The committee completed their charge; the county commissioners accepted the codes in the fall of 1997 and we had zoning codes designed for and by us, "Rural Ponderosa District." These codes recognized what was already happening in the Ponderosa, were more generous than the original covenants in what was allowed, but specific in what they permitted and did not. For instance, "Home Occupations" were allowed with specific limitations such as "no window display", standards for "traffic generated" by the occupation; "Rentals" were allowed with specific limitations such as "no more than 10 people", "adequate off street parking", standards regarding noise level allowed, and more. Cool! Now we knew what could be enforced, what couldn't, and we had the added clout of the county in enforcing them. But it didn't hold!

What happened? In 1999-2000, Chelan County did a county wide rezone and folded Ponderosa into the category Rural Waterfront. Was the Ponderosa informed of the rezoning and consequent hearings? From what I can gather, yes we were. Did we respond? No, we did not. We were involved in yet another of our internal crises and paid no attention. This brings us back to the President's column and where we are today. Apparently we could also have "Animal boarding facilities." "Junkyards." Whoopee!

October's meeting is the direct result of lack of member involvement in what happens here in the present and what will happen in the future. There are those who make things happen, those who watch it happen, and those who wonder

what happened. Again, we find ourselves in the latter categories. We've taken some huge steps forward with property management and in several other areas that many of us use and enjoy. This meeting is limited to rentals. What happens with rentals is important, but we also need to consider the "bigger picture" and work toward achieving the promise held in our mission statement.

What kind of community do we want to be? We are the owners of Ponderosa and we pay the bills. Ponderosa has moved a long way from primarily a camping community with several small cabins and a few full-time residents. Obviously, the Board is looking for what direction to take the Ponderosa in the next few years. What and who is going to give it to them? A few members with specific agendas or the majority of us who want what is best for all the residents. It's not rocket science. Members who stand to profit from a given situation or members with complaints about a situation will be heard. Who speaks for the rest of us? I will pay more attention when the board presents us with a plan that provides solutions and they seek further input and responses before taking action. A plan that will bring Ponderosa closer to the reality that is expressed in the Ponderosa's mission statement. As to solving this problem, I'd like to believe that the County Commissioners would look favorably on a rezoning that fits our particular needs – about rentals and many other situations that need to be addressed.

Light Hearted

by Tim Abel

Do you even just look up? You really should because there's stuff up there. A lot of stuff, like fish and bears and lions and dogs. Of course their Latin names are much more familiar, like Ursa Minor and Scorpio and such, but dead language or no, I guarantee you they're all up there spinning around over your head.

I used to be a working stiff but I retired. Bored stiff? Hardly! But even as a full-time slave to the education machine, I still found time to wander the trails of the Ponderosa. However my schedule forced me to enjoy them at 2:30 am!

Yeah, I know it might sound a bit strange, and knowing so forced me to be somewhat sneaky about my travels because of the suspicions I could evoke at that hour, but in my estimation it has to be the best time to walk the trails! Hearing owls, crickets, nighthawks, coyotes and seeing bats, northern lights and shooting stars is one heck of a payoff! The loose dogs and other people are in bed and most of the time there is some phase of the moon offering just enough light to see the trail, but it is really the lack of light that makes this walk so amazing!

The night sky has been one of the most underappreciated assets in the Ponderosa. It seems every new home that springs up lately has a host of lights clinging to them that either can't or won't be turned off. Sodium vapor, mercury vapor, security floodlights and simple porch lights that 'trespass' into neighboring yards every bit as much as the thieves and vandals that they are attempting to ward off. But is that accurate?

Security seems to be the #1 reason to pump light out into the night. When talk of reducing light pollution comes up the first reaction most will have is a fear that crime will go up. I always wondered if somewhere there were statistics kept that could demonstrate the difference between a dark, night sky-friendly house and one that was lit up like Safeco field. Wouldn't you know it, I found it in space. Cyberspace.

Police records compiled from Chicago, the UK and Southern California all agree that "it is commonly believed that nighttime lighting reduces crime, yet studies of crime conclude primarily that only fear of crime is reduced."¹ Furthermore, crime data does not show a strong link between lighting and crime rate. A recent test in the UK, done purposely to test this theory, showed crime rates shot up 55% where areas were purposely kept lit throughout the night. Areas that were purposely left dark had crime drop. I mean, when you think about it isn't it easier to break into a home that is lit up like a mall parking lot? The study showed less graffiti problems as well, as it is usually a lit wall that gets vandalized. Furthermore, crime data shows most break-ins occur when a property is unoccupied (homes during the day, businesses at night) despite security lights.

For many people at night, the fear of personal safety is entwined with another fear: the dark. This irrational fear of the dark distorts our legitimate concerns about personal safety—to the point that a brighter light is falsely viewed as making an area safer. Besides the crime data showing that a well-lit house is an easier target for thieves and vandals, the glare from an overly-lit house can actually make it harder for neighbors to see just what the heck is going on over at that house, making it less likely a criminal can be identified later while creating hiding places in the deeper, darker shadows the brighter light affords them. A lower-watt bulb is actually better when it comes to being able to see and

monitor such activity.

Be it security, increased visibility or aesthetics, lights on houses can be modified to be more neighborly and night sky friendly with a modicum of money invested. But before you head out to the hardware store you must consider what you are illuminating and why.

If the intended purpose for lighting your yard is aesthetics, consider a timer for decorative lighting. Since you and your neighbors are not spending the entire night looking out the window at your yard lights, having them shut off at a certain time each night can eliminate complaints, both voiced and quiet seething. This is another area where a timer and lower wattage bulbs can enhance that ambience while saving friendships and money!

Despite the statistics, if safety continues to be your main concern consider a motion detector device. They can save you hundreds of dollars in electrical costs per year over mercury/sodium vapor lights that come on at dusk and stay on throughout the night. However, adjusting the sensitivity of the detector will make it that much more effective. If it is set so sensitive that every beetle or bird crossing your yard sets the thing off then it is just an annoyance in the same vein as car alarms. Does anyone get concerned anymore when they hear of one of those?

Finally, if it is increased visibility you are trying to achieve, ask yourself if you really need to cover your entire yard or just specific areas next to your house. The intended use of light affects how bright it needs to be. Always try to shield light from 'trespassing', or seeping into adjoining yards by using any number of floodlight visors that can be picked up at Lowes or Home Deport or by logging on to info@parshield.com (click on flood light visors).

Some Home Owners' Associations require all outside lights be downcast so as not to disturb others or detract from the ability for all to enjoy a bumper crop of stars in any night sky. Let's hope we don't have to go and make another regulation to control this problem. The fact that in the Ponderosa there are dwindling areas where such miracles as the Milky Way and the Perseid meteor shower can be viewed are disturbing to say the least. Light pollution should be considered just as much of a threat as any other pollution. If you have to have them please shield them so that anyone can look up and see that dragon, or some Greek guy's belt, maybe a little dog. . .

¹ Go to <http://amper.ped.muni.cz/light/crime/OLCpt+2.htm> to see the investigation for yourself.

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

by Lorelie Olson

To: Tom and Damaris Bartlett for creating and maintaining the newly planted garden at the intersection of Stirrup and Pinto.

To: Mike and Mary Bunney for building a raised bed and replanting the firefighter's memorial garden at the District #4 firehouse.

To: The Houze family for their many hours of hot (!) work weeding and grooming the planted slope outside of the pool fence.

In addition to maintaining and improving their own properties, these families have volunteered their time and work to beautify common areas in the ponderosa for all to enjoy as they walk or drive by. Do take the time to view these beauty spots!

While you are enjoying these improved areas, you might consider both your own property and adjacent intersections and easements as possible places to continue the process of making Ponderosa a beautiful place for us all.

Fire Pits and the "Fire Safe Zone" Work Party on October 11, 2009

by Bobbie Lambert and Ann Ashford

Several years ago Bruce Merighi, then fire chief for District #4, met with the Greenbelt committee to request development of a fire safe zone where firefighters could safely gather during a fire in the Ponderosa. The area should be open without trees or brush for a certain diameter. (Bruce marked a perimeter within which we clear all trees and brush) This would allow firefighters to gather in a spot where fire would not get to them, here in the Ponderosa, rather than having to leave the area entirely. An area above the ski hill, to the left (east) of the power lines was selected. A group of 22 Ponderosa members worked hard to cut brush and small trees and gather them in piles which the fire department burned that winter.

A little more work needs to be done to finish the area so that it is usable. A few hours of work by a group of Greenbelt members, firefighters and community members should complete this important project. There will be a work party on October 11 (Sunday) in the morning. Anyone willing to help is welcome, and we really appreciate those who will turn out. If you have a chain saw, it would be very helpful if you could bring it with you. Details can be obtained from the office staff.

In addition, we would like to make a plea for your help. We want to make all of you refocus your attention on the extremely dangerous situation we would all be in if a large fire started in the Ponderosa. It is each of our responsibilities to adhere to the burn bans and fire safety rules that the fire department has put into effect. If you are not a full time resident, please find a way to secure your fire pits. My family has chosen to disassemble ours, because we let other people use our cabin. If you EVER allow friends, family, business associates or renters to use your home when you are not in town, please consider finding a way to lock or remove your fire pit. Recently, we have had a handful of very dangerous fires, created by ignorant people who just didn't pay attention to the burn ban signs. They were not trying to be malicious, or break the rules. They just didn't pay attention. But, it doesn't matter if the fire is started by an ignorant person or an intentional rule-breaker, the trees will burn at the same speed! So, please, please find a way to secure your fire pits if you do not live in the Ponderosa full time.

Thank you.

Ponderosa Community Club Greenbelt Rules

Enacted August 8, 2009

1. Please keep these areas attractive by cleaning up after use. Walking, jogging, biking, cross- country skiing, and snowshoeing are allowed. Please pull knapweed if you know it, and dispose of properly.
2. Hunting or discharge of firearms is prohibited.
3. Motorized vehicles are prohibited on Greenbelts, except for emergency vehicles and those necessary for maintenance and security as specified by the board. No lot shall use greenbelt parcels for vehicular access. No driveways may encroach on Greenbelt parcels.
4. Dumping of yard debris, garbage, ashes, household items or fixtures, vehicles or parts, industrial liquids, etc. is strictly prohibited.
5. No construction on Greenbelt property. Alterations and/or modifications including: digging, addition of manmade materiel, graffiti, construction of Motor Cross trails, bicycle racing tracks, forts, etc. are prohibited. Trails may be allowed if approved by the Greenbelt committee.
6. No person shall cut or remove trees, logs, brush or other natural growth without first obtaining written consent of the Greenbelt committee. Owners of property adjoining the Greenbelts are encouraged to maintain these Greenbelt areas. Prior review by the Greenbelt Committee is required so that sensitive plants are not removed or harmed. No construction or alteration of land contours will be allowed. No pesticides or herbicides are allowed. When property owners have approval from the Greenbelt committee for their maintenance plan, they will be asked to sign a form agreeing to maintain their piece of greenbelt for a designated time, and recognize that the greenbelt is Ponderosa CC property.
7. No fires may be lit on Greenbelt property.
8. Dogs must not be allowed to harass wildlife, other neighborhood dogs, or people enjoying the Greenbelt. Dogs must be under control. Dog poop is litter and must be picked up and disposed of properly.
9. Property owners are not allowed to use the Greenbelt property for their own personal use, such as parking of vehicles, trailers, storage, woodpiles, dumping, construction materials, or commercial activities.
10. Members are encouraged to have outdoor lighting that is downcast in order to minimize light pollution.
11. Wildfires are a serious threat in the Ponderosa, as in any forested area, and our goal is to maintain a balance between retaining our beautiful forests and protecting homes and property. As a general rule, our policy is to remove only dead trees and to keep lower, dead branches pruned 6 feet above the ground for trees taller than 18 feet. Homeowners can take actions on their own property such as:
 - a. Creating a "survivable space" about 30 feet wide around the home.
 - b. Consider fire resistive building materials (roofing and siding) when remodeling or building in wildfire prone areas.
 - c. Keep your yard and gutters free of pine needles, leaves or other flammable debris. Remove dead branches or close, overhanging branches from the reach of your roof and 10 feet away from your chimney.
 - d. Keep stacked wood at least 30 feet from your home or other buildings, and keep vegetation cleared away from the woodpiles.

SOCIAL COMMITTEE NEWS

by Marisha Robinson

The 4th of July parade was a blast!! First, I want to thank Gina Wilkins for helping me out with this event. She helped keep it organized and moving along. Thank you to our fire department for leading the parade yet again this year. Thank you to all of the ice cream scoopers and to Jeff Robinson for doing the cooking. Thank you to Ginger and Helena for helping clean up after the event. And thank you, thank you to Barb for helping me judge and assign prizes. This year we had the fireman's boot out and received \$47 in donations for the fire department. There was not much waste afterward. There are some frozen items left which will be used up at the Labor Day BBQ. Thank you to all who participated in the parade.

1. Webber-Chadwick float , "Pondo Fire Crackers" received a gift basket.
2. Rose Robinson 8, "Recycler on Quad" received a snorkel set.
3. Maggie and Emma on bikes got swimming pool dive rockets.
4. Chandler 10 and Nikoli 6, and their mom Wendy on a quad got Transformer toys and a free drink for mom.
5. Anne Nelson in her 1939 Ford with 2 passengers got 3 free drinks and a box of cookies.
6. Ethan 5, Emily 7, Sophie 3, and Anna 3 on bikes got beach play dough and swimming pool silly worms.
7. Kayla 10, Justin 6, and Ashley 4 on bikes will get free drinks and a beach bucket when they claim their prize.
8. Marija 13 on her bike got a snorkel set.
9. David 10 was on a mini bike and will get swimming goggles when he claims his prize.
10. Zoe 3, with her dog Elvis, will get a Littlest Pet Shop and a free drink when she claims her prize.
11. Bob and Nancy on their motorcycle and side car got a box of cookies and free drinks.
12. Chase and Dylan Lord and Mitchel on their bikes got 3 free ice cream cones from the Just Plain Grocery.
13. The 3 Peace out Girls on bikes got free cones and beach toys.
14. Caddy Shack golf cart got free drinks.
15. Nate and Amy in the Pink buggy got bubbles and drinks.
16. Noah 9, Boyd 9, and dad on a quad got a Mancala game and free drink.
17. A very large group walking together will get a gift basket when they claim their prize.
18. D.I.N.K.S (double income no kids) on a golf cart got free drinks and cookies.
19. The 4 Morgan cousins on bikes got 4 free ice cream cones and a Mancala game.
20. Claire and her grandma Joyce got a free drink and pool goggles.

The parade was a blast and we were able to get it on video this year. I am working on getting this video available on the web site.

The next event is Saturday, September 5th for a Labor Day BBQ. Then in October on the 24th we will have a little costume party with some games.

If anybody wants to volunteer, please contact me at Marisha Robinson
Social Committee Chair misha4pc@yahoo.com