



Raven Hills Razzamatazz

Raven Hills HOA

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September 2007

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COMMON AREA CLEAN_UP

It's o.k. to remove:

*dead trees, limbs, and brush

*low-lying limbs

*diseased trees

*thinned clumps of oak brush and buck brush

It's NOT o.k. to remove:

*live trees

*Pine needles and leaves on areas subject to erosion

*live vegetation that obstructs your view

*large trees or overhanging brush that could damage fences or houses

FUTURE OF THE COMMONS

Colorado Springs—what a great place to live! And we are even more fortunate to live in Raven Hills, the most beautiful neighborhood in the city.

A big part of what makes our neighborhood so unique is the common areas. The folks who designed this area nearly 40 years ago were visionaries. They knew that commonly-owned land winding through the neighborhood would enhance our quality of life.

How we've grown

And just as our families have grown and changed, so have our commons. Ponderosa pines and scrub oak have grown tall and wide. Unfortunately, after years of little to no maintenance, trees and bushes have become overgrown. Some areas are now too dense to walk through, and the entire area is at a higher risk for wildfire.

Where do we go from here?

What do we want for the future of our commons? Is it worth investing time and money to reduce the fire danger? Should we create walking trails or other recreational areas? Or should we just leave the commons as they are? What should be done with the neighborhood park?

The Commons Committee will be putting together a Common Area status brief with an area map and other details to show where we are today with a focus on the common areas. Look for hand delivery by the committee some time in October. We'd like to meet all homeowners and solicit e-mail addresses to help to save costs to make the November Common Area survey easier to deliver, implement, and review results.

Creating a master plan

In November, look for an e-mail with a link to the Common Areas survey. This survey will be conducted anonymously with comment areas for additional information. The preferred response would be collected via the online survey. We would like responses from all 225 homeowners in the community, so if you can't get the online survey special accommodations will be made. Please e-mail secretary@ravenhillshoa.com or call Kathy McBride at 598-4654.

Getting your feedback

Early in 2008, you will have your chance to review the draft plan, discuss it with your neighbors and provide us with your feedback. Your input will be used to make final adjustments to the plan.

See page 2 COMMONS

What Can I Do To Cleanup Common Areas Around My Home?

Those who have been unsure and uneasy about what to do in the commons areas near your home can rest assured that your help and efforts will be greeted with appreciation and thanks from the HOA. We want you

to feel welcome to jump in and lend a helping hand. Some basic courtesy and safety while removing the dead foliage to think about:

*Talk to your neighbors and get their help and suggestions when starting brush

removal.

*Work safely and observe OSHA standards. Please don't attempt to do anything beyond your abilities that could result in damage or injury.

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Vehicle Break-ins:

We are aware of two cars that were parked in the area of our association that were vandalized in recent weeks. Don't leave your vehicle unlocked or have possessions visible on the seats or floor.

- **Keep your garage doors closed.**

MEET YOUR ACC REPRESENTATIVE: DIANA FRUH

This issue of your Raven Hills Razamatazz will introduce a new feature. With each newsletter, we will take a look at a member of our Raven Hills Community.

Diana Fruh

Diana is one of those rare Colorado Springs natives. She was lucky enough to grow up in the Springs.

After living in Denver for six years, she and husband David decided to come back home.

When looking for a Colorado Springs home, Diana and David

searched for a house with mature trees and a big lot in D-20. They found just what they were looking for in Raven Hills and have been residents since 1997.

Diana decided to volunteer for the Architectural Control Committee because she was interested in not only preserving the value of her own home, but wanted to be involved in helping with neighborhood improvement. As she says, "I like to be involved in making our neighborhood better."

As an active member of the ACC, Diana notes that about 99% of all

requests are approved quickly and easily. The goal of the ACC is to work with the homeowner to find a mutually acceptable alternative. She's pleased that we have a wonderful community of homeowners and that it's really a pleasure to work with them. According to Diana, "I love to see the transformations when people fix up their properties. It gives me motivation for my own house!"

Not only is she a Raven Hills volunteer, but she also devotes time to son Dylan's Rockrimmon Elementary School.

COMMONS (...continued from page 1)

Putting it to a vote:

In May 2008, an association-wide voted will be held to approve or reject the master plan.

By working together on this plan, our common areas will continue to be a tremendous asset for our neighborhood for many years to come.

The Raven Hills Homeowners Association Board continues to seek solutions to the problem of making our commonly owned property less fire prone and a more useable asset for our community. Your input is important in developing this long-range plan.

Make the commons one of

your priorities. Be involved!



BE ALERT: WATCH OUT FOR YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD by *Jim Maline, RHHOA Watch Captain*

The Falcon Division would like to welcome back a former commander. Commander Robert Ownbey assumed command of the division on August 12, 2007. For the past eleven years, Commander Ownbey has been at the Central Division overseeing the Tactical Enforcement Unit, K-9, Bomb Squad and the Aviation Unit.

The CSPD has received many

questions about residential alarms. While CSPD does say they have a purpose, people need to understand that most residential alarm calls to the police are false. For this reason, if you experience an emergency situation, it is very important to call 911 instead of relying on an "alarm panic button." Even if you have an alarm system, it is very important to keep your windows closed and locked as well as garage

doors down.

For those interested in checking the weekly crime stats, this web site provides information for the entire city. www.springsgov.com/Page.asp?NavID=3358

We do know that many individual blocks have their own watch system. We'd like to hear from any of you to see how **your** watch is working.



Volunteers Keep Us Moving Forward: The Mikado Commons Cleanup is a Success!

During the summer a number of special efforts were made to beautify the Mikado area and to make all of us safer from the dangers of wildfire.

Over 160 hours, along with the participation of more than 20 homeowner-volunteers, were logged in toward reducing the risk of fire danger. Dead trees, Russian Olives, and brush were removed. According to Christina Randal of the Colorado Springs Fire Department, over 30 cubic yards of chips were generated by these volunteer efforts.

Roxana Smith was instrumental in organizing the volunteer participation and for coordinating the chipper dates. Tim Austin assisted her by keeping the chain-saw working.

So far this year homeowners have volunteered a total of 260 hours to make our commons safe and enhance our property values. These efforts go a long way toward future grants.

Another group of homeowners donated their time to the clean-up of our community park. Pine needles were raked and trees

pruned.

Grass roots community efforts like these go a long way toward building a safer Raven Hills. If the community had contracted the work of these volunteers, it would have cost our homeowners organization more than three thousand dollars.

Our FireWise partners use this information in writing their grant proposals to prove we are serious about fire mitigation. Keep up the good work!

Please report all hours to Bill DeMatte@rhhoamail@gmail.com

Keeping Raven Hills beautiful is all of our responsibility. Simple chores like weeding and mowing the lawn, as well as more involved ones like maintaining fences and painting your home are essential to keeping our neighborhood beautiful. Thank you to everyone for doing his part.

DAN DERBY'S EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT BENEFITS ALL HOMEOWNERS

It takes the efforts of each and every member of our homeowners organization to make Raven Hills the best place in the city to live. Don't count out our young adults! And congratulate Dan Derby!

Dan has been working toward his Eagle Scout badge.

He chose to put his energy into community fire mitigation. He single-handedly organized an effort to reduce the fire risk in our community in the common area of Buckeye Drive and Raven Hills Court.

Nearly twenty people came to support his project



Do you need Life or Health Insurance?

I have hundreds of companies to choose from for your best coverage.

Raven Hills Razzamatazz accepts advertising.

We are fortunate to have Dan Derby as a part of our Raven Hills Community!

- Below: volunteers enjoy a snack.

Brad Keating, your neighborhood agent.

244-2857

Paid advertisement

Possible FEMA Grant

Commons Director Bill DeMatte is doing all that he can to make a FEMA grant possible for the RHHOA. The grant will be awarded at the end of October and could bring as much as \$25,000 for fire mitigation.

Our first FireWise clean-up was held in 2004 and since

that time, we have continued in a partnership with FireWise. Last year homeowners logged 673 hours at \$17.55 per hour for a total of \$15,321.15.

To qualify for the grant, we'll need even more hours of volunteer time and effort.



RHHOA

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We're on the web!
Find us at:

www.ravenhillshoa.com

Chipper Date:
October 16th

RAVEN HILLS PICNIC: SUCCESS

There was no need for a rain date this year! September 16th provided perfect weather for the annual Raven Hills Picnic.

Nearly 100 residents came to the community park to enjoy hot dogs, hamburgers, drinks, delicious side dishes and fabulous desserts. And to catch up with the news of friends and family events.

Long-time residents exchanged stories of "how it used to be" and newer residents became acquainted during the event.

The social committee headed by Susan Clark, Dawn Nash, Janet Richards, Carrie Fuller, Annie MacFarlane, and Sherry Shattuck spent hours in preparation for this very successful event.

Mary and Jim Schaffner provided a booth where neighborhood children could make cards and decorate them with personal messages to send to members of our military in Iraq. 35 great, inspiring cards of thanks and encouragement were made by residents. They are being sent to one

of our own currently deployed to give to his unit.



Help to make Raven Hills an even better place to live!

You can organize the clean out of a common area near your home.

It will not only beautify your area, but help to protect your property from fire danger.

Get the support that you'll need. For information about slash removal, equipment and timely tips:

- Contact Bill DeMatte:
rhhoamail@gmail.com

Halloween Safety Tips:

- *Carry a flashlight
- *Walk, don't run
- *Stay on sidewalks
- *Approach only houses that are lit
- *Children of any age should be accompanied by an adult**
- *Children should not eat any candy until it has been inspected by a parent
- *Children should wear reflective markings or tape
- ...Courtesy of Safe Passage

