



# THE MOUNTAIN MEMO

VOL. 4, NO. 4

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**MAY THE JOYS OF THE SEASON EXTEND THRU THE NEW YEAR**

## THE COLORS OF FALL

Excerpts from the County Agent's corner in the Morgan Messenger

Despite appearances, nature doesn't paint with brush strokes. But, paint-by-numbers might be an accurate comparison, because each tree has its own fall color bound up in the chemical composition of the sap.

Complex chemical formulas provide the "instructions" on what color the leaves will turn. A tree might turn amber, gold, red, orange, or just fade from green to brown. It depends on how much iron, magnesium, phosphorous or sodium is in the leaves.

Scarlet oaks, red maples and sumacs, for instance, have a slightly acidic sap which causes the leaves to turn bright red. The leaves of some varieties of ash, growing where limestone is present, will turn a regal purplish-blue.

What prompts the change? Many people believe that a mischievous Jack Frost is responsible. Actually, however, it's not the weather but the relative length of the days and nights that starts the process.

As the days grow shorter and the nights longer, a chemical clock inside the trees starts up. A hormone that restricts the flow of sap to each leaf is released.

As autumn progresses, the sap flow slows. Chlorophyll, the chemical that gives the leaves their green color in the spring and summer, disappears. The

residual sap becomes more concentrated as it dries, creating the colors of fall.

As the leaves die and fall to earth, the forest begins a winter-long slumber. The leaves, which through the warmer months convert carbon dioxide to oxygen, now take up another task: enriching the soil and providing nutrients for future generations of trees.

And by the time this year's leaves fall, next spring's leaves are tightly wrapped in buds ready to unravel in the soft colors of spring.

## GYPSY MOTH UPDATE

We signed up to have our area inspected for gypsy moth egg masses. This was the initial step in assessing our vulnerability to that dreaded insect. The inspector has been through the development and has reported that: one, we have more than the minimum area for treatment, and two, the egg masses ranged from just over the minimum, 25 per acre, to well over 500 per acre. These two criteria place our development in the category of those who are considered for the spraying program. We will hear more about the time, and cost somewhere around the end of January-probably from the county extension agent.

The full particulars will be reported upon in the March newsletter. If there is any concern on anyone's part as to further details you may call Mr Arnold Mills at 304-229-5828.



## SECURITY ISSUES

## SECURITY PROGRAM

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THE MOUNTAIN MEMO is published four times a year (March, June, Sept and Dec) and is the Cacapon Highlands Property Owners official newsletter. All material for publication must be submitted by the 15th of the month prior to publication.

It has come to the attention of the Board that individual property owners and their guests have been cutting and using paths around the gates to gain access to the mountain. This type of activity totally defeats the intended purpose of the locked gates. It is each property owner's responsibility to make sure that visitors (and contractor's) access the mountain via the gates. Remember that if you gain access around the gates, then you also provide access to anyone else who wants to enter.

Also, the gates have been frequently left unlocked. In some cases, the locks have been removed from the gates by property owners. The gates should remain locked at all times and the locks should never be removed.

Much effort is made to try to secure the mountain for all property owners. Unfortunately, it only takes a few lapses in judgment to ruin the level of security that has been attained.

Please make every effort to keep the mountain secure for each and every property owner. Awareness and cooperation by property owners is, without doubt, essential for security. Rules and locks are useless without it.

We have again hired Mr Shannon Whitacre as our security observer for this winter season. Mr Whitacre has done an excellent job for us the past three years and there is no doubt that he will do another good job this year. He will start December 1 and go through March 31.

In addition to the services that Mr Whitacre performs, each property owner must take an active and responsible role in making the mountain as secure as possible. As additional cabins are built on the mountain, our security-awareness has to be ever increasing since the mountain will become increasingly attractive to 'outsiders'. As you know, this is the time of year when we begin to experience the problems of break-ins and vandalism.

To reduce the number of incidents, the following points should be considered:

**DO NOT** cut additional vehicular paths onto the mountain. Remember, if you can gain access so can everyone else. Also, you could incur the expense of having the path restored to an impassable state.

**DO NOT** leave valuables in your cabin. If you do keep them in your cabin, keep them out of sight or locked away.

**DO NOT** keep alcoholic beverages in your cabin.

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## THOUGHTS OF THE SEASON

Here it is the beginning of December again. To many it is one of the most charming seasons of the year. The Yule season is celebrated by nearly every race and creed in the world; whether it be religious, ethnic or social, the spirit of Christmas has an effect on each of us. Then of course there is ice skating on the ponds, skiing or tobogganing in the mountains or just enjoying the scenes painted by newly fallen snow. And there is the other side of the coin. Raking leaves, shoveling snow, traffic tie-ups, and eye glasses that get steamed up when coming in out of the cold.

Most of the festivities continue right into the new year, at least until about mid January. Then the toys grow old, the snow gets dirty, and the Christmas bills come due. This reminds me one of the bills that will be arriving around the first of the year will be the lot maintenance fee. This is how we maintain the portion of Sideling Hill called Cacapon Highlands. The fees are due upon receipt and will be considered in arrears on February 1 if not paid. Enough of the commercial messages back to the show.

One of the pleasantries of having the change of seasons is the ability of a person to stop and look back at the past year and to plan for the new year. Anticipating the spring and summer months, the little things that need to be done at home or on the mountain, one would jump at the chance to do them now. But in reality, when the time comes to do these little things, there are other things that are more important, bar-b-ques, swimming, golfing, and vacations. However we fashion our lives, our plans and the anticipation of fulfillment make them richer.

## OOPS!

It seems that there was a computer mixup involving some of the land owners who do not have structures on their property. The state sent out forms to many indicating they had structures and miscalculated the fire fee. In most cases the fire fee for a lot without a structure is \$1.00. I was told that there would be new tax forms sent out to those property owners.

## THE SHERIFF'S DEPT

The Sheriff's Department and other law enforcement agencies get quite a large number of calls that take them into the developments. Identifying the home or location is sometimes difficult. The owner may not be a full time resident and the agency's not always sure it has located the right property. It would be helpful if the name of the owner or the lot number could be displayed at the end of the driveway. The Department could refer to the map or to the mailing address located in the tax office.

Ed. note: Our covenants do not permit a sign larger then one (1) foot square.

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**DO NOT** keep alcoholic beverages in your cabin.

**NO NOT** leave firearms in your cabin

**DO NOT** store flammable liquids or matches in your cabin

Please remember that the issue of security is very important. When you are on the mountain, take time to check out your neighbors' properties and promptly report anything that is not proper. Also, if you have any suggestions for improvements to our security program, call me at 1-301-437-4096.

THE MOUNTAIN MEMO  
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FIRST CLASS

Forwarding and Address  
Correction Requested



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