
TIMBERLAKE TIMES

TIMBERLAKE LANDOWNER'S ASSOCIATION • HC 61 BOX 767 • RAMAH, NM 87321

MARCH 2012

TREASURER'S PONDERINGS

By Eileen Domer

Before joining the Board in the fall of 2006 I had been a critical care nurse, was a stay home Mom, responsible for our home finances, had been involved with fund raising as the PTO President for the Schools our daughters attended and was attending college to earn a Bachelor's Degree. We love Timberlake, so when I was asked to serve, I said "yes".

Being a Board member of the Association both as a full time resident, and now as non-resident has been educational and challenging. As a Treasurer I am accountable to over 500 landowners.

I learned how to use Excel spreadsheets, do internet searches for products, resources and people. I became familiar with accounting terminology like "cash base" systems and "accrual systems", learned the differences between an audit and attestation. I learned how property liens worked, how to research titles at the County Clerk's office and how the legal system works to resolve nonpayment.

Setting up the Association's budget was a real eye-opener. It wasn't just enough to know if there is enough money to pay the bills, but rather it was planning for the long run. Things we considered are: What has a job cost in the past? What will a job cost five years down the line? What work and equipment will be needed to take care of the roads, buildings and land? How long will a piece of equipment last? Before my tenure as a Board member the only thing I knew about a road grader was that it was big and usually yellow. Now I know the product names, how much it cost to buy and maintain, what kind of accessories our roads require, that it cannot be used in the mud and that only a few people are qualified to drive one.

Once the budget was decided on, then it had to be defended. A challenge when there are so many "Monday morning quarterbacks".

Going through boxes of records was interesting. We wanted to improve the Ranch and did not want to repeat the past mistakes.

One way to avoid past mistakes was to communicate; so I rewrote all of the standard letters, worked closely with the Bookkeeper, set up time lines and sent more letters/emails; turning the Income portion of the budget into a job instead of a record keeping exercise.

The income portion of the Budget considered: What percentages of landowners are not paying their dues? We found it was about eight percent. Then what will it cost all Landowners to insist on the timely payment from that eight percent? How can that cost be kept to a minimum, so gravel can be purchased and roads maintained.

My challenge is to raise the level of awareness of the importance of the dues for keeping the Landowner's Association and Timberlake Ranch healthy.

I now live in Middletown, NY and I'll admit it has been difficult to keep as focused on the issues when there is no one to run into at the post office/mail boxes and going to town for anything only involves driving five miles or 15 minutes on a paved road.

The best thing about being a Board member has been getting to know my fellow Board members. We all work for the improvement of the Association and never for personal gain. Over the years there were disagreements, angry emails and phone calls; but I never doubt their intentions.

I have one more year to serve and plan to keep improving the billing system. I look forward to working with new Board members so when my husband and I return to Timberlake full time it will still be the place with which we fell in love.



Fire Danger in Timberlake

Many of us who live here observe first hand how vital and important the Timberlake Volunteer Fire Department is to our community. Two separate occurrences - the home hit by lightning and the residential fire this last year could have decimated the community had it not been for their rapid response.

So far the moisture from snow this year is abysmal. It is continuing to show the downward trend from 82" in 2009/2010 to 53" in 2010/2011 to only 42" at the time this article is being written. There may be no safe window period for the Brush Pile at TCC Ranch House to be burned this winter/spring.

We all are very aware of how fast a simple lack in judgment or common sense can devastate lives. Burn Permits need to be acquired from the Timberlake Volunteer Fire Dept. if you intend on burning slash or other wood products on your property. Unattended campfires or camp stoves are dangerous to everybody or the tossing of a lit cigarette.

In 2008 Timberlake was given the highest NFPA 1144 (National Fire Protection Plan) hazard rating in the CWPP (Community Wildfire Protection Plan) for McKinley County. The following reasons were cited:

- Heavy fuel loads (Amt. of fuel, e.g. vegetation, plants, shrubs, trees, in terms of weight of fuel per unit area)

- One road in and out
- Narrow, winding roads
- Terrain conducive to unfavorable fire behavior
- Defensive space less than 30 feet around structures
- Paucity of water
- Structures lack fixed sprinkler system
- Utilities above ground

At the February Board of Directors meeting it was discussed that a self-imposed fire ban may be the only option to help dampen the angst of a catastrophic fire. If you see the Timberlake Ranch fire signs when entering Cloh Chin Toh and at the McGaffey/Timberlake junction area, please obey and protect your investment.



First days of the Wallow fire south of Springerville • June 2011

COMMONS REPORT

Winter brings slow progress to projects for obvious reasons.

The project of replacing the two screen doors on the Ranch House and widening the rock walkway to front porch were halted due to Elton White's unfortunate accident. He thankfully has recovered and work will begin again this spring.

Projects for 2012:

- Assessment of donated swing set for cost to upgrade because of safety concerns.
- Clean and aesthetically enhance entrance to Shorecliff Drive/Timberlake South.
- Collaborate with Cibola County to clean cattleguard into Timberlake near McGaffey

intersection and repair fence with equestrian access.

- Repair pasture fence in Commons and place chains/locks on the "farmer gate".
- Install two screen doors to library rooms at TCC Ranch House.
- Tree and brush cleaning along the South lake access road as time allows.
- Replace deteriorating picnic tables.
- Investigate using ceiling tiles to cover peeling paper/plaster on library room.

Please notify Don Parry (Commons Chairperson) or Linda Pedersen if you would like to be involved with any of the above projects.

Treasurer's Report First Half of July 2011-June 2012

TRLA'S income increased 2.5% from last year. The following charts compare this fiscal year with last year.

	July 1, 2011 Dec 31, 2011	July 1, 2010 Dec 31, 2010	% Difference
INCOME FROM DUES			
Current Year Dues	\$ 118,225.00	\$ 117,842.00	0.3%
Previous Years Dues	\$ 6,022.00	\$ 3,680.00	63.6%
sub total	\$ 124,247.00	\$ 121,522.00	2.2%
MISC INCOME			
Guest Member	\$ 1,303.00	\$ 1,610.00	-19.1%
Key Income	\$ 122.00	\$ 118.00	3.4%
Donation	\$ 100.00	—	
Finance Charges	\$ 2,712.00	\$ 2,098.00	29.3%
sub total	\$ 4,237.00	\$ 3,826.00	10.7%
Grand Total	\$ 128,484.00	\$ 125,348.00	2.5%

Expenses

Expenses for the first half of the year are \$71,755 (44% of the budget) 28.5% less than in the first half of the previous year.

	July 1, 2011 Dec 31, 2011	July 1, 2010 Dec 31, 2010	% Difference
Expenses			
Administrative			
Board	\$ 4,121.00	\$ 2,849.00	44.6%
Communications	\$ 400.00	\$ 132.00	203.0%
Financial	\$ 6,261.00	\$ 5,401.00	15.9%
Legal	\$ 4,714.00	\$ 427.00	1004.0%
sub total	\$ 15,496.00	\$ 8,809.00	75.9%
Ranch Operations			
Insurance	\$ 5,117.00	\$ 5,316.00	-3.7%
Emp. Wages & Taxes	\$ 2,577.00	\$ 4,846.00	-46.8%
Bldg & Commons	\$ 4,722.00	\$ 13,147.00	-64.1%
Equip Maint/Repair	\$ 2,732.00	\$ 5,495.00	-50.3%
Fuel	\$ 2,050.00	\$ 1,745.00	17.5%
Roads	\$ 32,712.00	\$ 54,235.00	-39.7%
Utilities	\$ 831.00	\$ 1,196.00	-30.5%
Truck Loan	\$ 5,360.00	\$ 5,360.00	0.0%
sub total	\$ 56,101.00	\$ 91,340.00	-38.6%
Grand Total	\$ 71,597.00	\$ 100,149.00	-28.5%

Administrative cost increased 75.9%. The increase was due largely to Legal fees for research on the proposed trail system, research water rights/use; property transfers, define guest membership responsibilities, and where TRLA was named as codefendant in landowner bankruptcies/bankforeclosures. There was an increase cost for Directors and Officer's insurance, office supplies, cost to maintain the copy machine, postage, newsletter layout, real estate taxes and the Bookkeeper's salary. No line item went over budget.

Ranch operations decreased 28.5%. The Bath and Ranch House renovations were mainly completed last year, there was less snow to plow, utility costs were kept to a minimum, and less gravel was purchased.

From February 2010 to December 2011 three lots were given to the Lawyer to begin foreclosure proceedings. One landowner settled with the Association and one lot was sold at auction by New Mexico. The new owner paid the back dues. The third lot is still in litigation.

There are approximately twenty new lots in the position for lien placement.

TRLA is not in financial difficulty; gravel will be purchased, roads will be maintained and other expenses covered.

The Budget Committee will develop the new budget in March.

We would like to Thank all for their timely payments. All figures can be found on the website: www.trnews.info

Sincerely, Eileen Domer, TRLA Treasurer

FISCAL YEAR	TOTAL 1st HALF -- January	
INFLOWS		
5009 Assessment Fees Total	\$ 124,247.17	\$ 28,278.15
Current Year Collections	\$ 118,225.48	\$ 26,294.38
Previous Year Collections	\$ 6,021.69	\$ 1,983.77
5011 Assessment fee Woodland	\$ 1,303.33	—
5915 Key Income	\$ 122.00	—
5920 Donations	\$ 100.00	—
5930 Finance Charges	\$ 2,172.00	\$ 408.00
TOTAL Inflows	\$ 128,484.50	\$ 28,686.15
EXPENSES		
Board		
6050 Annual Meeting	\$ <17.00>	\$ —
6103 Insurance-Dir. & Officers	\$ 2,492.00	\$ —
6140 Office Supplies & Exp	\$ 1,280.00	\$ 469.91
6160 Postage	\$ 331.00	\$ 895.00
6215 Subscription & Dues	\$ 10.00	\$ —
6290 Mileage-Board Members	\$ 25.00	\$ —
TOTAL	\$ 4,121.00	\$ 1,364.91
Communications		
6130 Newsletter	\$ 400.00	\$ —
6170 Website	\$ —	\$ —
TOTAL	\$ 400.00	\$ —
Financial		
6010 Accounting	\$ 5,120.00	\$ 750.00
6020 Audit	\$ —	\$ —
6250 Taxes - Real Estate	\$ 1,055.00	\$ —
6260 Taxes - Income	\$ 86.00	\$ —
TOTAL	\$ 6,261.00	\$ 750.00
LEGAL		
6110 Legal	\$ 189.00	\$ —
6111.01 Legal-Casutt	\$ 4,471.00	\$ 155.00
6111 Lien & Notary Fees	\$ 54.00	\$ —
TOTAL	\$ 4,714.00	\$ 155.00
Ranch Operations Insurance		
6090 Insurance-Workers Comp	\$ 642.00	\$ 112.00
6100 Insurance-Liability & Bond	\$ 4,475.00	\$ —
TOTAL	\$ 5,117.00	\$ 112.00
Employee Wages & Taxes		
6310 Wages		
6310.01 Grader Time (\$10,000)	\$ 683.00	\$ —
6310.02 Brushhog Time	\$ 121.00	\$ —
6310.03 Snowplow (\$2,600)	\$ —	\$ —
6310.06 Supervisor	\$ 30.00	\$ —
6310.06 Sanit. & Janitorial (W-9) (\$1,400)	\$ 660.00	\$ 50.00
6310.07 Ranch Hand (\$5,000)	\$ 1,048.00	\$ —
6310.08 Dump Truck Maint. (Labor)	\$ 26.00	\$ —
TOTAL	\$ 2,568.00	\$ 50.00
TAXES		
6220 Taxes - FICA	\$ 146.00	\$ —
6230 Taxes - Fed Unemploymt	\$ 15.00	\$ —
6240 Taxes - State Unemploy	\$ <3.00>	\$ —
6300 Mileage-Foreman & Employ	\$ —	\$ —
TOTAL	\$ 158.00	\$ —
Buildings & Commons		
6150 Operating Supplies	\$ 257.00	\$ —
6180 Bldg. Maint. & Repairs	\$ —	\$ —
6180.01 Ranch House	\$ 4,115.00	\$ 268.00
6180.02 Bath House	\$ 26.00	\$ —
6181 Common Land Maint Repairs	\$ 204.00	\$ —
6200 Sanit. & Janitor Supplies	\$ 129.00	\$ —
TOTAL	\$ 4,731.00	\$ 233.00
Equip. Maint. & Repairs		
6070.01 Dump Truck	\$ 1,757.00	\$ —
6070.02 Grader	\$ 123.00	\$ —
6070.03 Pickup	\$ 295.00	\$ —
6070.04 Tractor	\$ 546.00	\$ —
6070.05 Other	\$ 11.00	\$ —
TOTAL	\$ 2,732.00	\$ —
FUEL		
6311.01 Gasoline (1,500.00)	\$ 586.00	\$ 32.00
6311.02 Dyed Diesel (8,000.00)	\$ 1,464.00	\$ —
TOTAL	\$ 2,050.00	\$ 32.00
ROADS		
6190 Gravel	\$ 31,586.00	\$ —
6190 Road Maint. & Repairs	\$ 1,126.00	\$ —
TOTAL	\$ 32,712.00	\$ —
UTILITIES		
6270 Telephone	\$ 364.00	\$ 44.00
6280 Electric & Propane	\$ 467.00	\$ 116.00
TOTAL	\$ 831.00	\$ 160.00
6315 CONTINGENCY FUND	\$ —	\$ —
NOTES PAYABLE		
6105 Interest Expense	\$ 473.00	\$ 828.00
2216 F550	\$ 4,887.00	\$ 65.00
TOTAL	\$ 5,360.00	\$ 893.00
TOTAL OUTFLOWS	\$ 71,755.00	\$ 3,784.91
TOTAL Outflow after Rounding	\$ 71,752.00	\$ 3,786.00
Bank Accounts: 2/17/2012		
Deposits	\$ 61,059.12	
Blue:	\$ 41,536.50	
Reward:	\$ 1,520.49	
Contingency:	\$ 135,697.76	
TOTAL:	\$ 239,813.87	

History of the El Morro Valley - Part 2

The Conquistadores and the Seven Cities of Cibola By Dale Spencer

During the early 14th century, several renowned Spanish conquistadors explored the new world. In the year 1519, Hernan Cortes became one of the most prominently known of this first wave of Spanish conquistadors when he conquered the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlan (present day Mexico City). When Cortes and his soldiers first came upon the Aztecs, they were treated as very high ranking guests. Some even thought that Cortes was the emissary of the feathered serpent God Quetzalcoatl. Accordingly, they were lavished with golden gifts. The golden gifts only increased the greed among Cortes and his soldiers. They took Moctezuma II (the Aztec leader) hostage and for months extorted great wealth in gold and silver from the empire until the Aztecs could stand no more and rebelled. Outnumbered by an incredible margin, soldiers fled in fear for their lives, losing a substantial portion of their treasure in flight. Cortes survived and his exploits became famous among Spaniards seeking their fortune in the new world.

Only a few years later, Francisco Pizarro, impressed by the exploits of Cortes, began his own quest to find and capture the gold of the Inca's. In 1532, Pizarro was successful in his conquest and like Cortes, he captured vast amounts of gold and obtained large quantities of emeralds. Together, these stories of golden conquest drove many future conquistadors and their soldiers to explore vast tracts of the new world seeking similar golden rewards in the years that followed.

In early 1539, Marcos de Niza, a Spanish priest was sent on a journey north from Mexico City by the newly appointed Viceroy Mendoza. Mendoza had recently been appointed Governor over all the territories north of Mexico City. Marcos was sent on this urgent mission in search of wealthy cities that were rumored to be somewhere north of the frontier of New Spain which ended near the present day Mexican border with the US.

Marcos returned later that summer and reported that he had discovered wealthy cities in a province he called Cibola near the present day pueblo of Zuni. In his report, he described a city larger than Mexico City with very impressive architecture up to five stories high. His observations were made from a distance of a few miles, however, Marcos was afraid to approach the city after his traveling companion and advance scout Estevan had been killed there in the days before he arrived to the area. His conversations with Indian trading partners familiar with Cibola related stories of great wealth and cities with jeweled doorways. Upon laying eyes on the impressive architecture from Cibola, Marcos was further told by his native guides that each of the seven cities of Cibola increased in wealth as one progressed along the trade route and that this was the least wealthy of the seven cities.

Marcos de Niza was the first European to report seeing the fabled seven cities of Cibola. He hastily retreated to Mexico City after laying eyes on Cibola rather than risking death to enter. When he returned with his report "Relacion" to the Viceroy, a great deal of excitement ensued. Soon thereafter, a very substantial investment was made to launch the Coronado expedition to Cibola in 1540 with hopes of

capitalizing on the riches believed to be there. Some historians believe that his expedition was launched preemptively since Cortes was already building ships for a sea-based campaign to the area.

Historical writers have often said that de Niza made claims of finding gold in Cibola but there is no record of this in his written report to the Viceroy. He did report good and prosperous lands and advanced architecture with turquoise inlaid doorframes in a city he claimed was larger than Mexico City. These reports most likely led treasure hungry conquistadors to assume Cibola would be as wealthy as the Aztec and Inca empires had been. Marcos guided Coronado's army back to Cibola in 1540, but he quickly became a scapegoat when Cibola turned out to have no gold.

A question debated over the years is whether Marcos was forthcoming in his account of Cibola or for that matter whether he actually traveled there. Marcos de Niza was a priest with good reputation yet the soldiers that followed him to Cibola felt deceived once they got there. Marcos was accused of lying and his reputation never recovered. He died disgraced several years later. Some historians believe that Marcos may have fallen victim to exaggerated tales from Indians along the trading route. In fact, the Coronado expedition followed up on several of the native stories in hopes of substantiating their claims of great wealth in the region but were disappointed every time.



Some historians have speculated that Marcos made up stories of gold in conspiracy with Viceroy Mendoza to attract investment and encourage further conquest to the north. Some even say he couldn't have made the trip in time he claimed but there is some corroborated evidence that Marcos did make the trek. One sure example was his ability to lead Coronado's expedition back to Cibola in the following year. Perhaps the most convincing evidence was Coronado's confirmation of Estevan's death at Cibola when the Spaniards arrived there.

The route of Marcos in 1539 has been speculated for years by archaeologists. We know that he began his journey on March 8th and journeyed north following a trail inland from the coast of Baja California until reaching present day Matape Mexico. According to reports, de Niza sent a party west from Matape on April 7th where they discovered that the

History of the El Morro Valley - Part 2 ~ Continued

coast curved to the west rather than the east. At this point, they were near the top of the Sea of Cortez in the gulf of Baja California. When they returned, de Niza continued on northeastern track into southeastern Arizona continuing along well traveled Indian trade routes along the western border of the Gila wilderness. On May 9th he set forth on the final 15 day trek through unpopulated lands crossing over into present day New Mexico before finally arriving in the Cibola province around May 24th.

Marcos de Niza was the first person of European descent to record the name of Cibola. His traveling companion Estevan, first heard the term from Indian contacts during the trip. The term Cibola derives from the Zuni term for buffalo, and refers to the extensive trade in buffalo hides and other buffalo products, conducted from Cibola. The Indians of the region often made trade trips north along the well-established Cibola trail, to trade at Cibola for buffalo hides and turquoise.

Earlier in the trip, Marcos sent Estevan ahead to survey the forward route while Marcos waited for the party of scouts he sent west to bring back information about the coast. Estevan was an experienced scout and often adopted the persona of a native shaman. He typically preceded the traveling party into villages, paving the way by impressing the locals. Estevan had been given orders to send back word and to wait for Marcos. Later, Estevan sent back word that he had been told of the existence of a wonderful northern trade center named Cibola. He was told that Cibola, "the greatest thing in the world", was roughly another 30 days travel from there. Estevan was so excited by this news that he moved ahead against orders.

Continuing on, Marcos came to the region of southeast Arizona where the local Indians knew of Cibola. He questioned them and gathered consistently positive reports of the city and its wealth. The local Indians spoke of large multi-story dwellings made of stone, mortar and adobe with access by ladders. These reports proved to be quite accurate as it was later found that the pueblo structures gave the impression of three to five stories in height and were quite impressive when compared to the simple huts of the Indians Marcos met along the way.

Marcos tried to catch up to Estevan but remained a few days behind all the way to Cibola. Earlier on he wrote about showing samples of gold to the local Indians, in order to learn if gold could be found in the area. He was told that Indians in the inland mountains, to the east, were alleged to have gold but surprisingly, in the case of Cibola, Marcos never mentions gold in his report. He does note that turquoise is traded in the area and that turquoise was embedded in some door frames. This apparently led to a belief by the conquistadors that Cibola had doors and walls studded with jewels. Marcos later accused of lying although his official report was correct. It has since been confirmed that Zunis sometimes placed a "good luck" turquoise into the doorway of a home, but as Coronado was disappointed to learn, they had no great wealth, either in turquoise or gold.

As Marcos' party neared within a few days of Cibola, they were met by a small group of bloodied refugees from Estevan's entourage. They lamented that Estevan had ignored orders

from the governor of Cibola not to approach or enter the city. Apparently, the governor had been concerned about Estevan, given his peculiar dark-skinned shaman's appearance. Estevan, over-confident after many successful experiences impressing native villagers disregarded the governor's orders and attempted to enter the city anyway. He was seized and held captive for at least a day before being killed along with several of his native escorts.

Upon learning the fate of Estevan and his escorts, Marcos' guides almost turned on him, but after some convincing and a distribution of all his remaining gifts, Marcos talked his way out of the situation and continued on to Cibola with just small group of remaining guides. He is quoted in his report as follows:

"With these and my own Indians and interpreters, I pursued my journey until within sight of Cibola, which is situated on a plain at the skirt of a round hill. It has the appearance of a very beautiful town, the best I have seen in these parts. The houses are of the style that the Indians had described to me, all of stone, with stories and terraces, as well as I could see from a hill where I was able to view it. The city is bigger than Mexico City. At times, I was tempted to go on to the city itself, because I knew I risked only life, which I had offered to God on the day I started the journey. But, in the end, I was afraid to try it, realizing my danger and that if I died, I would not be able to make a report on this country, which to me appears the greatest and best of the discoveries I had made."

"When I remarked to the chiefs about how beautiful this city was, they replied that this one was the least of the seven cities. Furthermore, Totonteac, the still more distant kingdom, is even better than these seven. They said it has so many houses and people that it has no end."

At this point, Marcos returned to Mexico as quickly as possible. Marcos gives few details of his return trip. He returned to Mexico City by late August of 1539. This is evidenced by the certified copy of his report "Relación", dated August 26th and subsequent delivery of same to the Viceroy on September 2nd. Marcos return caused a period of intense rumor-mongering in Mexico City, as attested by numerous historians. Some historians believe that Marcos made claims about gold and fabulous wealth in Cibola but the official report "Relación" makes no such claims. A number of eyewitnesses accounts from the time report that Marcos talked of a "rich and populous" land to the north but there was no explicit mention of gold.

It is certain that Coronado's expedition in 1540 expected to find gold in Cibola and the investors who financed Coronado no doubt invested heavily for that reason. Indeed, Coronado's expedition to Cibola was not made without significant hardship and expense. The discovery that Cibola was not filled with gold was bitterly disappointing to Coronado and his soldiers. The expedition followed several leads. First to the west to the Hopi and Havasupai lands but these proved equally frustrating. In desperation the expedition followed new leads back east, winding through Texas and reaching as far as Kansas before eventually turning around and returning in defeat. Marcos was branded a liar but it is impossible to determine if Marcos actually promised gold. The records make no mention of it but there is speculation that he may have talked about it in private. Perhaps rumors simply took on a life of their own given the discoveries of Aztec and Inca gold a few years beforehand. Regardless, Marcos de Niza died in disgrace, a man of broken reputation.

Coming next--The details of Coronado's expedition...

Open Letter to Landowners of Timberlake Ranch Timberlake Needs You Now

A few years ago, Timberlake was in serious crisis. A group executed what was, effect, a coup. With vote proxies collected before the annual meeting, they took over the Board of Directors and proceeded to take what a majority of landowners believed to be a series of illegal and unilateral actions to attempt to dismantle Timberlake Ranch.

After an extended battle that included pleas to the State Attorney General, numerous sessions with a court-appointed mediator, and the destruction of trust and friendships, the entire board was eventually replaced. TRNews.info was created during that time in order to provide a method of communication for the majority of landowners who had a more positive vision for the future of this place.

We are relating this story now because that crisis occurred, in part, due to a failure of many of us landowners to remain vigilant and involved in the management of this wonderful place. We became complacent, relying on others to keep the ranch on a good course.

We are at a similar juncture today. We have had the luxury of a competent, hard-working, inclusive, and trustworthy Board for years. Linda Pedersen has been president for five years, during which time she and her crack team performed what we thought to be impossible. They put the Ranch on a sound fiscal basis, rewrote and obtained adoption of new CC and R's, and preserved and beautifully restored the ranch house for pennies on the dollar. But most importantly, they built this place into more of a community, in part by listening to everyone without judgment and making decisions based on the wishes of the landowners and what was best for Timberlake as a whole.

Some of those long-serving board members have left and others, including Linda Pedersen, will be leaving the board at the end of their terms in May. This is the point where we all need to get involved. We cannot make the same mistake we made a few years ago, by sitting on the sidelines and assuming a new board, led by a new president, will somehow come together and function well without our participation.

If you are willing to work (and this is very much a working Board), please sign up as a candidate for election to the Board of Directors and help maintain and enhance the beauty and value of this place. Both of us are past presidents of TRLA and we speak from experience when we tell you it is highly rewarding and important service. Timberlake needs you now.

Tim Amsden & Roger Irwin, Editors Timberlake-Ramah News

Ramah Trail System/TRLA Access Update

Provided by Mary Jo Wallen

The most recent information about the Ramah Trail System is that work on the trailhead (for parking) in Ramah on the west side of the old rodeo grounds should begin this summer along with the initial 1.2 mile trail in that area. The Youth Corp group will be housed in teepees, which should provide some great photography opportunities! We're hopeful that some of the Ramah High School kids will be able to secure employment for this project.

Over the winter the Board asked the law firm representing TRLA to give legal opinions on concerns if TRLA did partner with Adventure Gallup & Beyond (AGB) to build a trail(s) on our Common Land that can intersect with the main Ramah Trail system.

1. The law firm reviewed the Grant of Easement between Ramah Land & Irrigation and McKinley County and it states (1) that AGB is the "gatekeeper" contracted by the County to manage the public's use of the easement, and (2) that a similar easement would be offered to TRLA.

a. However, since we do not want our trail open to the public, the appropriate wording would be changed to accommodate our special needs. Our agreement would be with AGB or some other private entity and not the County.

b. There was no mention of Federal Funds, or federally imposed restrictions in the Easement Agreement. Public access to Ramah's land is limited to the use of the trail, not surrounding lands. If TRLA entered into a Grant of Easement with AGB, and such action was approved by the members, the law firm did not see any reason why TRLA's corporate status or structure would be compromised in any way.

2. It has been confirmed that if public funds are used to build a trail, then we would have to keep the trail open to the public. However, AGB acts as a "gatekeeper" and if we entered into an agreement with them, it's considered a private entity. In this case, we would be able to put signs up where the trails intersected, which would indicate that the trail coming down into Timberlake was "closed", "private property" and/or "no trespassing".

3. According to Doug Decker, McKinley County Attorney, the trail that was being considered on the south side of the lake is not in any immediate plans. As mentioned last fall, the Master Plan for the 300 miles of trails will extend over a 10-12 year period. The Special Assent of the Members would be necessary in order to "transfer" (i.e. grant an easement) part of the Common Areas for the trail system.

The Ad Hoc Committee that was established last September by the TRLA Board hopes to meet this spring when the weather is more conducive to determine access points which would be the least disturbing (sustainable) and optimizing recreational potential for Landowners. This objective bonds with the Vision Statement for TRLA "...to protect and enhance the values and enjoyment of Timberlake Ranch... and stewardship of the environment." The purpose of sustainable trails is to provide users a way to access natural areas on a defined path that's resistant to erosion and causes minimal damage to the environment. So far, the following landowners have expressed an interest in participating on this Committee: Rhett Renoud, Dr. Robert Crooks, Steve Wills, Nancy Dobbs and Mary Jo Wallen. If anyone else is interested, please contact Mary Jo Wallen at 783-4207, or email her at mrsdw19@aol.com

Several landowners attended an AGB meeting last November in Gallup and expressed our concerns to the AGB Board (pros and cons of our involvement). We intend to continue attendance at these meetings so we can be kept informed of the progress **bordering** our community. Meetings are always held at noon in the Gallup Chamber of Commerce Building -- normally the 3rd Monday of the month. Please call Mary Jo Wallen for more information.

As mentioned before, this Ad Hoc Committee is "exploring ideas" and will report to the TRLA Board. Once sufficient research has been done and reviewed by the Board and law firm, the entire membership will vote on whether or not we want to establish a trail(s) on our Common Land that will intersect with the main Ramah Trail System.

Telecommunications in Timberlake

Broadband is a term which includes a broad range of technologies, all of which provide high data rate access to the Internet and a continuous connection.

Satellite Options: HughesNet or Wildblue

HughesNet: Current customer's in Timberlake get download of 2432 Kbit/s and upload of 257 Kbit/s for \$60.

Usage is based on daily not monthly usage. Package deals and discounts can vary as another customer pays \$55 for 1000 Kbit/s download and 200 Kbit/s upload.

Wildblue: Current cost is \$149 startup fee with 5 Mbit/s download. 2 year contract. \$60/month. Usage based on monthly and not daily. Higher download packages available at a higher cost.

Note: Be sure to ask if they offer a (1) "vacation mode" where the system can be turned off if you are a part-time landowner or fulltime and take lengthy vacations and (2) if there is a price break for bundling with satellite TV providers. For example, if you bundle with Dish Network, a recent landowner only paid a \$49 installation fee and monthly fee is \$49.99 plus tax. There is no extra charge if usage is excessive during the month.

DSL (Digital Subscriber Line) provides a connection to the Internet through the telephone network. Download speed is much faster and monthly cost is substantially less than satellite systems. Currently CenturyLink has DSL to Ramah and Zuni. According to the manager for this region, there has been no talk, that is he is aware of, that would prevent DSL expansion to Timberlake and/or Fence Lake in the near future. Basic charge for DSL in Ramah is \$25/mo. with 1.5 Mbit/s download and .5 Mbit/s upload.

Television Options:

Dish Network

Direct TV

Selection of one of these depends on personal likes and dislikes with channel options. Things to consider is capability of taking modem to use at another geographical site and option to put on "seasonal or vacation" mode. Ask about bundling with broadband internet providers.

Landline Telephone:

CenturyLink: Basic charge with no long distance carrier and extras: \$26.66/mo. Seasonal rate/vacation mode: \$9.79/mo (requires four full working days to switch to active mode). The current customer office in Zuni will be closing the end of February. Repair personnel and service will not be affected.

Cellular Phone Service:

Cellular One has a tower by Ramah. Cellular One and AT&T cell phones may be able to acquire enough signal near the Ranch House or wherever there is a straight shot through the lake cliffs.

Verizon tower is located in Zuni. At the time this article is being written, we have not been able to ascertain what occurred with this tower in November/December 2011 which only allows a minimum data (internet) signal. Last year, Mary Jo and Dick Wallen provided information about the antenna/repeater system that they installed. Their cell service is still excellent with four (4) bars

available all the time. However, they had to discontinue their my-fi system because of the inadequate service (no or slow download capability) and no promise of a "fix". Landowners on Black Bear/Pinetree area have noted that they can no longer get any bars on cell phone where before there were at least (2) two bars.

Discussion:

We continue to research options for cellular telecommunication in Timberlake. The bureaucracy at the private, state and federal level combined with the pace of technology leaves the citizen's ability to get answers frustrating. The following are being investigated: FCC (Wireless Competition Bureau) and the FCC nationwide search for unserved areas being identified; Cellular Service regulations – federal or corporation imposed.

If you are concerned about communication and safety issues in Timberlake due to the "cellular telecommunication isolation", notify Mike Ripperger of the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission (mike.ripperger@state.nm.us) or PRC, Telecommunications Division, 1120 Paseo De Peralta, P.O. Box 1269, Santa Fe, NM 87501 Attn. Mike Ripperger, Bureau Chief. It would be helpful to copy the TRLA Board, so we can substantiate our concerns when we are talking with the FCC NM PRC, etc. You can email Linda Pedersen at pete137@juno.com or Mary Jo Wallen at mrsdw19@aol.com.

When expressing your concerns to Mike Ripperger, you could use the following comment along with your own opinions.

This is a doomsday scenario. If there is a major fire in Timberlake, the above ground utilities will burn quickly – phone, electricity – and there is only one road out. Our development has over 38 miles of gravel/dirt roads and during the summer/fire season, there could be anywhere from 300 to 600 people needing assistance. We have elderly people living in our development with serious health problems as well as quite a few landowners who need internet/cell/landline phone service for their businesses. Improved communications are a necessity, not a luxury.

Open Board Positions

Applicants wishing to run for a vacant three year Board position to be filled at the TRLA Annual Meeting on May 26th need to contact Mary Jo Wallen (505.783.4207 • mrsdw19@aol.com) or Linda Pedersen (505.783.2465 • pete137@juno.com) by April 15th. There will be three vacant positions to fill. You must be a Member in Good Standing to be considered. Material will be sent via email or postal to assist applicants in resume and the duties required of a Board Member.

Landowners interested in volunteering to validate and count ballots a week prior to annual meeting and at annual meeting are needed. Please notify Mary Jo or Linda if you can help. A Board Member will be present in order to certify that only ballots from Members in Good Standing are counted.

Roads Report

- Cliffside, Lake View Drive and road to the lake were brush hogged in November.
- Zetor tractor graded from Fire Station to Hwy 53 twice in November and Hwy 53 to the cattle guard (flats) once.
- Justin's Earthworks spread 119 tons of 2" leach rock on Cottonwood Loop and will be spreading an additional 120 tons on Oak Drive when weather and road conditions permit.
- 6.5 hours of snowplowing was performed in December with Zetor and F550.
- Zetor graded 16 hours in December and January – Canyon Rd at Hwy 53, Box S to the Flats three times, and Lake View Drive.
- Two inner tubes and a new tire installed for the Zetor in December and February.
- Snow chains adjusted on the F550.
- A total 15 hours of snowplowing occurred after the Valentine's Day snowfall with Zetor (7 hrs.) and F550 (6.5 hrs.).

Cibola County was out in December and McKinley County once in January and twice in February to remove snow. McKinley County will snowplow the main road from Hwy 53 to the Box S after it completes snow removal on all bus routes in the county. This can occur within 24 hours of accumulation of snow or longer depending on severity of the storm.



New Board Member

On February 18, 2012 Linda Shoppe was appointed to the TRLA Board of Directors to fill a vacant position.

Linda and her husband Dave first came to Timberlake Ranch in March of 1996. They instantly fell in love with the area and were fortunate a few years later to have their dream home in the Timberlake South subdivision.

Her main reason for wanting to serve on this Board is to ensure that all the improvements that have been accomplished by this Board over the last few years is continued forward, and concerned that it could easily back slide with lawsuits, dissension between landowners and the Board of Directors. She wants to see the dues going to improve the community and not attorney fees.

Linda served on the committee to revise the Covenants and Bylaws for Timberlake Ranch which resulted in one understandable set for the entire ranch and not five separate ones.

In her bio she stated, "I care deeply about our unique community and I want to do my part in hopes of retaining its beauty and rural atmosphere. But at the same time, I want to see continued improvements, to our common areas, and mainly to the roads.

Treasurer's Report Fiscal Year 2011-2012

MONTH: January, 2012 (see spreadsheet for detailed income, expenses and bank balances)

Income: \$28,686.15

Expenses: \$3,786.00

Significant expenses for January, 2012

- Office supplies & expenses: \$469.91 for paper, copying, January letters, Corrales POBx rental & parts for copier.
- Postage: \$895.00 stamped envelopes & reimbursement. Stamps/postage.
- Ranch House: \$268.00 framing, photos and fabric for Historic Room.
- Utilities: \$160.00 Telephone and electric.

COLLECTIONS:

Three landowners (7 lots) owe over \$1000.00. One lot has been sent to the state for delinquent property taxes.

Twenty-eight lots have not paid this year's dues.

Twenty-six lots are behind over two years.

Fifty-four are behind half year.

Found new owners for two lots. Both new owners agreed to pay past dues.

One landowner who owned two lots declared bankruptcy. Cannot find the owner of lot 010106M. Two liens have been filed. Will file 20 liens if landowners do not pay by March 31, 2012.

Respectfully submitted,
Eileen Domer, TRLA Treasurer 2/17/2012



Timberlake Neighborhood Volunteer Annual Yard Sale

The Volunteers are planning their annual yard sale in August. If you have things stored away in boxes, closets, storage room, or on shelves that you haven't used in two years, do you really need it?

Proceeds from the yard sales in the past years have funded the Community Bulletin Board, TCC Ranch House flag pole and flags, Book Room shelving and carousel cabinets for DVDs/VCR tapes, new stove for the kitchen, window treatments for the entire Ranch House, a display case for Historic Room and soon to be purchased picnic tables.

If you have items that you wish to give to a good cause call 505.783.2465 or 505.783.2457 or leave on the porch at the TCC Ranch House. We can store the items until August. Sorry, we can't take large appliances.

Does Your Property in Timberlake Have A Clear Title

Many of us when we first saw Timberlake were so in awe of the beauty, we couldn't wait to get a piece of paradise. We may have been young and never bought real estate before and trusted the sales person or person selling their property to be honest and knowledgeable. As we acquired more knowledge about real estate through personal experiences or dealing with unsavory situations as a Board member, we realized there can be major pitfalls in cutting corners and taking advantage of the deal that was "too good to be true".

Acquiring property can be through various means such as a property settlement agreement between Seller and Buyer, a transfer of title from one person to another, a quitclaim deed, Quiet Title, etc. In New Mexico, if you acquired property without going through a Title Company, a check should be done to insure your land has a clear title. "Clear title" is a phrase used to state that the owner of real property owns it free and clear of encumbrances.

Prior to the invention of title insurance, Buyers in real estate transactions bore sole responsibility for ensuring the validity of the land title held by the Seller. If the title were later deemed invalid or found to be fraudulent, the Buyer lost his investment. Title insurance these days can be complicated by a "standard" coverage versus additional coverage that can include parties in possession, unrecorded easements, survey protection, lien coverage, etc.

While most information concerning property transactions is available for public access, New Mexico is a nondisclosure state and sale value is private and confidential information. However, they do provide property information and ownership transfers. Is there a clear chronological conveyance recording of your property?

TRLA will place liens on lot properties when Association dues are not paid after a specified period of time. Because a lien is on the lot and not the landowner, the lien stays with that property. A lien can be forgotten after a long period of time unless there is painstaking attention given to detail. TRLA will not release a lien until the dues are current on the lot.

Cibola and McKinley County do not notify TRLA when property owners change. Property owners who personally sell their property do not notify us. Only in the case where the Buyers are using a Title Company, will the Title Company notify TRLA as they realize that Timberlake is deed restricted. TRLA will send invoices only to the owner of record on our books, not the county. If the previous owner does not forward correspondence to the Buyer or call TRLA's Treasurer about the sale, Association dues accumulate positioning the lot for a lien and eventual foreclosure.



Note of Thanks

To Rusty Richardson and Jack Mansperger who spent several hours clearing the main road and side roads after the 6-8" of snowfall on Valentine's Day.

To Don and Joleen Parry for the contribution of area rugs that added so much décor to the Library Room and Historic Room at the TCC Ranch House.

To Landowners that notify the Board when there is a change of address or email.

"At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us." Albert Schweitzer

Architectural/Maintenance Report

No official building plans have been submitted. However, through communications there is a possibility of a house addition and one to two homes that may be constructed over the summer.

A reminder to all landowners is that the Amended and Restated Covenants state:

"No construction or alteration of a structure on any Lot that requires CID approval, and no placement of any structure on any Lot that contains 200 or more square feet, shall occur without prior written approval of plans by the Architectural Committee."

How Did You Get Here?

With such a diverse population of landowners, we all have at least one thing in common – a love of this place we call Timberlake Ranch. There must be many stories as how each of us discovered it.

Please let us know how you came upon this beautiful setting hidden off of Highway 53. Was it word of mouth, advertisement or maybe just a wrong turn off the highway?

There has been much interest and talk as to how we could chronicle the stories and share them – how many are similar and what are unusual.

If you would please submit your story by mail to:

Nancy Wills
HC 61 Box 836
Ramah, NM 87321

or email at: lovintimberlake@hughes.net

We will compile the accounts and share "How Did You Get Here" in future Timberlake Times Newsletters.

If you prefer to remain anonymous please let us know and we will honor your request when we publish our findings in the future.

RETURN SERVICE
REQUESTED
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TRLA Board of Director 2011 - 2012

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South end of Ramah Lake - Nov-2011