



BANNER MOUNTAIN HOMEOWNERS ASSOC. est. 1984

www.bannermountain.org



May 2009

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FIREWISE MEETING

Saturday, May 30, 11:00 am to 2:00 pm

Second Annual Banner Mountain Firewise Community Program

In a continuing effort to promote fire safety and awareness, we are pleased to announce the Second Annual Banner Mountain Firewise Community Program. It will be held on **May 30th from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm at Seaman's Lodge in Pioneer Park in Nevada City.** This year's theme is "Protecting Your Home from Wildfires". **Free** hot dogs and soft drinks will be available.

The featured speaker will be Steve Quarles, who is a University of California Cooperative Extension Advisor and Director of the Center for Fire Research and Outreach's *Building in Fire-Prone Areas Program*. He will describe how a home can catch fire and measures you can take to prevent it along with demonstrations of fire resistance testing of various building materials used to construct decks and walls.

If you are unable to attend but are interested nevertheless, see his websites at <http://firecenter.berkeley.edu/quarles/squarles.htm> (building materials test results) and



<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/article/16667>

(protecting your home from wildfires).

Related fire safety issues such as vegetation management and chipping programs will also be covered.

Hope to see you there!

2009 Chipping Program

As you may know the FSC (Fire Safe Council) lost it's funding for the free chipping program that has been provided the last several years. Currently there is little probability that funding will be restored. The chipping program was an important element in the effort for Banner Mountain to become a designated Fire Wise Community.

In response to the need to reduce the fuel load on Banner Mountain, the BMHA, in association with FONA (Federation of Neighborhood Associations of Nevada County), will offer an alternative to the lost chipping program that will begin in May. The details concerning the requirements for chipping piles will remain unchanged. The major difference is that the chipping service will no longer be free. Each homeowner is now responsible for paying for the chipping. **However, members of the BMHA (and FONA) will be eligible for a considerable savings for the service.**

Additional details regarding costs and arrangements for chipping will be posted on the BMHA webpage

(www.bannermountain.org) in the very near future.



Spring Dance Party Benefit with silent auction and social

CLAIM (Citizens Looking At Impacts of Mining) is announcing a Spring Dance Party Benefit, Silent Auction and Social to be held on Friday, May 15, starting at 7:30 pm at the Center for the Arts at 314 W. Main Street, Grass Valley, CA. Cousin Cricket and the Shay Dillon Band will provide rocking entertainment, and will be joined by other local musicians. The Silent Auction will include a wide variety of practical and exotic items. Come early to claim the choicest selections. Stay to hear the music, or have a drink and mingle with others. The admission price of \$20 covers the whole evening of events. Starting May 1, advance tickets can be purchased at Briar Patch Co-op and The Bookseller in Grass Valley, and Yabobo and After the Gold Rush Records in Nevada City.

The event benefits Citizens Looking At Impacts of Mining (CLAIM-GV), a non-profit dedicated to providing facts on the potential re-opening of the Idaho-Maryland Mine. CLAIM-GV does not believe the mine is a good fit for our community, preferring clean and green 21st century jobs to a return to mining days. CLAIM-GV recently posted all of the comments submitted to the City of Grass Valley on IMM's Draft Environmental Impact Report. Go to www.claim-gv.org for more facts on the mine, and to read the comments submitted by citizens of Nevada County, California state agencies, and others. You can also sign a CLAIM-GV-sponsored petition against the mine at <http://www.thepetitionsite.com/2/stop-reopening-idahomaryland-goldmine>.

Come hear great music by local musicians and support our work to keep Grass Valley in the 21st century!

For more information, call 264-6058 or email info@claim-gv.org. See www.cousincricket.com and www.shaydillon.com for more band information, and www.claim-gv.org for more information about CLAIM.

Banner Mountain Lookout

Igor Raven

Each year as summer approaches, I start thinking about the upcoming fire season and my duties at the Banner Mountain Lookout. As many of you already know, the Banner Mountain Lookout is a vital component to the early detection of wildfires in our area. It is staffed completely by volunteer lookouts who spend

an average of one four hour shift per week scanning the surrounding area for signs of smoke. Every year Banner Mountain Lookouts are responsible for reporting several first sightings of fires to our Emergency Control Center. In addition, they give cross bearing reports when another lookout sights smoke, giving Cal Fire a much needed precise location. Cal Fire invested time and money in tree thinning this past year so that our lookouts have a better view of the immediate area.

There are several seasoned lookout volunteers who have been doing this work for many years, but each year we lose people who have volunteered in the past and need replacements for them. What we are looking for in the way of a volunteer is someone who will be able to commit to a four hour shift once a week throughout the fire season. This job requires that a volunteer be able to maintain vigilance for that four hour period and be able to work alone. We recognize that this job isn't for everyone, and if you are interested in becoming a lookout we will ask that you come to the lookout for a visit before you commit to the training. If you decide that you would like to volunteer for this very important public service, you will receive the training needed to do the job. We understand that summer is the time for family vacations and we try to make accommodation for our volunteers.

If you are interested in being a volunteer lookout this summer, please contact me (Igor Raven) at 478-5821.

Nevada County Land Trust on Banner Mt.

The **Woodpecker Wildlife Preserve** was acquired by the non-profit Land Trust in 1999. Since then, hikers have enjoyed crossing this 28 acre parcel on the Cascade Canal trail starting about ½ mi. from Gracie Rd. Use of the land is made possible by members and donations. Planning is now underway to build a hiking trail from the Canal trail, down 300 ft. and back up through this mixed conifer woodland. Donors and volunteers are welcome. Call 272-5994 or write Info@NevadaCountyLandTrust.org.

See www.nevadacountylandtrust.org for Treks, outings, and community events, as well as the conservation efforts on 1000s of acres of Nevada County.



Dangerous County Decision: Second Dwelling Ordinance Amendment

The Nevada County Planning Commission passed an ordinance amendment that will increase fire danger for Banner Mt. residents, **ORD 08-003**. The Banner Mountain Homeowners Association does not object to second dwelling units per se. Under the right circumstances we recognize that they can play a vital role to increase our stock of affordable housing. However, we do object to a key aspect of the ordinance amendment. It would negate current County regulations that restrict building second units on long dead-end roads. These road standards and second unit restrictions are in place for public safety. They are designed to ensure that fire fighters and their equipment can get in and residents can get out simultaneously during a catastrophic wildfire. In this kind of situation disregarding road adequacy and increasing more residents through second units makes no sense whatsoever. It's a public safety issue, plain and simple.

In addition Nevada County asked for input from the fire agencies. Both the Nevada County Consolidated Fire District and CAL FIRE expressed their objections in writing about removing the current dead-end road standards as they apply to second units. These agencies mention that current regulations are designed to ensure public and firefighter safety during a wildfire emergency. CAL FIRE also states that the proposed ordinance would be in conflict with State Fire Safe Regulations, which do apply to the construction of second dwelling units.

Under these circumstances the Banner Mountain Homeowners Association cannot support ORD 08-003. The issues of dead-end

roads and public safety as well as the concerns of our fire agencies need to be properly addressed.

Your email communications

In the interest of effective communications with residents of Banner Mountain, we ask that you send us your email address. It doesn't matter whether or not you are a member of the Banner Mountain Homeowners Association (BMHA). Email is a quick and low cost way for us to inform you about important upcoming events. And BMHA is committed to bringing these situations to your attention. We promise that your email address will never be divulged to any outside organization or individual. If you are so inclined, simply go to our website at www.bannermountain.org, click on *Mailing List* and enter your name and email address. Our website also offers a review of topics of current interest to Banner Mountain residents

Membership: We look forward to you renewing your membership. Just go to <http://www.bannermountain.org/becomeamember.html> and fill out the "e-form". Or contact any board member or renew at the May meeting.

Come on Board: We encourage any one interested in becoming a Director to contact: Banner Mountain Homeowners President Willy Kollmeyer, . 271-1378; wdkollmeyer@comcast.net.

Board of Directors

Willy Kollmeyer, President, 271-1378 - willy@bannermountain.org
Sylvia Pichitino, Secretary, 265-2201 - sylvia@bannermountain.org
Hosea Bostic, Treasurer, 265-4467 hosea@bannermountain.org
Jim Bair, VP, Editor, 274-0186 jim@bannermountain.org
Bob Bogart, Webmaster, 263-0413 bob@bannermountain.org
Helene Hall, 478-0538 helene@bannermountain.org
Chuck Staetz chuck@bannermountain.org

ASSOCIATION PURPOSE

The purpose of the organization is to:

1. Promote activities which help provide for optimum living conditions in the area and to discourage activities which threaten to affect the area adversely.
2. Keep the members informed of current issues which might affect the Banner Mountain area.
3. Establish committees to study the relationship of any proposed activity to its effect on the area.
4. Voice the consensus of opinion of the BMHA to pertinent Government agencies.

Banner Mountain Homeowners Association

www.bannermountain.org

Member of:

Federation of Neighborhood Organizations (FONA)

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