

## BOARD MEETINGS

**Third Thursday,  
every other month**

**Country Club at 4:30 pm**

**Mutual Water Co. at 6 pm**

### **BOARD MEMBERS:**

#### **Country Club:**

President: Philip Hartley

Treasurer: J. Richard

Secretary: Clelia Baur

Director: Doug Bridges

Director: Christian Sidwell

Historian: Betty Helf

#### **Water Company:**

President.: Tom Smythe

Vice President: Vacant

Secretary: Barbara Eichten

Treasurer: Barbara Eichten

Director: Norma Simmons

Director: Richard Tracy

### **Administration Office**

8475 Harbor View Drive

Financial info: 707-279-8544

Fax: 707-279-0118

Send your eMail messages  
to

Visit our Website:

**Riviera-West.com**

**RivieraWest@gmail.com**

### **Office Hours/Days:**

**Monday-Friday**

**10 am to 4 pm**



*Riviera West Country Club  
Harbor View Mutual Water Company*

## News

November 2015

Visit our WEBSITE ... [Riviera-West.com](http://Riviera-West.com)

Issue 77

**Next Country Club Board Meeting is Nov. 19, 2015 at 4:30 pm**  
**Next Mutual Water Co. Board Meeting is Nov. 19, 2015 at 6:00 pm**

## President's Forum

### **Philip Hartley, President, Riviera West Country Club**

#### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

I know everyone is still stunned by the tragedy that has befallen fellow Lake County residents as the result of the Valley firestorm. It is heartening to observe and participate in the outpouring of community support for the victims. This event makes the efforts of the Riviera West community to increase fire safety even more noteworthy. This year just half as many properties were cited for fire safety infractions and the great majority of these property owners responded by clearing their properties and only forty fine letters were subsequently necessary. The Board is considering making inspections and reporting of dead and dying trees a year-round activity because of the danger these trees impose.

Jim Govern, our longstanding and capable maintenance person recently underwent bypass surgery and will be absent for an extended period.

*(Continued on page 2)*

### **Tom Smythe, President, Harbor View Mutual Water Company**

Dear Neighbors,

Well, we have made it through the summer with our new water plant. Our operators, Jeremiah and Eric, have learned some of the ins and outs of the new plant and operating system. Our water quality has improved (at least in my opinion). We have significantly reduced the amount of treated water to backwash filters, which has to be disposed of in the spray field. We will soon start on demolition of portions of the old water treatment plant that are no longer required. We also replaced a couple of broken water valves at Riviera West Drive and Mountain Crest found during a water main break .

Thank you all for your cooperation in conserving water during the drought. So many of you out there are really conserving, that I am embarrassed for not doing enough.

I have received the preliminary report for upgrading our water tanks (repair one and replace two). This will be discussed at our next Board meeting. The November Board meeting is canceled as two members are out of state and we do not have a quorum. I am trying to schedule a meeting in December.

Happy Holidays,

Tom Smythe

### **Water bills**

Meters are read during the first few days of every other month, billings are created immediately thereafter, and water bills are sent out, usually by the 5th. Your water bill is DUE UPON RECEIPT since it is for service you received during the two months just prior to the billing. Any question? Call the office ... 707-279-8544.

Jermiah and Eric from the water company are helping out and we will hire temporary services as needed. We wish Jim a full and speedy recovery.

The Board is also considering the creation of a position to manage the activities and operations of the association. Working in collaboration with the Harbor View Water Company Board, the thinking to date is to hire an experienced local person on consulting basis. This arrangement would create the most flexibility for the Boards, provide for a pay only for services rendered contract, and not obligate Riviera West to a new employee, i.e. there would be no taxes or federal deductions to pay and the Board could sever the contract with minimal notice. And, there would be no outside company to deal with. As of October, we are still in the discussion stage.

As the El Niño winter approaches we would ask all homeowners to pitch in to help forestall any damage by moving water. While the roads, gutters and storm drains in our community are a Lake County responsibility, they are going to be hard pressed to lend much preventative help this year because of the tremendous demands created by the Valley Fire. Therefore, we are kind of on our own. We have purchased a dozen pre-filled sand bags and wrapped straw tubes (called wattles) for emergency use by homeowners. These are stored in the back corner of the clubhouse parking lot. Homeowners are urged to think about potential moving water problems near their property and to take preventative measures including clearing street gutters of leaves, pine needles and dirt that block drains. We will hire some help for the process of clearing drains and other needed preparations. I have spoken with Lyle Swartz, Director of County Roads, who provided advice and helpful information on preparing for this winter.

**PLEASE NOTE THERE WILL BE NO MWC BOARD MEETING IN NOVEMBER**

**The Office will be closed the following days:**

**Wednesday, November 25th**

Closed

**Thursday, November 26th**

Closed in observance of Thanksgiving

**Friday, November 27th**

Closed for Thanksgiving

**Thursday, December 24th**

Closed in observance of Christmas

**Friday, December 24th**

Closed for Christmas



### **Holiday Parking**

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In an effort to keep plenty of parking available for guests for holiday gatherings, residents are reminded to use your garage and driveway for parking vehicles.



Ladies' Club meetings are held the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 10 am in the Clubhouse. September through May Ladies' Club Luncheon in June.

**Ladies' Club Meeting for Nov. will meet Mon. Nov. 23rd at 10:00 am**

**Upcoming Events**

**Dec 6th** Sunday - Christmas Open House, Ladies' Club 50/50 Raffle

**Jan 16th** Saturday - Crab Feed Date and Cost TBD, 50/50 Raffle

**Feb 20th** Saturday - Valentine Theme Dinner, 50/50 Raffle

Hosted by: Wilma and Harold Taylor

**Mar 19th** Saturday - St. Patrick's Dinner, BYOB 50/50 Raffle

Hosted by: Kerry and Doug Moore

**April 16th** Saturday - Brunch 11-2 p.m. 50/50 Raffle

Hosted by: Ladies' Club

**May 21st** Saturday - Mexican Fiesta  
Hosted by: Norma Simmons and Jan Wilson

**June-** Ladies' Club Luncheon, Date and Time to Follow

**BYOB**

**Cocktails & Appetizers served at 5:30 p.m. and Dinners at 6:30 p.m.**  
**Cost of most Dinners and Brunch are \$12**  
**Except Crab Dinner in January**  
*(Cost to be determined)*

- Norma Simmons Ladies' Club President



Ladies Boutique/Craft Fair sponsored by the Ladies' Club for November 6th has been postponed due to lack of participants.



*Happy Holidays!*

*From the Ladies' Club*





If you don't already have one, please remember that a Spark Arrestor should be installed on your chimney before burning any wood in your fireplace.

### **Make Your Retaining Wall Safe as well as Beautiful**

Retaining walls come in many styles and sizes. They can be very attractive and are useful landscaping elements, but they must be built properly to serve their purpose. The Riviera West Architectural Guidelines to Building state that retaining walls must follow the same height restrictions as for fencing: four feet in height along the street frontage and six feet on the rest of the lot. Retaining walls over four feet in height are required by the Lake County Building Department to be built to plan specifications drawn by a professional engineer.

According to the County Building Department, the four feet height limit might include the underground foundation of your wall. To be sure your wall is compliant with County building codes; we recommend that you check with the Building Department as you are planning your wall. For your information, two County documents containing important details about retaining wall permitting are posted on the Riviera West website on the "Architectural Committee" page.

**Reminder:** Riviera West property owners are required to submit a scale plot plan and materials list for approval prior to retaining wall construction. We look forward to speaking with you if you are planning to build a retaining wall.

Thank you for your help in keeping Riviera West a safe and attractive community and good luck with your property improvement projects!



**Clelia Baur**  
Chair, Architectural Control and Planning Committee

## Pioneer Families of Lake County

### Addison and Anderson Benson

Addison and Anderson Benson were twin brothers, born May 7, 1822, in Worcester County, MA. The Benson family later migrated to Angel's Camp, WI, where they operated a saw mill. However, once they reached Lake County, their lives diverged dramatically, according to Paul Benson of Kelseyville, a descendant of Addison.

When Addison first entered Lake County in the 1860's, he rode on a black horse up to the top of Mount Konocti. From there he could see the greenest spot in Big Valley, and it was on this spot that the Benson family homesteaded. After Addison saw Lake County, he convinced Anderson to come out as well.

Addison married a local Indian woman, Gepigul. Addison learned the Pomo language and went to live with Gepigul's tribe. They had three children, William Benson, Ellen Benson Giles and Thomas Benson.

William and his wife, Mary (Knight) Benson were well known for their skill in traditional Pomo art. Mary was a famous basket weaver, and Paul said he once met a teacher at the Art Institute in San Francisco who included Mary's work in his curriculum.

In addition the making baskets, William made items used in spiritual ceremonies. In an on-going correspondence with art dealer Grace Nicholson of Pasadena, William detailed his work in progress. In the 1920s and 1930s, he went to UC Berkeley to try to record Pomo language and culture. "He could tell at that time already that it was disappearing," Paul said. Mary died in 1930, and William in 1937.

Anderson Benson, who was the grandfather of Ross Benson, passed away in June 1998 at the age of 90, leaving behind a legacy of notable contributions to the county's pear industry. According to Paul, who is Ross' great nephew, Anderson was the one who developed the family property,

by homesteading and then by growing wheat. One of Anderson and Emeline (Thompson) Benson's children was Henry Benson, who was Ross Benson's father .

"Henry went to Stanford, and he got there on a bicycle by himself," Paul said. "To pay his way he built drafting tables at Stanford for the architectural students." Henry had almost completed his degree in electrical engineering when his father died and he had to come home and run the ranch.

The story goes that it was Ross' mother (Leta Dorn Benson) who told the boys they needed to grow pears. She convinced them to do it, and Ross' father, Henry, planted the first orchard on that homestead. To put the orchard in, he made his own track layer tractor in his blacksmith's shop. As it turned out, the orchard had to be taken out, because it wasn't the correct root stock .

Ross' father then took the tractor apart because he didn't think it worked very well, and he built a drilling rig out of the parts. He drilled wells all over the valley to raise money for the next orchard. He was the one responsible for drilling the wells on Big Valley Road. They needed wells all along that road, so they could spray to keep down the dust.

Ross was born September 6, 1907. He got involved in the ranch as soon as he could, then he went off to U.C. Davis, then transferred to Oregon State where he spent three years. He had to return home because of the Depression.

During World War II, Ross served in the U.S. Army in the Pacific Theater. When he returned home he got involved in running the ranch on his own. That's when he started doing the research plots for U.C. Extension. After eight years of research, he and his father figured out the method for fighting fire blight.

Ross was always an innovative person. He was always open to new ideas, ideas that would be completely unconventional to other people. He was the first in Lake County to use water applied by sprinklers as a method of frost protection, and he experimented with butane-fired orchard heaters. He contributed to research on fire blight and how bacteria contribute to frost damage.

**(Written by Cynthia Parkhill for the Record-Bee's "Pioneer Families" edition, March 27, 1999)**

*For these historical documents, we wish to give a special thanks to Betty Helf for her efforts.*