



PINE NEEDLER

A PONDEROSA COMMUNITY CLUB NEWSLETTER

2007 PONDEROSA BOARD OFFICERS

President: Bill Griffin
Treasurer: Peter Smith
Vice President: Gina Wilkins
Secretary: Mike Buck
Director of Operations: Jeanne Whitlow
Association Manager: Bob Melson
Office: (509) 763-0320
Email: ponderosabob@cpucafe.com

NOVEMBER 2008

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, editor.

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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.

NEWS FROM THE BOARD

Board Asks Members to Approve 2009 Budget
Bill Griffin, President

Budget time again. Time to remind everyone that we live in a small city, with one major difference: In a city you own your lot and the house on it, while the city owns everything else and you pay taxes for maintenance and operational costs. In the Ponderosa you own your lot and the house on it AND you own your share of everything else...the roads, the water system, the greenbelts and playgrounds, the clubhouse and the swimming pool. All of these amenities are owned by the members, and if they are to be maintained the members must pay sufficient Dues to cover the costs of maintenance and operations.

For those of you who go immediately to the bottom line to compare last year's Dues with this year's request, please pay particular attention to the comments and the footnote in the lower part of the budget about the 2008 charges and credits. The problems described there stem from inconsistent bookkeeping and lack of continuity in Board financial planning, resulting in chaotic conditions and no clear track for constructing a budget.

A better comparison of 2008 with 2009 is in the adjusted 2008 Dues to be found in the footnote. A comparison of the line-by-line expense items in the upper portion of the budget show very few new items. Most of the 2009 budget increase is due to increased costs of things that have to be done on a daily basis.

Payroll Salaries and Benefits are the largest part of any organization's expenses. In 2009 we anticipate increases from several causes: We have done market research in order to keep our salaries competitive. Our new Caretaker has more skills and experience than our prior Caretaker; we have increased that position's compensation in anticipation of greater productivity. We were caught short in 2008 because the budget did not include sufficient overtime for an extraordinary snowfall and a major breakdown in our water system. An adjustment has been made for 2009. And we have taken the cost-saving lessons learned in 2006 and 2007 by retaining the position of Office Manager to do our bookkeeping and to serve member's needs.

Two things have increased the cost of M&O Pool: Propane will cost more, and we have increased the hours our pool is to be monitored on weekends.

Office & Board Expenses will increase because of necessary revisions to our governing documents. Each proposed revision requires a separate printing and mailing with the ballot and a subsequent printing and mailing of the approved versions of the documents.

The exterior of the clubhouse is badly in need of paint, \$13,000 of the increase in our Buildings & Grounds budget. It has been suggested that our maintenance crew do it. They have neither the large amount of time required nor the scaffolding, compressor and other specialized equipment needed for this work. This is a job for professionals.

Legal & Lien services are expected to increase dramatically in light of several foreclosures that need to be filed against non-paying members, plus a variety of land issues that have arisen or come to light in recent months.

The Board has put in many hours working and reworking these numbers and discussing this budget in public meetings. A long-time member told us this public discussion of a Ponderosa budget is a first in his memory. The Board is satisfied the proposed 2009 budget contains the essential elements necessary to the health of the Ponderosa, and we respectfully request that you vote "YES" to approve it.

LOOKING AHEAD TO WATER SYSTEM PROJECTS

President Bill Griffin
Director of Operations, Jeanne Whitlow

In 1991 the membership agreed to an annual special assessment of no more than \$100.00/lot for 20 years. The purpose was to upgrade our water system, to meet health codes, and to provide full flow for fighting fires. We soon discovered that the \$58,000 we were collecting each year for the project allowed very little to be done each year, and inflation put us further behind as we tried to accumulate money.

In 1996 the Board elected not to apply for an interest free loan from the State, so we continued to accumulate funds from the assessment while our water system continued to deteriorate. In 2002 we finally did apply for a 30-year State loan at 1% interest. The loan, however, limited us to improvements of our wells and pumping system. It did not allow us to replace our water mains. Under the able direction of Dick Nicklas all that remains of that project is installation of an emergency backup system to insure that we have water during a power failure. Three items of good news: 1) The project will be completed very soon, on time and under budget; 2) Since its inception, we have invested the 1% interest State loan money at a higher interest rate (currently 3%+) so we have made money on the loan. 3) We currently have \$338,000 in our Water Account.

The President, Vice President, and Operations Director met recently with our engineer Bill Schmidt, our Association Manager and Maintenance staff to establish priorities and a work schedule for replacement of our water mains and hydrants and the installation of meter sets. The intent is to begin replacement at the upper end our system where low pressure has always been a problem, to move then to areas of our system where continual breaks are being experienced, and to places that allow us to tie various segments of our system together.

Mr.Schmidt gave us a very rough estimate of \$2.5 for the work at today's prices, not including paving the roads that will have to be dug up. We asked him to further refine his figures, assuming 10 years to finish the project. Once we have his response, we will explore the viability of grants and low interest money and the per-lot economic impact.

There are several benefits to this project: 1) Water sufficient for our needs for consumptions and FULL FLOW FOR FIREFIGHTING will be assured (See the May 2008, NEEDLER, page 6, to appreciate the current peril); 2) We will substantially reduce the costs of repairing an increasing number of breaks in our system; 3) We will finally have maps of where our mains and valves are located, which will eliminate the trial-and –error costs of trying to find any breaks; 4) The ductile iron material to be used should last 200-300 years.

It is important to keep in mind that the Board is in the very early stages of considering the project, its costs and implementation. Whatever comes of this must be put to the membership for a vote. In the meantime, we will keep you informed via posting in the Ponderosa, our website and the. NEEDLER.

CHANGE AND PINE NEEDLES BLOWIN' IN THE WIND

Jeanne Whitlow, Director of Operations

Bob and Nancy Melson have resigned their positions and our hope is to find replacements that will work well in the Ponderosa. Bob and Nancy have laid a great foundation for those stepping into these jobs. They will be missed.

Ken Severance is our newly hired caretaker. Ken comes from an experienced background in a number of areas and we are pleased to have him as an employee. Please welcome him when you see him out and about.

As the person responsible for the Greenbelt Committee and Buildings and Grounds Committee, I asked each committee chair to make a list of tasks volunteers can do during their time at the Ponderosa. I feel that many members would like to be involved but cannot make it to specific week-end activities; e.g. Greenbelt Work Party the last week-end of the month. The list of volunteer tasks will be posted both in the office and on the PCC website. Please become an active member our community and keep it beautiful.

The 2009 Budget will be mailed shortly. The Board had open discussions at the monthly meetings so that members would understand our rationale and process in the budget items. We tried very hard to deal with inflation, do the things necessary to keep the Ponderosa working, yet keep a restrained budget.

THE CONTINUING PROBLEM OF RENTALS

Bill Griffin, President

In the August, 2008, NEEDLER, I detailed a few of the problems created by the growing number of rentals in the Ponderosa, along with some solutions. The issue is this: On the one hand we have members who are completely within their rights to rent their Ponderosa property to the public. On the other hand, the landlord members of these rentals are inviting and allowing the public to use our private, members-only property which has been paid for and maintained by dues-paying members (e.g. Ponderosa Roads, Water and Water System, Playgrounds, Greenbelts and Trails, Swimming Pool and Clubhouse).

The Board decided that it is possible to prevent the public from using our Swimming Pool and Clubhouse. In future Board meetings we will be discussing and devising methods to return these two facilities to their former members-only status.

The Board also decided that it is not possible to prevent the public from using our Roads, Water and Water System, Playgrounds, Greenbelts and Trails. In future Board meetings we will be discussing charging landlords for this public use of what was intended to be members-only facilities.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

HAVE YOU NOTICED?

Have you noticed the improvements to our Clubhouse this last year? New roof, heating and cooling system (Yahoo!), new hearth and firebrick and a beautiful new face to the fireplace. If the Clubhouse isn't open, you can see it pretty well through the window. You might not have noticed how sad the Clubhouse has been looking but our Buildings and Grounds Committee (Nancy Melson, Chairperson) has. They propose we get a new floor and paint the inside and out. Painting comes under maintenance and is reflected in the new budget proposal. The flooring would be a capital improvement and the expenditure would need to come out of that savings account. The members need to vote in order to give the Board permission to spend the money for flooring. The estimate is \$12,000 for a beautiful lifetime floor. This bid was offered to the Ponderosa, with our non-profit status, at a significant savings over the regular retail price. The existing floor has been there approximately 45 years. This is a separate ballot issue than the budget.

Please vote and send in your ballot to make sure your wishes are known.

Sharyl Nelson

CHELAN COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT #4 AUXILIARY

Co-chairs: Marlene Glover & Mary Funke

The Auxiliary would like to thank everyone that helped with our various activities this year. Our Burn Pile lunch and Nason Creek rest area coffee stop were both very successful. The Fire Department will make good use of the money for needed supplies.

The Fire Department has four new volunteers being trained. Those that have joined the department are: Boy Byres, Frank Bennish, Kevin Sweeney and Peter Smith. We thank them for their time and for the effort they are putting into helping the Fire Department. We also have about four more volunteers and could use more for the next training session. Mike Bunney has been doing the fire fighting training and Terry Glover has been training the drivers. Thank you again for volunteering. Call 763-2426 or 763-3040 if you can help.

Remember that if you missed getting a fire permit, one is still needed for burning a small campfire. Numbers to call to obtain a permit are listed at the fire hall.

Have a safe autumn and please be careful with fires.

PONDEROSA COMMITTEE NEWS

Building and Grounds Report
Committee Chair, Nancy Melson

The fireplace is finished and has received many positive comments. Stop by and take a look if you haven't seen it yet; it is quite amazing, and changes the look of the Clubhouse interior.

Much work has been done on continuing repairs in the caretaker's home since Ken moved in. Stop by and say hello to Ken if you haven't met him. We welcome him to the Ponderosa!

The playground has been raked and maintained so that we can enjoy the crisp, fall days.

The final pest control was completed October 14, 2008, including the crawlspace under the Clubhouse, the interior and the perimeter. Tim said that mice have been a huge problem this year, so watch out for them!

There is a list of Building and Grounds "volunteer opportunities" on the website and in the Ponderosa office if you would like to help out.

The committee looks forward to continuing maintenance and upgrades in the Clubhouse, and encourages community members to use it more. It is a perfect place for many different activities.

** An added note: If you plan an activity that is open to the Ponderosa community (such as a pizza party, a dance, a game night, etc.), there is no fee for using the Clubhouse. Just stop in at the office and reserve the time with Nancy or Bob. If you reserve the Clubhouse for a private occasion, the cost is only \$125 to reserve it; \$80 of that amount is returned to you after your event as long as it is cleaned and left without any damage. It is a great gathering place, so we encourage you to take advantage of this benefit of being a Ponderosa member. **

Social Committee Schedules Year End Events For 2008

Committee Chair, Marisha Robinson (509-763-0462)

I know there has been a lapse in social activity, but due to my knee surgery I didn't feel up to doing a lot. Next year is looking to be much more active.

Upcoming:

November 22 at 6:30pm is the Chili Feed. Chili and beverages is provided, just bring your choice of bread.

November 29 at 1pm is the Annual Decorating of the Clubhouse. There will be a lot of shiny new decorations to play with. Cookies and beverages provided.

December 13 is the Christmas potluck. Board meeting is at 10am and the potluck will be served at 4:30pm. Non-alcoholic beverages and meats provided. Please bring your favorite side dish or dessert.

December 31 is the New Years Eve party. There will be lots of fun to be had. This is the only time I will apply for a Banquet License from the Liquor Board. There will be a limited amount of alcoholic beverages on hand, so bring more if you want. Other than that, all food and non-alcoholic beverages will be provided.

I am looking forward to seeing you all there. I could definitely use some help for the Clubhouse decorating, the Christmas Potluck, and the New Years Eve party. Please call, or just come by the day of the event at the Clubhouse to help.

Thank you for all your support and I look forward to even more fun next year. I am definitely going to be doing an Easter Egg hunt and Halloween party, watch for details.

GREENBELT COMMITTEE TASK FORCE

Committee Chair, Steve Malmstead

This is my second “deployment” as your greenbelt chair. What brought me back? Like you, I enjoy the quiet, peaceful weekends that take me away from the cares of the world (Well, at least some of them). Knowing we have a volunteer “force” at the Ponderosa, I wanted to help out and yet needed to make sure I didn’t get “over-involved” and create yet another burden to bear. How did I do it? What keeps me coming back to the “task”?

The GREENBELTS – I continue to be amazed at the vast holdings we all own and share in our greenbelts! Our recent work led to the barking of our Bluebell trail. We also made improvements to our Bridge trail that begins behind our Ponderosa reader board on Camp 12. You can also enter/exit on Thoroughbred Lane. Take a hike! We’ve also limbed up dead pine branches in preparation for our next work party on Saturday, October 25th @ 9.

The PEOPLE – This great group of folks are dedicated to short meetings and our focus on tasks. We have only one meeting per month (May – October) and keep the meetings under an hour. A work party always follows the meeting. It’s a “no guilt” committee so if someone can’t make it, we understand. If they have to leave the work party early, we understand. Thus, no guilt. It’s been great to make connections with fellow owners in the Ponderosa and has helped me to have a better sense of our “community”.

The MISSION - We are dedicated to improvements, access, and clear identification of our common-held land. In addition, we strive to communicate these findings to our membership. We’re in the process of developing a trail map that we can include in the Needler (and hopefully on our website) that will clearly identify current and future trails as well as ranch reserve areas. We’ve also considered guided trail walks. Good idea?

WHERE FROM HERE? – We wrap up our work this year with a chipping party. We’ve rented a large-scale machine to chip up the large piles of brush we’ve cleared. We’ll use this material on our trails next spring and summer. We’re also hoping to secure funding for the ongoing costs for current and future surveying of our common-held lands. We also hope to continue our initial work in developing a trail map for our members.

SMALL TASKS – I know, by now you’re wondering where you can sign up and how can you get involved with such a group! The board has also asked us to develop a list of small tasks to be posted at the office for those who’d like to help out but would prefer doing so on their own. The list will be posted on the bulletin board by the clubhouse. Please stop by the office to let us know your “choice” and if you need further assistance.

MORE INFORMATION – You can reach me by phone @ 360.387.5969 or via email: steve_malmstead@hotmail.com or feel free to call my Ponderosa secretary for more information (just kidding). Hope to see you at our work party on Saturday, Oct. 25 @ 9:00a.m. at the Clubhouse! Committee members: see you @ 8:00 for our meeting! You’re welcome to join us or simply stop by and say ‘hello’. On to the “task”!

ASSOCIATION MANAGER REVIEWS 2008 AND LOOKS TO PONDEROSA’S FUTURE

Bob Melson, Ponderosa Association Manager

2008 – A year in review.

We started the year with a responsible budget in place and four dedicated employees. Next we successfully transitioned the Ponderosa Books back out to our office and away from Webb Accountancy. We then met with our roofing and heating contractor to schedule major upgrades to our clubhouse. Paul and Tony prepared all of our winter equipment to run smoothly and then they plowed and they plowed andWith help from the membership, we established the first ever group email list for better community communication. We worked diligently with the Ponderosa Greenbelt Committee as spring arrived. Tony was assigned to help with needed project on the last Saturday of each month. We contracted to have our pool refinished and upgraded and again Paul and Tony worked overtime to get it up and running by Memorial weekend. Thanks to our building and grounds committee, many upgrades were not only made on the clubhouse but also the Ponderosa playground became safer and kid friendly. Summer brought an excitement into the Ponderosa as more and more members enjoyed our facilities and the social activities provided by an active social committee. Paul and Tony also spent many hours on road and water repairs as well as road and water upgrades. Fall has brought a renewed interest in our Ponderosa water system and engineer Bill

Schmidt is designing needed new additions to our water projects. Fall has also brought a new caretaker to the Ponderosa. We would like to thank Tony Vierra for his efforts during his tenure here and welcome Ken Severance to the Ponderosa. As winter approaches we renew our efforts to present a solid financial plan to our members and to prepare for needed maintenance of all our roads and facilities. I also would like to thank the Ponderosa membership for the opportunity to serve them as their Association Manager for the past two years and I look forward to my second retirement effort.

2009 – What will the future bring?

I believe that my efforts have established the practical and financial needs of a Ponderosa Association Manager. I would hope that the Ponderosa Board of Trustees would be able to find an outstanding replacement for me as I retire. I have committed two years of my life to trying to bring our community together to see the potential of what living in the Ponderosa can afford our members. I would like to see this legacy continued through a cooperative effort between the Board, Ponderosa committees and our valued members. I wish our community and its members a successful 2009 and the opportunity to enjoy good health and happiness.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE PONDEROSA

WINTERIZING YOUR HOME AND DRIVING TIPS FOR PCC MEMBERS

By Paul Johansen

Winter is coming and now is the time to think about winterizing your house. Winter conditions bring unpredictable conditions to the Ponderosa. The potential for an outage of several hours or even for a full day is great. Be prepared! Walking into a cabin with frozen pipes is no fun and severe water damage is usually the result when the water in the frozen pipes thaws. A plan for winterizing your home includes a checklist for winter guests and renters using your property when you aren't present.

When leaving the house, include procedures for:

1. Shutting off water to the house and draining the water from the system.
2. Turning off water to hot water tank.
3. Flushing the toilet and adding RV antifreeze to toilet tank, bowl, all sink drains, and washing machine.
4. Adjusting any electric heaters.
5. Opening all faucets to allow air to escape.

When returning to the house, include procedures for:

1. Closing all valves before turning on the water.
2. Listening for running water.
4. If everything is OK, turn the hot water tank on.

Some additional home and garden reminders:

1. If you have heat tape on your plumbing, make sure it is up to code. Make sure your heat tape is installed as per manufacturer's recommendations. Never leave your heat tape on when the water is off and the system is drained. Poorly installed heat tape causes house fires.
2. Don't forget to winterize your sprinkler system! If you do not know how to winterize your sprinkler system, have it done by a professional. Blowing out your sprinkler system with compressed can damage your system and can cause a cross connection hazard which can contaminate your drinking water and your neighbor's water. Your systems diaphragms and/or gaskets are delicate and may be damaged if not removed prior to using compressed air. This may cause the backflow assembly to malfunction the following spring which could allow contaminants into the water supply from which you drink.
3. Disconnect all garden hoses from house spigots and standing hydrants. This will allow for proper draining of your house spigots or faucets. Having all water drained from your hoses will allow you to use your hoses in any emergency without having to thaw them out.
4. Identify things in your yard that you may need to find after it snows: your water shut off valve box, the edges of your driveway, and the edge of your garden! This will help when you are snow blowing your walkways and driveways. It will also help save your gardens if you have your driveway plowed by other people.

Winter road and driving tips:

1. Carry chains at all times and use them when necessary.
2. Colt and Palomino often require chains, especially if the driver in front of you is stuck.
3. When pulling a trailer, even four wheel drive vehicles may require chains to get up a hill or to get started.
4. When clearing your driveway, do not pile the snow next to the roadway. PCC employees may push the snow right back on your driveway.

5. Keep your snow piles in areas that allow you to see coming traffic when you return to the roadway.
 6. Parking on the roads during the winter is not allowed. Not only is the vehicle in the way for plowing, but it may be in the way of emergency vehicles.
- The best solution to avoid chaining up is to not drive during heavy snow storms. As soon as it stops snowing, the hills will be sanded and chains may no longer be needed. Ponderosa employees will do their best to keep the hills plowed and sanded for you!

PONDEROSA COMMUNITY CLUB, INC.

RULES GOVERNING USE OF ROADS AND MOTORIZED VEHICLES

1. All traffic signs shall be obeyed.
2. The speed limit on all Ponderosa roads is 15 m.p.h.
3. Parking is prohibited on all Ponderosa roads and cul-de-sacs so as not to restrict maintenance, snow plowing, or fire apparatus.
4. One-way travel restrictions where posted shall be obeyed.
5. NO VEHICLES are allowed on greenbelts, thus preventing erosion, destruction of vegetation, and to lessen fire danger in the non-snow seasons. SNOWMOBILES ARE NOT TO BE RIDDEN ON GREENBELTS AT ANY TIME.
6. Sledding is prohibited on all roads in Ponderosa. (Use the Sledding Hill in the Greenbelt.)
7. Violent turns which damage road surfaces are prohibited. No U-turns except at intersections.
8. ALL vehicles shall be in compliance with Chelan County's Noise Abatement regulations. ALL vehicles must have operational muffler systems.
9. Riding of non-street legal vehicles (e.g., motorbikes, ATVs, etc.) is prohibited after 9:00 PM and before 9:00 AM.
10. All motorized vehicles must be equipped with appropriate headlights and taillights if operated between sunset and sunrise.
11. All vehicles are to travel on the right side of the road, single file.
12. Helmets are required for the operators of motorcycles, ATVs, go-carts, and snowmobiles.
13. No more than the manufacturer's recommended number of riders / passengers per vehicle.
14. Violations of these rules and regulations may result in:
 - A. Requirement of hold harmless and indemnification of the PCC Inc. and the Board by owners. The appropriate form will be presented for the member's signature. If the member refuses to comply, a fine of \$100.00 will be charged. If payment is not received in 30 days, a lien will be filed against their property.
 - B. A second violation will result in a fine of \$100.00, collected as indicated in item "A" above.
 - C. Continued violations will result in an injunction being filed with the Chelan County District Court.
15. All members have the right and obligation to report in writing a violator's name, type of violation, type and location of violation, date and time of occurrence, as well as the name of vehicle owner and/or sponsoring member. This information is to be presented to a Board member either by hand delivery or by mail. Confidentiality will be preserved. IN ADDITION, driving violations that constitute reckless driving must be reported to the Chelan County Sheriff's Dept.

VOTE!

Return Budget 2009 Ballot by
December 13, 2008
at 10:30 am (Board Meeting)

ARE YOU RECEIVING YOUR EMAIL UPDATES FROM THE PONDEROSA OFFICE?

At our last Board meeting, three members informed the Board that they were not receiving the emails our association manager Bob has been sending re website updates and general announcements of interest to the membership. Already, over 250 members have signed up for this service. If you aren't signed up, or not getting the emails, please do one of the following:

- 1) If you have not given your email address to Bob, you should do so.
- 2) If you have given your email address to Bob but are not receiving the notices (two were sent in September), you should check your spam filter settings; either the filter or the provider's filter may be set to reject emails that are addressed to 250-or-so addressees as our emails are.
- 3) You should put Ponderosa's name, email, etc., into your email address book so your email program will recognize our emails as legitimate.