

**Plumas Eureka Community Services District**

# Plumas Pipelines

Fall Issue

November 2008

## Managers Message

How was your summer? Mine was filled with meeting new people, enjoying the Plumas National Forest, playing golf and feeling a lot more comfortable with my General Manager duties. Now I can relax (just a little) and truly live the “mountain life” I’ve always wanted to.

Summer started with a bang, literally! Late in June, a lightning storm raced through Plumas County and started hundreds of wildfires. The closest to Plumas Eureka was the Cold Fire, about 15 miles away, which burned several thousand acres in the Cold Creek area. There was a lot of commotion going on during that time and it made me aware of just how important good communications are. Thank goodness everyone made it through.

As a result of all the commotion, PECSO Board Members Rich Machado and Vern Wiemeyer are working with the Fire Department to develop an “Emergency Communications Plan”. They will be seeking input from the Homeowner Associations, local Realtors and the general public to put the plan together. Having a solid communications system that everyone understands is the key to being able to handle and survive any emergency that may arise. Watch for future announcements and participate in this potentially life and property saving communications plan. Your support and participation would be greatly appreciated.

As you know, Plumas Eureka’s water supply has arsenic concentrations in it that exceed the Federal Maximum Contaminate Level (MCL). We have obtained the services of ECO:LOGIC Engineering to help us identify the best solution for getting the arsenic level below the standard. We are sampling the water on a monthly basis and when the quarterly average is above the MCL, the State of California requires PECSO to send you a “Public Notification” announcement. We anticipate you will be receiving these notices on a quarterly basis until we get below the arsenic MCL. We will discuss the arsenic issues at our monthly Board meetings so be sure to review the Board Meeting Minutes to keep updated. Or better yet, attend the meetings which are held the second Wednesday of every month at the Fire Station.



As always, please feel free to call the office or send me an email if you have any questions, problems or need any information. My email is [frmotzkus@hughes.net](mailto:frmotzkus@hughes.net).

Wishing you a safe and happy Holiday season!!

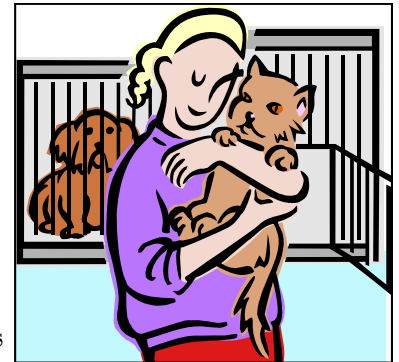
Frank

Apology

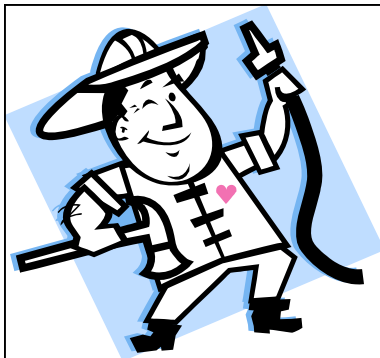


When only one person showed up for a recent emergency preparedness planning session that two of our Board members worked very hard to put together, I was appalled. Thoughts went back to a recent article I wrote for this publication that essentially asked the question – “does anyone really care about this Community?” I felt ‘woe is us’ (your Board), no one does care. But for one of the few times in my life I sat back and did some thinking before putting pen in hand and telling you what inconsiderate \*\*&^\$@+\*\*<’s you all were. That was a VERY selfish attitude on my part.

This is a Community of very caring people who go out of their way toward making Plumas Eureka and the surrounding environs a much better place to live.



We all see the beautiful gardens set up by PEPS, the life saving equipment given to the Fire Department by the Auxiliary. We take advantage of the events supported by the Art Guild, attend the Jazz presentations and the Fourth of July activities. Many have eaten tacos and enjoyed the New Year’s breakfast put on by the Elks or the breakfasts at Plumas Eureka State Park handled by the Rotary.



We owe debts of gratitude to the Lions for their sight conservation activities and those wonderful people who spend hours working at the Nifty Thrifty and/or the Food Bank lending a helping hand to those who are not as fortunate as we are. We have folks who volunteer at the Hospital and with High Sierra Animal Rescue. Those who contribute their time to the Community Center, or on the Boards of the Men’s or Women’s Clubs or volunteer at the State Park deserve our gratitude for the countless hours of recreational enjoyment they have provided for us. We cannot forget our Fire Fighters and Homeowners Associations trying to keep our neighborhoods in good shape. There are many, many others whose dedication to Community is often forgotten but not unappreciated.

I was wrong to think negatively about you. This Community is so very much better because of you unselfish donations of time, effort and dollars. The per capita distribution of volunteer hours staggers the imagination. It is impossible to shake everyone’s hand and express my thanks. Perhaps this article will at least call attention to your accomplishments. I apologize for having those initial negative thoughts but I am so very happy to be wrong! We are blessed to have you as neighbors and words cannot accurately express my heartfelt gratitude for your involvement.



Thank you, Elmer ‘Tret’ Tretten



## Plumas Eureka Preservation Society – Fall 2008

As always, PEPS had a busy year and it started off with a great plant sale on Memorial Day weekend. This is becoming a tradition that captures the essence of our community – people coming together for different causes and supporting those causes while enjoying a great benefit - breakfast (put together by the Fire Auxiliary) and an affordable plant sale just in time for spring planting. Our gardens' tried and true varieties were thinned, potted and ready for planting. Look for this event again next May.

Approximately 50 homes participated in the Pine Needle Pick Up in June. The skyrocketing costs of the past years had us rethinking whether or not we could continue with this program. The Plumas Eureka Estates Homeowners Association offered to help in the planning, and after many discussions, we decided that for a \$55 fee per household, it would still be a worthwhile program to those who want their pine needles removed. We're considering fine-tuning the program again for next year with a different approach to picking up the needles and perhaps a fee reduction.

Our gardens and our backs benefited when we planted more perennial bushes, giving more color that will occur throughout the summer. Annuals are a great addition, but can be labor intensive in planting and maintaining, so with the added perennials and some spot annual color, the gardens should look great next year. Herbs were again planted in the Enduring Freedom Garden and were a welcome addition for the creative cooks in our neighborhoods. Remember to look for them again next year and help yourself to snips of parsley, basil, rosemary, thyme and many others. The large tree that had been cut down in the Ponderosa Garden was carved into a bench during the late summer. It was dedicated to Randy Ross who was a great friend and help to PEPS. A dedication plaque was purchased and will be affixed to the bench once the staining and sealing process is completed next spring. We have plans to plant a couple of colorful maple or oak trees in that garden that will explode with color once fall arrives. The Firehouse Garden received new perennials, some shade loving plants, and the removal of a couple of dead trees.

Our annual meeting and Soup's On dinner was hugely successful this year. More people than ever attended and enjoyed a hearty clam and corn chowder dinner. After dinner and a recap of the year, the new board was voted in. The new board for 2009 is Renee Walker, President, Cheryl Shewmake, Vice President, Mary Blaylock, Treasurer, Janet Grijalva, Corresponding Secretary, and Lucille Buchholtz, Recording Secretary.

The exciting time at the Firehouse Garden is just arriving – The building and surrounding trees and bushes will be alive with Christmas lights that will be lit during the Tree Lighting Ceremony and Santa Visit on November 29<sup>th</sup>. Plan on coming, sharing in some warm cider or hot chocolate, cookies, and a visit with Santa. It's a special time of year! The evening begins at 5:00. Bring the kids, visit with your neighbors, and enjoy a few Christmas carols when the lights are lit.

Several members have decided to become "active" members which we LOVE! They are Barbara Yelland, Maureen Forster, Suzanne Woods, Susan Miller, and Sharon Munsen. We are excited when there are new people, new ideas, and new energy. We encourage anyone to come to our meetings which are held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of every month (excluding July and August). Winter is a fun time to plan for the upcoming growing season and hang out with the "full timers" who get to experience the wonderful winters here in Plumas Pines! Please contact me anytime you would like to come to our meetings. My number is 836-4119.

Renee Walker, President

### ARSENIC – What is it? Why was I notified? How will it affect me?

Arsenic is a naturally occurring semi-metal element in the periodic table. It can be found in rocks, soil, water, air, plants, and animals. You cannot taste or smell arsenic; therefore laboratory testing is the only way to identify whether arsenic is present. Arsenic is released into drinking water supplies from natural deposits in the earth or from agricultural and industrial practices.



Higher levels of arsenic tend to be found more in ground water than in surface waters (i.e. lakes and rivers). Plumas Eureka's drinking water supply comes from a ground water source. As our well pumps put the water into our system they create a "draw down" area around the pump suction pipe. When pumping stops, the ground water will flow into the "draw down" area thus increasing the arsenic concentration for the next pumping cycle. The more water we pump, the higher the possible arsenic levels.

In 2006, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reduced the allowable four quarter annual average arsenic standard from 50 micrograms per Liter (50 parts per billion) to 10 micrograms per Liter (10 parts per billion). Plumas Eureka met the new standard up until the end of 2007. The public notice you received recently explained our situation and what steps we are taking to get our drinking water back into compliance with the federal standard. Public notices are required to be sent every time our arsenic levels exceed the EPA Standard on a quarterly annual average. We have the water tested for arsenic levels every month and analyzing past data with respect to our ground water usage, we anticipate that you will be receiving public notices about every three months until the arsenic levels are reduced below the standard.



We have obtained the services of ECO:LOGIC Engineering of Reno, NV to help us identify the best alternative to use to reduce the arsenic level below the federal standard. They will be looking at all possibilities and provide us a detailed engineering report that will be used to secure funding from lending institutions.

The public notice you receive states:

**This is not an emergency.**

If it had been, you would have been notified immediately. However, *some people who drink water containing arsenic in excess of the MCL over many years may experience skin damage or circulatory system problems, and may have an increased risk of getting cancer.*

**You do not need to use an alternative water supply (e.g., bottled water).**

**If you have other health issues concerning the consumption of this water, you may wish to consult your doctor.**

There are many studies that have been done that outline the health risks associated with a **lifetime** of drinking arsenic laden water. Children, elderly people, and those with chronic health problems are more sensitive to the arsenic exposure and are at a higher risk of developing severe health problems. The National Resources Defense Council has an on-line report with more information. The report can be found at <http://www.nrdc.org/water/drinking/qarsenic.asp>.

Until Plumas Eureka has the arsenic levels below the federal standard and you are concerned about your families health, you might consider installing a home filtering system that removes arsenic. There are several different systems available that range from under the sink models to whole house systems. Be careful when choosing a system and make sure it has been certified by NSF International to remove arsenic. Call NSF International at 1-800-NSF-MARK or visit their web site at <http://www.nsf.org> to check if the system you are considering is certified or not.

To find out more information regarding arsenic in drinking water, visit the EPA web site

<http://www.epa.gov/safewater/arsenic/index.html>.

As always, feel free to call the office if you have any questions.

**Emergency Response Plan by Rich Machado & Vern Wiemeyer**



Your CSD Board wants to develop an Emergency Response Plan to help our community be prepared to survive unknown disasters. In July CSD Board members contacted community representatives such as Homeowner Associations and business owners and obtained positive responses to develop an District Emergency Response Plan. A follow up meeting was planned. In August a letter was sent to 'concerned community members' to meet in September to set up a committee to develop our District Emergency Plan. A CSD Board representative, the Fire Chief, the Assistant Fire Chief and one representative from the community attended.

The CSD Board feels that an Emergency Response Plan is important to have in place. This summer we had four fires in our immediate area, any one of which could have become a disaster had there been windy conditions. In the past we have had to deal with flooding and road closure, as well as heavy snows along with power outages. Other potential hazards do exist in our area. Some of these dangers

make it imperative that we have existing plans in place to help ourselves survive on our own prior to county, state or federal help arriving.

As of now there is no Community Emergency Preparedness Plan for our area. We would like to enlist your support should our community face a threat and we need your ideas on ways to handle these incidents.

If you would like us to develop a Community Emergency Response Plan, and you are willing to be involved, please call the Fire Department office at 836-0532, Vern Wiemeyer at 836-4673 or Rich Machado at 836-2690. We look forward to hearing from you.

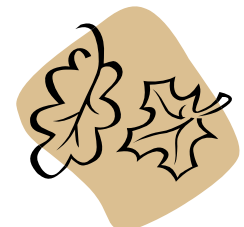
Rich & Vern



**From PEVHOA#7, Inc**

This past year has been fairly quiet as far as Association business is concerned. At our Annual Meeting in July the incumbents on the Board of Directors were re-elected and we had some good discussions regarding various issues including the probable need to re-roof units on the Cottonwood Drive side earlier than previously scheduled. The common roads on Cottonwood Drive and Poplar Valley Road had their cracks filled and sealant applied by Kustom Koatings out of Reno. There are several units up for sale and we have at least three new owners going into winter. Hopefully we will have a good (wet) winter without any major issues or problems. Take care and see you in the spring!

Bob Conen, President





### From the Chief

It has been a busy year for the Fire Department. We finally put into service a fire engine that was donated to us from San Bernadino County Fire Department. This fire engine is primarily designed for wildland fire fighting. This engine has already seen action at wildfires here in the area. We had to move a wall at the Fire Station to accommodate this engine as it was just a little too long. Thanks to Firefighters/Engineers Rich Machado and Craig Fox for all their carpentry skills and many hours of labor for moving the wall.

Plumas County had their share of major wildfires this fire season. The Cold Fire was the closest and one of the biggest in the County. Although we did not get involved in that fire, we were on standby for structure protection had it become necessary to protect the homes in the area. We are still in fire season as I write this article. As you know with the bad fire season here locally, I imposed a Ban on all open flame fires within the Plumas Eureka Fire District. I want to thank each and every one of you for supporting the ban and keeping our community safe from the threat of wildfire. The open flame ban will be lifted when CalFIRE officially declares fire season over for Plumas County.

Our firefighters have been busy training and responding to calls this year with our neighbors and partners, Graeagle Fire District. Our auto-aid dispatching to calls and joint fire and medical training has been and continues to be a great benefit to both of our communities. However we still are looking for a few more volunteers to join our ranks. We have been negotiating with our Board for some stipend increases and paid training for our volunteers in the hopes that we can 'interest' a few more of you in the community to help out as a volunteer firefighter.

The Plumas Eureka Community Auxiliary was busy again raising funds for the Fire Department by hosting and putting on two very successful pancake breakfast's this year. They also contributed to the annual golf tournament and hosted the ever popular "Firefighters Appreciation Dinner". Thank you all for your hard work and support for the volunteer firefighters, we really do appreciate you!

Your fire department recently mailed out our very first edition of "The Responder" newsletter. This was the creation of Assistant Chief Tom Forster and his wife Maureen. This is a very informative and a very well done newsletter. I want to personally thank Tom and Maureen for a wonderful job! We will be publishing these twice a year, in the summer and winter. If you have any comments about the publication, please contact the Editors at [pefdresponder@me.com](mailto:pefdresponder@me.com) or by calling 530-836-1086.

As winter slowly approaches and we start firing up those stoves and furnaces to knock off the morning chill, please remember to clean and check those chimneys, flues and stove pipes. Be extra careful with your wood burning appliances and as the holiday season approaches, with your lighted decorations and Christmas trees. The holiday season is also a good time to change the batteries in your smoke detector. I personally try to change them twice a year, once when Daylight Savings starts and again when it ends on November 2<sup>nd</sup>. If for some reason you do not have a working smoke detector and cannot afford one, please contact me at the Fire Station and I will provide you with one at no cost to you.

On behalf of the Plumas Eureka Firefighters and myself, we wish each and everyone of you the best. May you all have a wonderful and safe Holiday Season and a great New Year.

Respectfully, Gary Castagnetti, Fire Chief

**PEEHA (Plumas Eureka Homeowners Association)**

The annual Association dinner meeting was held at Longboard’s Picnic Grounds on Saturday August 23<sup>rd</sup>. Attendance this year was at an all-time high, with 96 barbequed dinners served. In addition to an overview of Association activities and plans, an excellent presentation from CSD General Manager Frank Motzkus, and Fire Chief Gary Castagnetti brought homeowners up-to-date on activities of the Community Services District. The Board received a number of complements on our efforts to keep property owners informed on important issues affecting the Community at large.

This annual dinner meeting will be held again in the summer of 2009. A notice and invitation will be mailed to all property owners in Plumas Eureka Estates in early summer next year.

The Board is pleased to announce two new members who will commence two year terms next year. Donna Lage and Woody Barry were unanimously elected to replace Bob Randall and Mark Smith. Our thanks to both Bob and Mark for their contributions. We are looking forward to the involvement of Donna and Woody.

A Board Meeting will be held before the end of the year to elect officers and to set the agenda for 2009.

We wish all a great winter. Let’s hope we get the snow and moisture so badly needed.

Thank you, The PEEHA Board of Directors

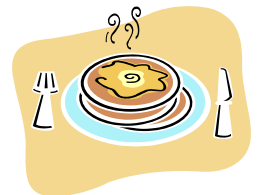


**From the Plumas Eureka Community Auxiliary**

The Auxiliary is happy to announce a very successful 2008 Membership Drive. To date, \$6480.00 has been received from 309 memberships. We especially would like to thank 35% of you who made additional donations to the \$10.00 annual fee.



Your interest, support and generosity have allowed us to contribute \$3,000.00 towards the recent purchase of a command vehicle for the Volunteer Fire Department. We recently sponsored the annual Firefighters Appreciation Dinner at the Coyote Bar and Grill with 24 people in attendance for a fun evening, a great meal and a video presentation by the Forster’s to highlight the year’s departmental activities.



We look forward to your continued interest in supporting the Auxiliary, and to your attendance at both of the annual Pancake Breakfasts.

Remember, we’re always in search of additional volunteers to join us on the Auxiliary Board and would welcome additional participants!

Thank you

Sue Carrera and Muriel Aman

**This n' That from Teresa****In case of whatever**

Sometimes we notice things at homes here in the District as we are making the daily rounds. Mostly it's a malfunctioning irrigation system. But it doesn't matter what it is, can we get in touch with you if there is something we need to notify you about!? In other words, do we have your phone number? Do we have your email? If you don't think we do, then give us a call or send us an email and let us check. We would like to have everyone in the district (with email) in our system.

**“Just top it!”**

The last time we called our recycler to pick up our aluminum and redeemable plastic, she spent over two hours just removing the tops from the bottles. Please throw the tops out before dropping your redeemable recycles off here at the Fire Department.

**The question is – is it redeemable recycle (CRV), recyclable plastic, or refuse?**

Please check the labels on your plastic containers to ascertain that they are indeed redeemable recyclable (CRV). I recently sorted through the recycle area (removing said bottle tops) and literally filled up three large trash bags with GARBAGE! Most all of our donators follow the rules and just leave aluminum and recyclable CRV plastic, but there are some that just figure that if its plastic it's okay....NOT!! **We accept CRV plastic and aluminum cans only.** Please – no milk cartons, shampoo bottles, pill bottles, glass, etc. Non-CRV plastic (#1 or #2) and glass containers should be taken to a recycling center. Thank you.

**Project Santa**

We have a donation box located just outside my office, for Project Santa Claus. We have been a drop zone for this local charity for over thirteen years!! Donations were a little thin last year as we only called three times for pick ups. Perhaps we'll do better this season. What to donate? Monetary donations are always good because right after Christmas, the staff of Project Santa Claus goes shopping at all the clearance sales. You can also donate new clothes, toys, games, toiletries, music CD's and movie DVD's, etc. Age range is birth to teen and the Project Santa Elves also make up goodie packages for the elderly, so think of them too when you're shopping for donations to Project Santa.

**JUST A REMINDER....**

The tree lighting ceremony and Santa's visit is scheduled for Saturday November 29th at the Fire House. Bring your friends and relatives and kick off the Christmas season with Santa, carols, and holiday cheer!

**Sweatshirts too!!**

We have added sweatshirts to our stock of Fire Department tee shirts and caps for sale here at the Fire House, just drop by or call if you are interested.

Have a fine Holiday Season and an even better New Year.

Teresa





*See you next time!!*

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**PLUMAS EUREKA CSD**

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