



Yosemite West Property &
Homeowners, Inc.
www.yosemitewest.org

In the West

Newsletter
July 2008

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President's Summer Message

by Kay Pitts

YWPHI President (2007-2008)

Please mark your calendars for Sunday, August 31st, when the YWPHI annual meeting and potluck brunch starts at 10:30 a.m. (see p.3 for more details). Brunch is followed by the YWPHI business meeting that includes approval of the minutes from last year's annual meeting, reports from YWPHI committees, and election of new members to the YWPHI Board of Directors. All YWPHI members are encouraged to attend this meeting and participate in improving your organization.

A draft of the minutes from the September 2, 2007 annual meeting and a draft agenda for this year's meeting are included at the end of this e-newsletter. We welcome your review of and comment on last year's minutes on August 31. We would appreciate your sending any topics to include on the agenda to president@yosemitewest.org by August 15. **Please print your own copies of these documents to bring to the annual meeting.**

With normal terms expiring, we will have **three vacancies on the YWPHI Board of Directors for 2008-2009.** We ask all YWPHI members to help out by serving on the Board. As a board member you will meet more of your neighbors, have a greater say in the way the Board uses your dues, and learn more about what's happening in the neighborhood. The Board is open to all YWPHI members, whether homeowners or vacant lot owners, new residents or old, full-time or part-time, including **you.** Please contact Tom Lambert at (209) 372-4764, 372-4769 or email nominating@yosemitewest.org if you would like to serve. The newly elected Board will meet after the business meeting to assign duties for the coming year.

We look forward to seeing everyone at the brunch and annual meeting!

Minutes from YWPHI Board Meetings

Once approved by the board, minutes from previous YWPHI Board of Directors' meetings are archived on the YWPHI website at <http://www.yosemitewest.org/board.htm>. The minutes from the last board meeting on April 5, 2008 will be available after the annual meeting.

Welcome New YWPHI Member

We're pleased to welcome to YWPHI in 2007-08, David and Mary Ann Bluhm.

Environmental Education Campus

You can visit the park planning pages of Yosemite National Park's website (www.nps.gov/yose/parkmgmt/eecampus.htm) for updates on the status of the Environmental Education Campus, which is proposed for Henness Ridge, adjacent to Yosemite West.

Public Workshop on Draft Yosemite West Special Plan

The Mariposa County Board of Supervisors will hold a public workshop on the Draft Yosemite West Special Plan on Saturday, August 16, 2008 at 10 a.m. in the Board chambers in Mariposa. Please visit the Planning Department website at <http://www.mariposacounty.org/planning> to download the draft plan and confirm the workshop will be held as currently it is scheduled.

Time to Renew Your Membership!

You will soon be receiving a mailing asking you to renew your \$25 annual YWPHI membership dues. Please take a minute to mail in your check or renew using PayPal. All of your dues stay in the community to work on issues that benefit everyone. With continued support from existing members and participation of new property owners, we can continue our current programs.

When you receive your renewal notice, kindly please send it in. No doubt many members will want to pay as soon as possible. For those who can't wait for the mail, you can download the Membership Form at <http://www.yosemitewest.org/members.pdf>.

Paying Your Dues with PayPal

Those who prefer not writing checks can pay via PayPal. If you have a PayPal account, you probably know the process. If not, getting a PayPal account is simple and free. PayPal, owned and run by eBay, is a secure method of making a payment without having to give out your credit card number.

To register for an account, go to <https://www.paypal.com>, click on the "Sign Up" link at the top, and then register for a Personal account. You will need to link the account to your bank account or credit card in order to make funds available.

Once you have a PayPal account, log in and select "Send Money" from the top tab. Enter treasurer@yosemitewest.org in the "To" box, then enter an amount of \$25 and choose "Goods" and select "Continue."

On the next screen, in the "Message" area (scroll down below the "Send Money" button), please include your name and your Yosemite West address. Click on "Send Money" and you're done. No stamps, no envelopes, no hassle.

Yosemite West Property & Homeowners, Inc. Labor Day Weekend Brunch & Annual Meeting

**Sunday, August 31, 2008
10:30 a.m.**

The YWPHI Labor Day potluck brunch and annual meeting starts at 10:30 a.m., Sunday, August 31, 2008 on the south side of Henness Circle behind Betty Clark's house, 7486 Henness Circle.

YWPHI members and their guests are welcome to attend.

YWPHI will provide plates, napkins, cups, water, soft drinks, and beer.

As always, bring a dish to share at the potluck brunch -

If Your Last Name Starts With -	Please Bring -
A - H	main dish (quiche, frittata, etc.)
K - P	fruit, vegetables, salads
Q - Z	muffins, sweet rolls, coffee cake

Please also bring your own folding chair(s).

The YWPHI annual meeting will take place following brunch. The annual meeting includes the election of the YWPHI Board of Directors to serve for 2008-2009 and the approval of minutes from last year's annual meeting. A draft of the minutes from the September 2, 2007 annual meeting and a draft agenda for this year's meeting are included at the end of this e-newsletter.

Please email president@yosemitewest.org or contact Kay Pitts (☎ 209-372-4775) with any questions, comment or suggestions you may have.

Yosemite West Becomes the First Mariposa County Community to Complete a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP)

At their June 17 meeting, the Mariposa County Board of Supervisors unanimously approved a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) for Yosemite West. Yosemite West is the first Mariposa County community to complete a CWPP, which will become part of the overall Mariposa County CWPP that is being prepared by the Mariposa County Fire Safe Council.

The Board of Supervisors' approval was the final step in a process that included approval by Mariposa County Fire Department's Chief Jim Wilson, Cal Fire's Chief Mikel Martin, and Yosemite National Park's Fire Use Manager Michael Beasley.

YWPFI was awarded a grant in 2006 from the National Park Service administered by the California Fire Safe Council to complete its CWPP. YWPFI used this federal funding, and matching funds from the Mariposa County Fire Department and Yosemite West property owners, along with support from its fiscal sponsor, the Yosemite/Sequoia Resource Conservation & Development Council, to complete the vital project.

A CWPP is a planning tool for at-risk communities in the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI), areas where homes meet with undeveloped wildlands, to identify and reduce the risk of wildfire across the landscape and jurisdictional boundaries. It is developed through a collaborative process that identifies and prioritizes potential solutions, so that when funding is sought to address wildfire issues, there is a comprehensive overall plan from which to start. **A CWPP neither guarantees funding nor regulates actions, but communities with completed plans have a competitive edge for grants for hazard fuel reduction projects.**

Wildfires in California have destroyed homes and entire neighborhoods, garnered national media attention, and created

momentum for the passage of federal and state legislation addressing wildfire risk. A CWPP is a crucial step in communities working to protect themselves.

The CWPP on CD will be mailed to property owners of record in Yosemite West in mid August. You can also download it at <http://www.yosemitewest.org/ywcwpp.pdf>. For more information, contact the YWPFI Fire Safety committee at email firesafety@yosemitewest.org.

Spring Fire Safety in Review

Memorial Day Weekend Clean-up

We'd like to extend a special thanks to all the volunteers who braved the cool and drizzly Memorial Day weekend to help with the clean-up efforts: the Chapin family, Harry Hagan, Tom Lambert, John Mock, Ken Owens, Don Pitts, the Ringrose family, Al Ruiz, Bob Skrdla, Ken Wall, and Bob Wolcott.

The picnic moved indoors due to the inclement weather, so our sincere appreciation to Kay Pitts and the YWPFI Hospitality committee for organizing all the food and to Don and Kay Pitts for letting almost four dozen folks crowd into their living room. And, a special thanks to our guest speakers: Paul Alvarez of CalFire; and Sean Rankin and the chipping crew from the Mariposa County Fire Safe Council.

2008 Chipping Program

YWPFI sponsored the 4th Annual YWPFI Spring Chipping Program on June 2-3, 2008. The goal of the program is to facilitate creation of community wide defensible space in compliance with PRC §4291. Twenty-eight property owners of 31 parcels (25 houses and six vacant lots) participated in the program, representing 29% of the YWPFI membership.

2008 In-Kind Services Survey Results

The 2008 IN-KIND SERVICES SURVEY showed that Yosemite West residents invested more than 1,600 hours of volunteer labor this spring

in addition to hiring labor to help with brushing and thinning. The total valuation of Yosemite West's effort toward creating community-wide defensible space is more than \$95,000! We appreciate the time everyone took to complete the survey, which yielded interesting and useful data.

Of the survey's respondents, 83% were homeowners and 17% were vacant lot owners. The average number of hours per parcel spent on hazard fuel reduction and debris disposal was 15 hours, with a range from four to 56 hours.

For the three types of **Hazardous Fuel Reduction**, 100% did brushing of the forest floor (raking pine needles and cones, removing dead/downed wood, and increasing space between shrubs), 70% did thinning (removing dead trees, reducing ladder fuels, and increasing spacing between large trees), and 30% improved access to their driveway and/or parking area. Sixty percent hired someone to help with brushing and thinning, and 13% helped their neighbors.

For the three methods of **Debris Disposal**, 35% piled for the annual chipping program, 13% burned on their own property, and 61% hauled to the community burn pile.

Lessons Learned

From the 2008 IN-KIND SERVICES SURVEY and this year's clean-up efforts, we'd like to share a few points to keep in mind.

- Some residents did hazardous fuel reduction, but no debris disposal. This means that debris was left on the property. **To succeed at creating community-wide defensible space, the debris needs to be removed from the property and the interior of the community.** Raking leaves or hauling debris to the edge of your property does not create community-wide defensible space. YWPHI facilitates debris removal by organizing the Memorial Day weekend clean-up to haul debris to the burn pile and by sponsoring an annual chipping program. Please take

advantage of these free programs, which are part of your YWPHI membership benefits.

The fire season is underway, so if you still have debris piles, please arrange to remove them now. If you hired someone else to rake and haul your pine needles, please double check that this work was done.

CalFire suspended all burning in Mariposa County on May 1st. Since then, there have been several "campfires" on private property in Yosemite West. Please note that these are illegal, even on your own property! Be sure that anyone and everyone staying or working at your home knows and understands that we all need to be extra careful in this very dangerous and dry fire season. If you see any open fires in Yosemite West, CalFire requests you to immediately call ☎ 911.

- **The Memorial Day weekend clean-up is not a free service offered by YWPHI; it requires volunteer participation.** Some residents have incorrectly thought that if they raked and piled pine needles but were not present on Memorial Day weekend, someone else would haul their pine needle away. This is incorrect; you must be present and help haul your own pine needles.

- Some residents have defensible space on some or most of their property, but not uniformly on all of it. **Make sure your defensible space encircles your house and equally extends out in all directions, so as to comply fully with PRC §4291.**

- Some residents indicated they piled for the chipping program, but did not sign up for the chipping program. **The chipping program requires advance sign up so the YWPHI Fire Safety committee can tag piles for the chipping crew.**

Our sincere thanks to everyone whose efforts help toward making Yosemite West a Fire Safe community.

YWPHI Board of Directors (2007-2008)

Kay Pitts, President; Kelly Rich, Vice President; Jeff Hornacek, Secretary; Members Jim Andrews, Tom Lambert & Kim O'Neil

YWPHI Committee Chairs (2004-2005)

Kim O'Neil, Treasurer; John Mock, Fire Safety; Tom Lambert, Newsletter Editor, and Kim O'Neil, Webmaster. (Committee chairs are *not* necessarily members of the board of directors.)

Labor Day Weekend Brunch & Annual Meeting Information see p.3

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Address Correction Requested