

Mt. Hood Forest Homeowners Association

FALL/WINTER 2012

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President's Message *by Paula Hoiland*

The MHFHA Annual meeting and picnic was held June 23rd up on the mountain and it was a very cold and rainy day. Obviously summer started out cold and rainy yet has ended with one of the nicest stretches of weather in many years. We had over 100 cabin owners at the meeting and the theme of the meeting dealt with the security issues and concerns due to the cabin break-ins that have plagued us. Since the meeting we have been working with the Zigzag Forest Service team to agree on the placement and installation of the Forest Watch Program that was unveiled at the summer meeting.

It has been a slow process due to the coordination with the Forest Service and SHPO. Due to the historic designation of several tracts on Mt Hood, SHPO must also approve the placement of each sign. We are still hopeful to have the signs installed before winter sets in.

The Cabin Fee Act is progressing against a ticking time clock. The passage of the House Bill 3397 on September 10, 2012 was a huge success for all cabin owners. Chairman Doc Hastings from Washington State made this happen and we should all express our gratitude to he and his staff. On the Senate side we are hoping for passage during the Lame Duck session following the November elections. Currently there are some issues with the language of the Senate bill, specifically wrangling over the inclusion of a periodic 10 year review of fees to ensure that they continue to reflect 'fair market value' for the use of the land. As of yet this issue has not been resolved although C2 and ENR staff are working hard to come to an agreement. It is critical that CFA bill be passed during the Lame Duck session of the 112th Congress. MHFHA and NFH will continue to keep all cabin owners posted on new developments.



Join the MHFHA Board of Directors. We have an opening and interested cabin owners are invited to attend our Nov. 5th Director Meeting (contact us for details). Also needed is a Mt Hood Representative to join the Oregon Forest Homeowners Association (OHFA) Board of Directors. Please contact us if you are willing to serve! It's fun and rewarding to be involved in the cabin program.

It's Time to Winterize Your Pipes! *By David Jacob, Water Master*

Winter is coming, time to winterize your plumbing in your cabin. If you have had problems in the past, you know what it is like. To prevent this **Shut off** the water ; **Drain** your piping, of course remember to turn off the hot water heater first. Look for low points in the piping to ensure the water can get out . If not get a plumber to install low point drains, or blow compressed air to clear out the water.

If you just insulate your pipes, it will then freeze in two days instead of two hours, (unless you provide a heat source. but that is not reliable, since that requires power). To prevent the drain traps from freezing, get some RV antifreeze and pour some in all the drains including the toilet tank and bowl. RV antifreeze is propylene glycol which is not a poison.



DID YOU KNOW?.....

Our special permits from the Forest Service state many conditions and rules. Here are just a few to be mindful of:

- Any outside building improvements, i.e. siding, new windows, doors, roofing etc. must be approved by the Forest Service BEFORE you proceed.
- All stacked wood that is covered must be done with either green or brown tarps—No Blue Tarps.
- When renting your cabin, the Forest Service limit is 30 calendar days a year or 6 weekends per year.
- Yard lights are approved, but they must be, when illuminated automatically only when the cabin is occupied. NO lights that automatically come on at darkness are allowed at any other time.
- Any color changes to outside structures must be approved by the Forest Service BEFORE you paint etc.

Our permits state that we must get permission from the FS prior to any outside or exterior work.

“Perfect for long lazy walks along the creek observing the hundreds of spawning salmon “

Leanne Veldhuis was hired by the Zigzag Ranger District to replace Christy Covington, a position that has been vacant for close to 18 months. Leanne is the new “Special Uses Program Manager” and can be reached at lveldhuis@fs.fed.us or by calling 503-622-3191.

Leanne oversees the Recreational Residence Program so we should all see some benefit to having an additional FS person to contact.

Amazing September

by Scott MacCaskill



Absolutely astonishing, mind-boggling, even breathtaking! I’m referring to the month of September on Mt. Hood of course. Simply the most perfect-perfect-perfect month ever! Perfect for long, lazy walks along the creek observing the hundreds of spawning salmon and changing autumn leaves. Perfect for splitting and stacking cords of seasoned wood, completing delayed summer projects and tackling winterizing tasks. Perfect for unplugging and being a complete and total “slug.” I have Oregon Duck football tickets, but given the choice between fighting game day I-5 traffic, beer- drinking crowds, drowsy late night returns, and experiencing the “perfection” of the mountain, the decision is effortless. Sometimes alone, sometimes with family, and sometimes with great friends, no matter how you experienced it, September thoroughly exposed the joys of owning a cabin at Mt. Hood. The cabin is about positioning yourself and your family in a space that draws out the good and meaningful parts of life. You’re not impressing anyone or attempting to keep up; you’re simply getting to the core of what’s absolute, real, and basic in life. You experience deeper conversations around the dinner table, unattainable while dining out. You play table games you wouldn’t care to dust off at home, and you sit by the fire sharing stories you wouldn’t get the chance to hear during the routine of daily life at home. September was amazing for doing it all...historic really, and one I’ll personally never ever forget.

TARGET SHOOTING IN THE MT. HOOD NATIONAL FOREST

by Carolyn Raz



I'm guessing that many cabin owners have been more than concerned (or at least annoyed) by the sounds of gunfire shattering the pristine silence in our forest. If you're like me, the sounds of gunshots are concerning because you don't know for sure if bullets may fly close by. Most often, though, the safety concern is followed by the litter that is left behind along with destroyed signs and damaged target trees.

Just a mile or so above Rd. 34 is a rock quarry. If one walks onto the Powerline Road toward the quarry you come to a "shooting range". The roadway is blocked by giant boulders (thanks to the Forest Service several years ago) but that has had little if any affect as a shooting deterrence. The shooters have set up paper targets, potatoes, painted fluorescent orange on sticks, and everything from old dinner plates to stuffed toys as targets. The shooters have even come with rakes to push aside the layers and layers of spent shells and shattered target items. Additionally, large black plastic trash bags filled with trash are often dumped there.

On my frequent Forest walks, I come across places with hundreds of spent shells and the accompanying trash. I try to pick up as much as possible, but there needs to be a consequence if the shooters are caught creating and leaving trash. The irony is that shooting in the National Forest is LEGAL ... but trashing the forest is not! There are rules, of course, but it's obvious they are unenforced particularly due to budget constraints. There is only an admonition in the Forest Service regulations and that's to keep the Forest clean by removing the casings and targets. Yeah, right. Either the shooters haven't read the regulations or they don't care. We must credit the Forest Service, though, for placing safety first.

Here are the Forest Service published safety guidelines:

1. "ALWAYS keep the gun pointed in a safe direction."
2. "ALWAYS keep your finger off the trigger until ready to shoot."
3. "ALWAYS keep the gun unloaded until ready to use."
4. "ALWAYS be sure of your target and what is beyond your target."

It is unsettling when you are around people firing guns. It is dangerous and concerning. If you come across shooters and it is safe to do so, take a picture of, or write down, the shooter's car license plate. If you later find the area where the shooter was is damaged or trashed, give the information to the Forest Service. We must all stay vigilant and help the Forest Service keep our forests not only safe but clean from trash.

Your Voice Has Been Heard

The survey results are in, the responses were tabulated and we heard from over 35% of all cabin owners:

* Over 96% (positive) find the newsletter useful and informative.

* You were equally split on the top two topics, information wanting to see local news and 'do it yourself articles'.

* Over 80% of you visit the website at least once a

month.

* The usage of the cabins is: less than 15 nights is 20%, 16-30 nights 28%, 31-45 nights 26%, 46-60 8% and 18% more than 60 nights a year.

* Lastly, what you liked were the road/snow updates, the C2/CUFFA happenings.



Have You Recently Moved or Changed Your E-mail Address?

Please don't forget to keep us informed of any changes. You can email us at info@mhfha.com or send a note to: MHFHA ... PO Box 82351... Portland, OR 97282



Notes from the Treasurer:

Thank you very much to the 332 cabin owners that responded to our request for financial support this year. This is 61% representation of the cabins. Many of you were also very generous in additional support for the ongoing effort being carried out in Washington, DC. Your generosity allowed us to pass along another \$6,000 to C2 in August. This brings our total financial support from Mt Hood cabin owners to \$22,000 since 2008.

In the spring mailing, we included a brief survey and had a surprisingly high percentage of responses. Of those responding, there were 30 that used their cabin more than 60 days a year and another 28 that have 46 to 60 days annual use. The national average for all Forest Service permitted cabins is 62 days a year. How do you measure up?

Since we have gone to two newsletters a year some folks have opted to send in their support during the fall mailing rather than the spring mailing. When you wait until the fall to respond, this excludes you from receiving the fall newsletter by email because we need to verify your information by way of the return card. So you may find that you have requested the fall letter by email but still receive it in your mail box. We would love to have everyone on the same cycle, as this simplifies the work load. If you would still like to receive all the newsletters by postal mail, that is OK. Our costs would be less if all memberships were returned in the spring allowing fall mailings to include the newsletter minus the additional return card and envelop.

We really do appreciate all the support that MHFA receives from the cabin owners.

The Zigzag Ranger Station is going through construction to add to their space. Therefore, the current office will be closed until the project is complete—approximately in the Spring of 2013. In order to see Fran or Leanne, you must call or email and make an appointment—no drop in visits. Call Fran at 503-622-2031. Her new fax number is 503-622-3056.



Insight Into Good Septic Care

Many cabin owners on Mt Hood have septic systems. Our Operational Maintenance agreement states, “Permit holders will pump and inspect the septic/ systems that serve their cabins on a regular basis and will ensure that these systems are in good working order.”

So here are some tips on how to keep your septic system in good working order:

1. Have your system inspected every 3 years.
2. Discourage root damage by keeping trees out of the septic drain field. Trees with very aggressive roots, such as willows and alder should be discouraged from the drain field.
3. Never flush cat litter, disposable diapers, sanitary napkins, tampons, paper towels, facial tissues, coffee grounds, or cigarette butts and filters.
4. They'll clog your septic tank in less time than you might imagine.
5. Overuse of heavy cleaners kill beneficial bacteria in the septic tank, so solids won't break down as well. RV antifreeze in the toilet and sink trap during the winter is OK for the septic, but minimize the practice if you can.
6. Grease can clog the septic drain field, making it impossible for soil to absorb liquids so don't pour it down your drain.
7. Use toilet paper that degrades easily. Suggested brands include Kirkland and Scotts. Brands to avoid tend to be the multiple layer 'super soft' thick varieties.
8. Assist good biodegrading by using one of the products available like Rid-X and other septic enzyme adjuncts. Yeast packets work also.