



Yosemite West Property & Homeowners Inc.

www.YosemiteWest.org

In the West Newsletter May 2011

Issue Highlights

Memorial Day Cleanup

Things are melting fast and ground is starting to show. Once again, it's time to get our ground fuels off the ground and into the burn pile. If you can make it, **we will need laborers and trucks**. If you can help, please contact Tom Lambert at 209.379.4127. More details on p. 3.

Neighborhood Survey

YWPHI will shortly be distributing a survey to poll the membership and find out what you see as the most pressing issues in the neighborhood. If the association is going to really serve us as members, **we need to hear from as many people as possible**, so please keep an eye out for it and read about getting involved on p. 2.

Fire Safety Updates

Once again, we will have work in the neighborhood funded by grant money, but this is the **last year you will be able to get these services for free** on private lots within the neighborhood. If you have a property that has not yet been treated, please sign up this year. Details on p. 4-5

Garbage and Bears

Last year, rangers were forced to execute two bears for the crime of being bears due to the carelessness of visitors, residents and construction crews. Especially if you own or manage a rental or are building a house in the neighborhood, for the safety of residents and bears, please read the article on p. 6-7.

Help Wanted!

YWPHI will have several positions open this year. If we get enough people willing to each take one small job, **the time commitment need not be great and presence in Yosemite West is not necessary** (and in some cases may actually make some tasks easier). See page 7 for details.

President's Summer Message

By Tom Lambert, YWPHI President

The storm week of March 2011 was a week that will live in infamy. It exposed many weaknesses in the infrastructure and emergency preparedness of Yosemite West. Some of our county workers pulled all-nighters, catnapping in their trucks while trying to get us back up and running, and they deserve our thanks. We also had roads that went unplowed and a water system that was out for 12 days and we need a full accounting of what happened and how to prevent it in the future. We hope that will be forthcoming at the May 12 meeting of the Yosemite West Maintenance District Advisory Committee. In the meantime, it has given many of us pause to think about what's right and what's wrong with our neighborhood.

We are facing many challenges as our infrastructure ages and our neighborhood builds out. Though many of these issues are beyond the purview of YWPHI, nevertheless as a community we need to plan for the future of our community. The survey mentioned on the left will be an important first step in deciding what role YWPHI should take in that future.

What's right? Above all, we actually know our neighbors. That simple fact, whether we agree or disagree, makes it possible for us to work together on these issues. I'm hoping the wakeup call from the storm will usher in a new wave of participation. Perhaps you have no interest in a formal position, but anyone with a bit of time to invest in the neighborhood can help out on any number of projects small and large.

Also In This Issue

- YWPHI Board Minutes, p. 2
- *In the West* Publication, p. 2
- Updated Phone Tree, p. 2
- Welcome New Members, p. 2
- Emergency Phone Tree update, p. 2
- About the CodeRED system, p. 4
- Maintenance and Planning Committee updates, p. 5.

YWPHI Board Minutes

Minutes from previous YWPHI Board of Directors' meetings are archived online at <http://www.yosemitewest.org/board.htm>. Minutes from the October 14, 2009, September 5, 2010, October 20, 2010 meetings and September 6, 2009 annual meeting are now available online. The next board meeting is Wednesday, June 8, 2011 at 7 p.m.

***In the West* Publication**

Thanks go to these contributors to this edition of *In the West*: Theresa Ho and Kim O'Neil.

Archived issues of the newsletter are available to download as a PDF at <http://www.yosemitewest.org/archive.htm>. Each issue is announced to all members by email as soon as it is available for download from the YWPHI site. Your willingness to obtain the newsletter electronically saves YWPHI money on printing and mailing, allowing us to use that money for community projects.

Welcome New Members

YWPHI welcomes Mary Ann Murphy & Lyn Platten, Daniel & Barbara Black, John Roosen & Susan Rogers, Peter Golcher & Michelle Waters, Tom & Sondra Herbert, and Olegario & Lydia Mata.

Membership Dues

We thank our new and renewing members for sending in their dues. YWPHI has 122 members for the 2010/11 membership year. We invite everyone not presently a member to join; you can download a membership form at www.yosemitewest.org/members.htm.

Newly Elected YWPHI Board of Directors (2009-2010)

The YWPHI Board of Directors was reelected at the annual meeting on September 5, 2010. Continuing are officers Tom Lambert (President), Kelly Rich (Vice President), Kim O'Neil (Treasurer), and members Todd "Kipper" Caranto and Rea Jackman. Jim Andrews resigned.

Bill Duff (Secretary) and Mike Stepien were newly elected

Tom Lambert will continue as newsletter

editor, as will Kim O'Neil as webmaster, John Mock as Chair of the Fire Safety Committee, and Rea Jackman on the Hospitality committee.

Yosemite West Emergency Telephone Tree Update

YWPHI maintains and annually updates the YOSEMITE WEST EMERGENCY TELEPHONE TREE, which lists and is distributed to homeowners with their contact information. (It does not include nor is it distributed to vacant lot owners.) Many homeowners have primary residences elsewhere, and the tree endeavors to list any telephone contact information at alternative residences and cell phone numbers.

The emergency telephone tree is intended to systematically notify residents during an emergency or when a situation arises that affects the entire community. However, YWPHI, its members and officers, and those using the emergency telephone tree, cannot guarantee that anyone will receive timely and adequate notice of an emergency, and disclaims all liability. Note, it is your responsibility to opt in to the emergency telephone tree. If you do not contact YWPHI to be listed on the tree, do not expect a phone call when something goes wrong.

The YOSEMITE WEST EMERGENCY TELEPHONE TREE is for the exclusive use of Yosemite West homeowners and residents (including occupants of long-term rental properties). To protect privacy, please keep the emergency telephone tree confidential, and do not forward it or provide copies to others for any purpose. YWPHI also provides the list to the Mariposa County Fire Department, Sheriff's office, Public Works Department, and Yosemite National Park fire chief.

In May 2011, YWPHI updated the Yosemite West Emergency Telephone Tree. If you are a homeowner with an email address, YWPHI will send you an email message shortly with instructions to download the recently updated tree. If you do not have email, a copy of the tree will be mailed under separate cover.

Please send an email to info@yosemitewest.org to inform us of any changes to your contact information, or to remove your name from the tree for any reason.

Yosemite West Memorial Day Weekend Yard Clean-up

Sunday, May 29, 2011

<http://www.yosemitewest.org/firesafe.htm>

The community burn pile, located at the lower end of the development off Yosemite Park Way, will be open on Memorial Day weekend to provide a place to dispose of yard debris. The burn pile fills up quickly each spring and you can ease the pressure on it in two ways:

- by burning pine needles on your own property; call the Mariposa County Burn Day Information Line (888-440-2876) and carefully follow all guidelines and requirements (for further details visit <http://www.yosemitewest.org/fowner.htm>).
- by signing up for chipping (see below).

If you do not have a vehicle to transport yard debris to the burn pile, volunteers with trucks will be cruising the neighborhood on Sunday, May 29 between 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. **If you want help clearing your lot, please don't wait at your house. Check in with Richard Heim at the top of Henness Circle at 9am** and help out up there so we can get to your place that much quicker. Please don't leave piles along the street expecting others to take them away. Big thanks to Richard for taking this on this year!

This clean-up is a community event. If you are physically unable to actually help load trucks, you can still provide applause! If you have a truck that helps immensely. Gloves, rakes, pitchforks, wheelbarrows and tarps are very helpful. Contact Tom Lambert at 209.379.4127 if you can make it.

Free Picnic Lunch Sunday, May 29 at noon

YWPHI is sponsoring its annual Memorial Day Weekend picnic lunch and invites everyone in the community on Sunday, May 29th to join us behind Betty Clark's house at 7486 Henness Circle. We will be serving food about noon. Please bring your own chairs.

Guest Speaker — Mariposa Emergency Planner Don Florence

We are pleased to announce that Don Florence, Mariposa Emergency Planner, will be our guest at this year's picnic. Don has been tasked by the Mariposa County Office of Emergency Services to prepare a **Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP)** for Mariposa County. Don will explain the purpose and process and what it means to Yosemite West. Take a few minutes in advance of the picnic to familiarize yourself with the LHMP process. YWPHI has posted documents and a link to a five-question Hazard Mitigation Survey on its home page, <http://www.yosemitewest.org>. Please direct any questions about the LHMP to Don at dflorence@mariposacounty.org.

What Goes In the Community Burn Pile

- pine needles and pine cones

What Stays Out of the Burn Pile

- piles for chipping
- logs and stumps
- garbage (plastic bags, glass, etc)
- hazardous or toxic materials
- construction debris

Two types of curbside piles:

- **Piles for Hauling** to the community burn pile. Have your piles ready by 9 a.m. Sunday, May 29. **If you want community help in hauling, please come to the top of Henness Circle at 9am rather than waiting at your house!**
- **Piles for Chipping** *after* Memorial Day Weekend (see p. 4).

If you are preparing your lot for building, you cannot bring this debris to the community burn pile. The burn pile cannot handle this large volume of material. You must make your own arrangements (e.g., by renting a dumpster) to dispose of the debris.

YWPHI does not manage the community burn pile. Please direct any questions you may have (e.g., opening/closing dates) to the Mariposa County Public Works Department (209-966-5356).

Mariposa County CodeRED Emergency Notification System

As of August 2009, the Mariposa County Sheriff's Office has contracted with Emergency Communications Network to license its CodeRED high-speed notification solution. Please visit the CodeRED Enrollment page (<http://bit.ly/YowestCodeRED>) to enter your address and phone numbers(s). There is also a link from the YWPHI home page, <http://www.yosemitewest.org>. Submitting this information will enable you to be notified by your local emergency response team in the event of emergency situations or critical community alerts.

CodRED is an opt-in system, so if you want to be notified, you must provide them with your contact information.

Burn Permit Rule Clarification

Cal Fire is requiring burn permits as of May 1st, 2011. However, this year we've got them to clarify that burn permits are not required above 4000 feet. People simply need to call the Burn Day Information line at 888-440-2876 to see if it is a permissible burn day.

If you can burn your pine needles and tree limbs on your land, that takes pressure off the burn pile and tends to be a fair bit less work. Just be safe and have water, shovels and other firefighting equipment handy.

2011 Chipping Program

YWPHI is again proud to offer free chipping to everyone in the community funded by its 2010 National Fire Plan grant (<http://www.yosemitewest.org/grants.htm>).

To Sign Up for Chipping

Participation requires you to do three easy things:

1. Make your curbside chipping pile by Tuesday, May 31st.
2. Flag your pile(s) using the lime green flagging tape provided in the mailbox shed.
3. Email firesafety@yosemitewest.org to inform us you have a pile; if you do not contact the YWPHI Fire Safety Committee, your pile will *not* be chipped.

Chipping Guidelines

Follow these guidelines when making your curbside pile for chipping.

Do's

- Hand pile brush and branches with cut ends pointing in the same direction toward the street on your property near the curb in easily accessible piles by May 31st

Don'ts

- No piles in the street
- No rocks, pine needles, pine cones or garbage.
- No branch/tree greater than 8 inches in diameter in piles
- No machine-made or dozer-made piles

Fire Safety Grants Update

The YWPHI Fire Safety Committee is continuing to implement two National Fire Plan grants. For project updates please see <http://www.yosemitewest.org/grants.htm>.

A. 2010 Defensible Space Grant Status

Fuel Reduction inside the community

We completed on-the-ground work inside the community for this season on November 12, 2010, treating 71 parcels (25 houses and 46 vacant lots) and chipping approximately 2,000 tons. The two-year combined participation total is 172 parcels or 60% of all parcels in Yosemite West. Work has stopped for winter and will resume shortly after Memorial Day, weather permitting.

The project goal was 80% of all parcels in Yosemite West, so we mailed an information packet (on how to sign up for the defensible space project) in March 2011 to 64 owners of 84 selected parcels who have not yet participated in 2009 or 2010. We have received a 15% positive reply as of April 11, 2011. If you have not yet signed up, please email firesafety@yosemitewest.org.

This is the last year of this project and all work must be completed by September 1, 2011.

Fuel Reduction outside the community

The California Fire Safe Council informed us on November 16, 2010 that the federal environmental and cultural resource compliance review of our project for work outside the community is successfully completed. No on-the-ground work in the project area outside the community was done in 2010; this work is tentatively scheduled to be done in summer 2011.

B. 2011 Project Area YW-004 Grant Status

YWPFI was awarded a 2011 National Fire Plan grant for \$94,350 for fuel reduction on Project Area YW-004 (see the *Yosemite West CWPP*) on June 14, 2010. In March 2011 we signed the grant agreement and the National Park Service (NPS) informed the California Fire Safe Council that it will likely be after the end of the current fiscal year (September 2011) before NPS knows if they will be able to fund the 2011 grants. This is the first time this has happened with NPS-funded grants through the California Fire Safe Grants Clearinghouse. Right now NPS is working with a 20% deficit and will only be able to fund the grants if they receive new funds and have some remaining at the end of their current fiscal year. All grant activities are on hold until further notice.

YW PAC and YWMDAC

YWPFI reports on the activities of the Yosemite West Planning Advisory Committee (YW PAC) and the Yosemite West Maintenance District Advisory Committee (YWMDAC). The committees act as a liaison between Yosemite West property owners and the Mariposa County Planning Department and Public Works Department, respectively, and make recommendations to Mariposa County. Individuals serving on these committees are Yosemite West property owners appointed by the Mariposa County Board of Supervisors who may or may not be YWPFI members. YWPFI provides information about the committees as a service to the community, but is not involved with any activities of either committee.

YW PAC

The YW PAC has not met since 2008. However, it has new members appointed in December 2010. The current YW PAC members are: Rick Cashner, Mark Chapman, Jeff Hornacek, Robert Kroon, Ken LeBlanc, Neal Misener, Don Pitts, Pete Regla, and Pete Ulyatt. The Mariposa County Planning Department's page on the Mariposa County website posts the official list of committee members and the expiry date of their terms.

YWMDAC

The YWMDAC last met on November 10, 2010. YWMDAC also has new members appointed in December 2010. The current YWMDAC members are: Jeff Hornacek, Jerry Jackman, Debra Kroon, Richard Long, John Mock, Don Pitts, and Pete Ulyatt. The next YWMDAC meeting is at 10 a.m., Thursday, May 12, 2011 at Don Pitts' house. The meeting is open to the public. We are hoping that Public Works will give a full accounting of what happened during the storm and water outage. In addition, Mitch Jonasky has been hired as an independent consultant by Mariposa County Public Works Department and we expect details on what this entails to be provided at the meeting as well.

In the event of an issue with roads, sewer or water, please directly contact the Mariposa County Public Works Department (209-966-5356, Monday-Friday during business hours). Outside of regular business hours, page Facilities Manager Pam Brochini (209-742-2632).

About YWPFI

YWPFI was established to promote and protect the best interests of the owners of land used for residential purposes in Yosemite West. YWPFI shall strive for the improvement and betterment of all facilities and services within the area, and shall promote and encourage maximum community and civic spirit, and foster good will and friendship among all residents of Yosemite West.

Two Bears Killed in Yosemite West (R.I.P. Bears #7 and #99)

By Theresa Ho

I'm still not sure exactly what that bear was doing in the pine tree. He would lean way out with one paw outstretched to snag one of the large sugar pine cones, glistening with sap, and then draw it in and nibble or lick at it. Do bears eat pine sap? Then it dropped the cone, watching it bounce down through the branches of the tree until it hit the ground, not unlike a toddler dropping food from a highchair, before reaching out again for the next cone. If I didn't know what it was doing, I certainly knew that I enjoyed watching from the front porch with friends as a wild bear did inexplicable wild bear things.

Being able to share this place with such majestic wildlife is one of the things that makes living here so unique and special. Unfortunately, sometimes our worlds clash, and we run into problems. Last year in our neighborhood, bears became so habituated to people that they became aggressive, defended "their" dumpsters, harassed work crews to try to get their lunches, took a swipe at one person, and made several attempts to break into houses. We all know where that leads. In August, Forest Service rangers were forced to trap and kill Bear 7. On November 19, 2010, they had to return and destroy Bear 99.

Finding ways to deal with our trash here in Yosemite West can be a real challenge. Although so many of us know what needs to be done, and carefully dispose of and store our trash and food so that wildlife doesn't get into it, we also have the problem of a flood of visitors who often think they're helping by taking trash *to* the dumpster even though they don't have the key to put it *in* the dumpster. People from most urban areas can't imagine a place where there is no municipal garbage collection.

Last summer, we saw garbage strewn about constantly and this year we have already seen two bags of trash left by the side of the road. We heard rumors of construction crews feeding bears and more. YWPHI has spoken with Brad Aborn, Lee Stetson and Michelle Miller (Director of the Solid Waste division of Mariposa County Public Works) to try to find solutions that would help our neighborhood, but solutions are not obvious.

We have asked the county about allowing additional dumpsters on county land, but they are reticent to allow private dumpsters on public property. In Wawona the county provides dumpsters in partnership with Total Waste Management Inc. by assessing every parcel \$23.75 per month, an amount that is slated to rise as the program currently runs a large deficit. A flat fee solution like that would likely be very unpopular in Yosemite West.

We could also approach it from an enforcement perspective. Improper storage of food and garbage is a misdemeanor in Mariposa County, but we can't count on enforcement up here and for the many times we've seen garbage left out, we have rarely seen who left it. What can we do? If you have any brilliant or even foolish ideas, please pass them along.

In any event, we desperately need solutions. The bears will continue to die if we don't do something and garbage is an eyesore. The danger is primarily to the bears. Bears will not attack people and there has never been a bear death in Yosemite, but there have been incidents of serious injury where a person stood between a bear and its food or, more commonly, a bear and its escape route, such as when bears raiding dumpsters have been spooked. If we continue to have garbage problems, we will continue to have bear problems. There are some steps you can take to help:

ALWAYS

- Store food and garbage indoors or in bear-proof containers.
- Dispose of garbage in bearproof dumpsters.
- Shoo away any bears that you see on your property. Don't let them get comfortable around people.
- Close the car doors when ferrying loads into the house.
- Close and latch doors and windows when you are not in the house.
- Clean the grease trap in your outdoor grill.
- Explain to guests what they need to do to keep bears and property safe.

Bears and Garbage (cont.)

NEVER

- Leave food unattended even for a minute such as when ferrying loads into the house.
- Leave garbage unattended, even briefly.
- Attempt to put garbage in a dumpster you don't pay for — all dumpsters in Yosemite West are privately run.

If you own or manage a rental

- Provide proper garbage disposal for your guests. Do not ask them to take their garbage with them — this is a common cause of illegal dumping in Yosemite West.
- Post information near the door and in your welcome information packet in your rental.
- Educate them about the importance of bear safety when you confirm the reservation and when they check in.

Want to Get Involved? We Need YOU

Want to be involved in your neighborhood? Is there something you think needs fixing? We could use help of all sorts, both by taking on an elected position or simply taking the lead on a project. The time commitment need not be high. Many activities take only a few hours every quarter and we also have numerous projects that have no ongoing commitment. Furthermore, a consistent presence in Yosemite West is not necessary. Some tasks require legwork in the city or phone calling, and Board meetings always have a teleconference option, so even those positions do not require you to be in Yosemite West.

We will need to replace two outgoing Board members in 2011. We also have other positions that can be held by Board members or not. Most importantly, by September, 2011, we need to find people willing to transition into the following slots:

- Treasurer. The YWPHI books are up and running on Quickbooks, so anyone with basic bookkeeping skills could take this on following the established procedures.

- Secretary. This simply involves taking notes at meetings. If you can write, you can do this.
- Webmaster. Have a bit of technical skill and feel like keeping up on what's happening? Consider helping out on the website.
- Newsletter Editor. Surely someone out there can breathe new life into the newsletter, or at least keep it on life support!

In addition to these standing positions, there are numerous projects that need doing, some of which we may not even know about yet. If you have a good idea and some time to make it a reality, we would love to have your help. If you don't have ideas, but just want to help out, we have several small projects. We need to get another firehouse house built, we can always use people to spruce up the mailbox area and so on.

We are planning to distribute a survey shortly to get a better understanding of which issues matter most to the community. We have a great reserve of talent in Yosemite West and a small reserve of cash. Several years of grant money to fund our chipping program, previously paid for by YWPHI directly, has left us with some savings that we can use to push forward projects of importance in the community, but we still need a person to spearhead those projects. **If it isn't you, who will it be?** If you want to help at any level, please write to Tom Lambert at president@yosemitewest.org or call him at (209) 379-4127.

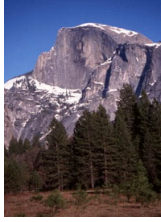
YWPHI Board of Directors (2009-2010)

Tom Lambert, President; Kelly Rich, Vice-President; Members Todd Caranto, Bill Duff, Rea Jackman, Kim O'Neil, Mike Stepien.

YWPHI Committees (2009-2010)

Tom Lambert, Newsletter Editor; Kim O'Neil, Webmaster and Treasurer; John Mock, Fire Safety; Rea Jackman, Hospitality.

Yosemite West Property & Homeowners, Inc.
7585 Henness Ridge Road
Yosemite National Park, CA 95389-9108
Address correction requested



Yosemite West Property & Homeowners, Inc. **2011 In-Kind Contribution**
 www.YosemiteWest.org

Yosemite West Defensible Space Project

The hours of volunteer labor that you put in each year for fire safety activities on your property have a dollar value. This value and any out-of-pocket expenses is called an *In-Kind Contribution*. It is used to satisfy the community match required by our 2010 and 2011 National Fire Plan grants from the USDA Forest Service and National Park Service through the California Fire Safe Council.

Landowner Name(s): _____

Local Address (House or Vacant Lot): _____

Indicate your 2011 In-Kind Contribution for fuel reduction that improves community-wide defensible space through the two options below. Include only hours or expenses after 1-1-2011.		
#1 Time volunteered to conduct fuel reduction valued at a fixed rate of \$18 per hour.	# Hours worked	Amount
Brushing the forest floor - raking pine needles, picking up pine cones, removing dead/downed wood, increasing space between shrubs Thinning the forest - removing dead trees, reducing ladder fuels, increasing space between trees Improving access to your property - reducing vegetation/trees near driveway and/or parking areas Debris removal - hauling to the community burn pile, burning on your property, piling for curbside chipping		\$
#2 Out-of-pocket expenses incurred for hiring independent labor to conduct fuel reduction.		
Name payee(s) and briefly describe services provided:		\$
Total 2011 In-Kind Contribution:		\$

Please complete and submit your *In-Kind Contribution* form(s) by July 1, 2011 to:

YWPHI, 7585 Henness Ridge Road, Yosemite National Park, CA 95389-9108.

Email any questions to firesafety@yosemitewest.org.