



THE MOUNTAIN MEMO

VOL. 1, NO. 3

SEPT 1985

THE ANNUAL BERKELEY SPRINGS APPLE BUTTER FESTIVAL - OCT 12 & 13

The Berkeley Springs Apple Butter Festival will be here before we know it - only one short month from now. It will run for two days, Saturday and Sunday, October 12 and 13 in "downtown" Berkeley Springs.

For those of you who have never attended this affair, lots of treats are in store. On those two days, the streets of Berkeley Springs become a carnival of delights. There you will find something to please any one (and every one) of your senses. Hungry? Try a country ham sandwich (a real W.VA specialty) or any of dozens of other mouthwatering pleasures; or maybe you'd like to take home a few quarts of homemade applesauce or apple butter to hold you through til spring.

Before or after you've bought your butter, you must witness its preparation. Fill your nostrils with its scent as it simmers in an enormous kettle over an open fire. Someone is always on duty with a utensil resembling a cross between a rake and a hoe to give it the constant stirring it needs as it cooks down to that wonderful, smooth apple butter consistency. And that Rube Goldberg contraption nearby that looks like Snuffy Smith's still is actually a near relative. Instead of "corn squeezin's" its specialty is "apple squeezin's" (apple cider), and mighty good it is, too.

Among the many booths, some tout sweaters or maybe bed coverings you might want to buy to keep you warm this winter. And speaking of bed coverings,

each year a quilt is commissioned specifically to be raffled off at the festival. It is always of the utmost quality in design and workmanship - a definite heirloom piece. For \$1.00 you can have a chance at winning it. In addition to all this, there are yard sales, crafts of all kinds, antiques, and sometimes, even a puppy or two for sale!

In the park gazebo, a band is usually playing - dixieland, folk, bluegrass. You can sit and listen for a spell, or you can have background music as you make your way among even more booths set up in the park and filled with goodies created by nearby artists and craftspeople.

Those of you who haven't attended the festival in the past few years should be pleased to know that the layout of the festival has been changed for the better. No more do you have to wait in line to walk down the street. There are fewer booths on the sidewalks, thereby eliminating much of the pedestrian congestion that may have marred some of your enjoyment of this event in the past.

This year marks the 12th year for the festival, and it has worked through its growing pains to become a real first class act without losing any of its very special grass roots flavor. This is a festival that involves the whole citizenry of Berkeley Springs. Everyone gets in on the act and this is what gives it that delightfully unique and inimitable flavor that is the Berkeley Springs Apple Butter Festival.

Carol Thompson



BOARD AND COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

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Co-Chairman

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Wheaton, Md 21784
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Tom Thompson(87)
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424-8791/301

PERSONAL AND PROPERTY SECURITY ON THE MOUNTAIN

As all of you are aware, your board has been contracting for security surveillance on our property for the past three years. During these three years, we have witnessed a dramatic reduction in the break-ins and trespassing in general. While some of this reduction may be attributable to a loss of interest in our development, we would like to think that the majority has been through the unscheduled visits to the property by our security employee.

The first year this program was initiated, we were able to pay the entire operating expense through contributions from lot owners who had built or who had property of value stored on their lots. Each subsequent year, however, contributions have dwindled and during this last winter, the Board was forced to approve a budget item from the general fund to fully finance the effort. The reason is probably pretty obvious since a reduction in incidences naturally leads to a certain amount of complacency. The Board, however, does not want to test the waters by trying a year without some sort of surveillance. We were forced to budget even more general funds this year because of a feared further receipt of contributions from our membership.

It should be noted that the surveillance not only provides protection to cabin owners, but the whole population in our sub-division. Unauthorized visitors do not have our natural sense of pride and ownership and could lead to careless disposal of trash, uncleaned camping areas, and greatly increase the potential for fire from untended camp fires or not completely extinguished when they leave. We all know what a major fire would do to our property whether we have built or not. At least those who own property probably have insurance against loss of their dwelling.

We will be mounting an active campaign in early October soliciting your contributions for coverage from December 1, 1985 through March 29, 1986. If each lot owner would contribute \$25.00 we would be able to pay for this effort without using our operating funds at all. We know that 100% participation in anything is not possible and we will try to seek an equitable request from each of you, depending on whether or not you have built, etc.

You'll be hearing from us soon and please plan on contributing as much as you can. THE PROGRAM CERTAINLY HAS BEEN WORTHWHILE. LET'S KEEP OUR MOUNTAIN SAFE AND GREEN.

ANNUAL ASSESSMENT OF GENERAL FUNDS DUES

In accordance with the Covenants and the By-Laws governing all of us at Cacapon Highlands, we are each required to pay an annual assessment of \$50.00 per lot owned at the beginning of each calendar year. Nowhere in these governing documents does it require the Board to solicit these dues. They are an assumed responsibility of each lot owner on the mountain. The Board realizes, however, that we are human and probably few of us are equipped with a computerized system that automatically reminds us of things to pay and do so far in advance.

As treasurer, I have written a computer program that runs on my home computer that does automatically produce an invoice for each of you. It calculates your total amount due based upon number of lots owned and prints invoices. This effort doesn't take long for the computer. I suppose from the time I start up the system until they are all prepared takes two hours at most. I also have a system that reads the same file and prepares labels. Again not long and I can generally have this all done in four hours. The fun starts then..... These invoices have to be stuffed into envelopes, matched with the proper label, and these labels then have to be stuck to the envelope (both addressee and return labels). Now we've tied up about 6 hours or so.

Next comes the real thrill -- licking the stamps and envelopes. Yeck!!!! If Patti happens to be home and in a good mood, she will generally help with this. If not.....

If all this sounds like complaining I have not written very well what I intended. The purpose of this notice in the Mountain Memo is to state that I do not have the time to devote 70 or 80 hours to this seemingly simple task of collecting annual dues. Obviously, I could have declined this job when the Board asked me to do it. It seemed like a natural for me though as I have a minor in accounting, a home computer, and a background in computer programming. In fact, if this were the end of the story, I would not have spent the time this afternoon writing this article for the Mountain Memo. I could be outside right now (92 degrees with 75 percent humidity) pulling weeds from my flower bed and the back yard.

There are 83 lot owners on our mountain; 42 required a second notice since the dues were not received within the 45 days; 28 were still not received when I went on vacation (60 days after the first notice went out) and I sent third

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.



FROM THE TOP

I would like to give you an update on the projects we are currently working on:

notices (rather threatening and intimidating I hear) indicating that failure to pay would result in the assessment of late charges, interest charges, and possibly a lien on the property. All required by the Covenants and By-Laws. Also, two special letters were written for people who had not paid the previous year either. We've now taken the 10 or 12 hours once a year, quintupled it (at least), and spread it over many months. Plus, you should read some of my hate mail after the second and third mailings - not to mention the phone calls.

Working with all the members of the Board, we spent a lot of time AND money trying to locate people for whom their mail was returned marked "FORWARDING PERIOD EXPIRED." Please, not again this year. I urge each of you to realize that it is Your responsibility to pay these annual dues when they are due. I must also insist that it is your responsibility of keeping the Board posted as to change of address, change in property ownership, etc. We cannot legally take someone's name off the dues mailing list because of separation or even divorce without documented proof as to new ownership. With your cooperation we can accomplish our annual dues collection in 30 to 45 days. The Board has unanimously agreed that there will be only one notice this year. For dues not received 45 days after the mailing, late charges will be assessed and the interest rates will begin. For dues (including late charges and interest) not received 60 days after notice, our attorney will be notified and liens filed. To remove a lien the owner will be required to pay all amounts past due plus attorney fees. This action is in keeping with our governing documents.

For those of you who had to send me copies of cancelled checks last year because my records were not accurate or correct, I apologize. I sincerely hope that this year it will go without a hitch. I've tried to identify all of my programming mistakes and correct them; plus I've started some new procedures in recording receipts and deposits which should give me a check and balance I didn't have last year.

Thanks for listening. I would appreciate help from each of you and I'd consider it a real pleasure if the next time you're on the mountain, you and your family would stop by our cabin and say "hello".

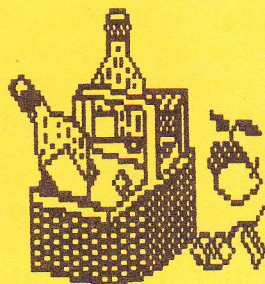
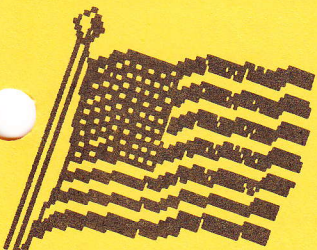
Sincerely, Tom Wright, Treasurer

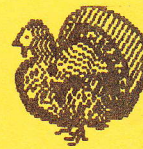
NEW GATES: Harold & Tim Lease will start construction on the new gates very shortly. They hope to have them completed by October. The main gate will have a single gate as opposed to the existing double gate. This was changed in the interest of security and durability. The Lease's will be gathering some stone from nearby properties. I'm sure that no one will have any problem with that, as stone is in abundance up there. Once the new gates are completed we will be re-keying the locks and sending property owners new keys. The new locks will be changed 30 days from the date of completion. We are also looking into the possibility of a more permanent bumper sticker so that our vehicles can be more easily identified.

SECURITY: We have hired Mr. Shannon Whitacre as our new security guard. He comes very highly recommended and there is no doubt he will do a good job. He will start on December 1 and go through March 29th. There is the possibility that the March date can be extended depending on the weather and when we all start going up there again in the spring. You'll find more on the security program elsewhere in the newsletter. Security is our most important concern and I hope that you will all contribute generously so that we will not have to operate in the red this year.

BRUSH CLEARING: The Board has been looking into the possibility of hiring a wood-chipper to clear the brush on our properties. The idea was to have each property owner gather their brush and leave it on the side of the road. We in turn would hire a chipper to come and take care of the brush. The cost would be at least \$300.00 a day. We have decided to table the idea until we can be assured that there will be enough property owners interested to make the project worthwhile. As for the root-balls, they are not the eyesore that they were a few years ago. Time is wearing them down to a point where they can be cut up without any difficulty; at least for the majority of them.

TELEPHONE SERVICE: On August 12th, the Public Service Commission advised us that our case has been forwarded to the Hearing Examiner Division for review and disposition. I have no idea how long it will take them to make a decision. They may decide to leave things as they are due to the lack of requests for service. We will notify you as soon as the results are known.





ELECTRIC SERVICE: On August 12th, the Public Service Commission contacted Potomac Edison Company notifying them of our formal complaint against them. Ted & I pursued this not only for ourselves, but for three other property owners that paid in advance to have electricity connected. Our hopes are that the prepayment charges will be waived for anyone else in the development requesting service. The ones that will be affected are those of you that do not have access to existing lines. There are three areas that fall into this category. Again, we will let you know as soon as we are notified.

ANNUAL MEETING: How can we make our next annual meeting more successful??? There were approximately 18 property owners at our last annual meeting. I realize that not all of you can attend but we had hoped for a better turn-out. Please give us your thoughts and ideas for next years' meeting.

CHANGES: For the record: Ken Kisling has been elected to finish the unexpired term of Gretchen Wyman and is the Co-chairman of the Board. Kay Roach has been elected to the Board to replace Steve Beigel whose term ends in November and Kay will hold the office of Secretary. We would like to welcome Ken and Kay as new members of the Board.

Gretchen felt it necessary to resign because of other commitments. We would like to say "Thanks" to Gretchen for her time, dedication and hard work during her term. She was truly an asset to the Board and will be missed by all. Thank you again, Gret.

Steve Beigel's term expires in November. Steve..... It is very difficult to find the right words to say thank you for all the work you have done since the Board came into being. You, along with the original board members provided the backbone for the association. Your guidance and expertise has been invaluable. We wish you much success in all your endeavors and thank you for all your help.

LABOR DAY Sept. 2, 1985 In 1882 an organization called the Knights of Labor paraded through the streets of New York in honor of the working man. They repeated this in 1883 and in 1884. In 1884 they adopted a resolution proclaiming the first Monday of September as Labor Day. Gradually the states began recognizing this day as a holiday. Then, on June 28, 1894 congress passed a bill making Labor Day, the first Monday in September, a legal holiday.

Today our children identify Labor Day as the end of summer and the beginning of the school year.

HALLOWEEN Oct. 31, 1985 In medieval times it was known as All Hallows Eve or the eve of All Saints Day. The Celtes used this time for the autumnal festival ending the growing season (much like May Day festivals celebrate the beginning of the growing season). November represented the beginning of the darkest and most barren half of the year therefore, All Hallows Eve festival acquired a sinister significance, with ghosts, witches, demons, etc. The childrens' game of bobbing for apples was part of an ancient ritual. The children of marrying age would call upon the black world to tell them 'when to marry' as well as 'whom to marry' through ritualistic games.

VETERANS DAY (Armistice Day) This day was originally set aside by the U.S., Great Britain and France as a remembrance of those who were killed in World War I and was picked as the day of the Armistice November 11, 1918. And was generally known as Armistice Day. After World War II it was known as Remembrance Day in Canada and Great Britain. Following the Korean War, June 1, 1954, Congress passed a bill designating this day as Veterans Day and proclaiming it as an occasion for honoring veterans of all wars. The veterans usually have ceremonies and the President lays a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington, Va.



KNOW YOUR SNAKES

How do you tell poisonous from non-poisonous snakes, and how can you control snakes around the house? There are several ways to check the difference between poisonous and non-poisonous snakes in our area.

First, on the underside of the body of poisonous snakes, between the vent and the tip of the tail, the scales are undivided flat plates. In non-poisonous snakes the scales are like two rows, in other words, divided.

Second, there's a pit or cavity between the nostrils and the eyes in poisonous snakes. The pit is absent in non-poisonous species.

Third, the pupils of the eyes are different. In non-poisonous snakes, the pupils are rounded like yours and mine. In poisonous snakes, such as the copperhead or rattlesnake, the pupils are elliptical or vertical; that is, like a cat's eye or a thin narrow football in place for a kick-off.

Fourth, the poisonous snakes have upper fangs - two big curved, needlelike front teeth. The poisonous also have small upper and lower teeth, like little fish bones. The non-poisonous have only small teeth and no fangs.

One of the ways to control snakes around the home is to keep grass mowed as close to the building as possible. Keep brush, trash, and wood piles away from premises. Trash and brush attract rodents which in turn attract snakes. The same applies to garbage and piles of refuse which attract or harbor snakes or insects.

Snakes seek the shelter of comfortable quarters as cold weather approaches. That is when they are often found in and about basements, porches and garages.

Unless there is danger of poisonous snakes around dwellings, garages, or out-buildings, discourage needless killing, and encourage the presence of non-poisonous snakes; especially the garter, the ring-necked, green snakes and other harmless types. They are primarily worm-and-insect-eaters and are beneficial.



So are most black snakes. They may take some birds or their eggs or small rabbits or squirrels, but black snakes are good insurance against rats and mice.

The snakes like all other types of wildlife fill a place in the natural environment. They prey upon other types of animals in order to survive and preserve their species.

Sometimes man could do well to learn some lessons from our wildlife neighbors who kill only out of absolute necessity and not to satisfy passion and greed.

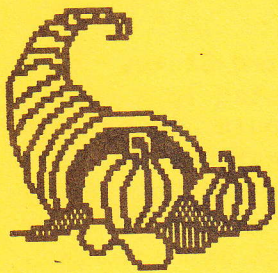
Programs and activities offered by the West Virginia University Cooperative Extension Service are available to all persons without regard to race, color, sex, or national origin.



THANKSGIVING In the United States this holiday has been attributed to a festival held by the Plymouth Colony in December 1621 but celebrations of this kind have been held since ancient times. In the New England area it has a very traditional flavor, which means Turkey, squash, pumpkin pie and cranberrys.

George Washington, in 1789 issued the first presidential thanksgiving proclamation. Abraham Lincoln on October 3, 1863 proclaimed the last Thursday of November as Thanksgiving Day. This was due mainly to the efforts of Mrs Sarah J. Hale. Each succeeding president made similar proclamations until President Franklin D. Roosevelt when in 1939 he made the third Thursday Thanksgiving Day. Then in 1941 congress by a joint resolution and with the approval of the President set the fourth Thursday as a national holiday.

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FIRST CLASS



***** THE CACAPON HIGHLANDS PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER PUBLISHED QUARTERLY *****