

Newsletter Staff

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Ranch Roundup

A Prescott Community Newsletter



Ranch Has New Fire Engine

In May the Prescott City Fire Department's ability to protect our homes in the Ranch increased significantly. A brand new fire truck was purchased and assigned to nearby Fire Station No. 75. The new fire engine was manufactured by the HME company in Michigan cost \$300,000 and has improved fire fighting features. The fire truck also has a much more powerful engine that is needed to climb our steep Ranch streets and driveways. The new vehicle has an expectant life of ten years prior to being replaced. The previous fire truck assigned to Fire Station No. 75 is beyond economical repair and will be auctioned off. Normally used fire trucks are bought by volunteer fire departments all over the country. The used trucks are normally sold for 10% of their original cost.



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"All together now!"

The first grade class from Washington Elementary School along with more than one hundred residents of the Ranch and the city attended the traditional 'Housing Ceremony' for the new fire truck. Many of our folks helped push the new truck in and then out of the fire station three times as part of the ceremony. Following the 'Housing Ceremony' a hamburger/hot dog bar-b-que was hosted by the station firemen. Prescott Fire Chief, Darrell Willis officiated over the event. The mayor, city manager and other officials were also in attendance.

There are five fire stations in Prescott and each station has one Class I fire engine along with other emergency vehicles. Normally three fire trucks will respond to a house fire. During a larger or major fire, trucks and firefighters will also come from the Forest Service, and Central Yavapai and Chino Valley. Approximately 85 employees work the Prescott Fire Department. Of these about 78 are trained fire fighters.

Brian Padilla-Melton, a fireman assigned to No. 75 is part of the crew that will ride the new fire truck. According to Brian three or four fire fighters are assigned to each truck. They include the Captain, Engineer (driver) and one or two firemen. He displayed the truck's 'Jaws of Life' that is made up of four parts; the spreader (shown in photo), the cutter, the ram and the power unit. Brian stated that the new red fire truck replaces the last yellow Prescott fire truck. During the 1980s all the Prescott fires trucks were yellow. Now all are the traditional red.



Brian Padilla-Melton

Visitors at the Fire Station were welcome to tour the station and meet the many fire fighters present. Because of the foresight, effort and generous donation of land by our developers, Jim and Linda Lee, we have this modern emergency facility at our doorstep. We also give thanks to our local firefighters. Visitors left the fire station with an increased feeling of safety, security and trust for our lives and homes.

Defensible Space

DO YOU KNOW WHAT "DEFENSIBLE SPACE" MEANS?

It seems that some Prescott area residents still don't, or haven't taken the public warnings seriously enough. In perilous times like this, we all need to have homes surrounded by defensible space, which simply is another way of saying that we've removed flammable materials in the vicinity of our houses.

Once that's done, the local fire departments have a decent chance of saving our houses if wildfire descends on us this year as it did in May, 2002.

There are still no guarantees. Fierce winds can defeat even the most dedicated of fire-fighters, but if we do our jobs of cutting away brush, moving firewood well away from our homes, having the right roofing materials, protecting eaves and decks and use a dozen other protective techniques, we substantially increase our chances of surviving fire.

You can contact Jeremy Brinkerhoff at the Prescott Fire Department [445-5555] for a free assessment of your property to determine what may be required for you to establish your defensible space.

Ranch Volunteers Sought Ranch HOA Council Members are seeking volunteers to help keep the roadsides in the Ranch clean of trash. Individuals who would like to help keep our streets tidy should contact their unit HOA Council Representative to select a street or streets in their unit that they would like to keep clean of trash.

Ranch Social Club Membership Renewal Time. The Ranch Social Club (RSC) organizes many fun-filled social activities that make living at the Ranch so enjoyable. It is now time for current members to renew their annual memberships which runs from September 1, 2006 through August 31, 2007, and the forms can be found on the FYI section of the RSC web page as well as the ones current members will receive in the mail. Cost is \$25.00 per household. If you are not a RSC member and would like to obtain information about the RSC, click on the RSC website address posted on the HOA website or go to the following address: <http://www.ranchsocial.com/>. When the RSC website home page appears, click on "Click Here" and a e-mail form will appear and you can send your message to the Membership Chairman and she will respond directly to you.

Featured in Fall HOA Newsletter. The next issue of the HOA Newsletter will feature the accomplishments and progress that the new Ranch HOA has accomplished in its first year of existence under the homeowners elected council. The newsletter will include information about the repair of the street manholes, the street, trail and common area cleanup and other items of interest that mark your HOA's first year of operation. The Fall edition will also provide information on how our management company, HOAMCO has helped and guided us through this first year.



HOA News - Community Action

What Can I do about it? Most of us agree that Prescott and the Ranch in particular is a lovely place to live. However, there will always be things that need improvement or fixing. Recently two of our Ranch ladies saw situations that needed 'fixin' and they asked themselves the question. "What can I do about it?"

'We can move mountains'. In the case of Joan Preston, she had noticed for a long time that there was a huge unsightly pile of dirt left when Lamb Chevrolet was being built. Every day as she passed this ugly little mountain she wondered why Prescott deserved this eyesore. Finally in July 2005 she started a personal campaign to get rid of the pile of dirt.

As it was prior to the City Council elections, she wrote to all the candidates, and got answers from many of them. She was told that the dirt came from the Wal-Mart construction site and that it is now owned by ADOT and that it was on State Trust Land. Some felt it was not a city problem.

Joan kept up the phone calls, letters and email. She pointed out that because it came from the Wal-Mart construction site the city had some responsibility to clean up the 'gateway to our city'. In August 2005, she received a letter from Mayor Simmons stating "her efforts were not in vain." Within a few weeks earth moving equipment arrived and the dirt pile was leveled just prior to the election. Good work Joan!

'Way to go Flo'. As we whiz down Lee Blvd. some of us most likely haven't taken the time to notice the change in the appearance of the median leading into the Ranch. Up to a few weeks ago the median was filled with weeds and the landscape shrubs and bushes were wild looking. Flo Reynolds noticed all the weeds and unkempt landscaping and thought it made the entrance to the Ranch ugly. She then asked herself, 'What can I do about it?'

First, Flo found out that the median belongs to the city, but that Gateway Mall had originally agreed to maintain the median. She then contacted Ken Stevenson of the Gateway Mall Landscaping Department. She received excellent cooperation and the work was started. Next time you pass by notice how nice our Ranch entrance looks now! Flo also received comment from the Mall that they will properly maintain the median landscaping in the future. The entrance to our Ranch is much prettier thanks to Flo's efforts.



Mistletoe Menace

Mistletoe in the Ranch. As you drive around the Ranch during the winter and early spring you will see many large clumps of bright green foliage hanging from many of our oak trees. These clumps are mistletoe and will gradually disappear as leaves of the oak trees come forth. You might even think the mistletoe adds beauty to our neighborhood. During the summer you will also have a hard time even seeing the mistletoe growing amongst the normal foliage of the trees. What's to worry? Out of sight, out of mind!



Mistletoe

A Thousand Kisses or One Dead Tree

Mistletoe is a creeping menace and if left untended will eventually spread, injure and even kill many of our older trees. The problem is that for mistletoe to grow it must take its water and nutrients from the trees they are attached to. Mistletoe is a semi-parasite which means that it feeds from both the air and its host tree. Unfortunately, the Prescott area is going through a long serious drought and our trees need every bit of moisture they can get to survive. When mistletoe takes moisture and nutrients from a tree, the tree is weakened, growth is slowed and the tree has a harder time surviving. The tree also becomes more susceptible to fire.

One of the two primary methods that mistletoe spreads from tree to tree is by birds. Our birds like to eat the mistletoe berries that come in the fall and many of these berries pass through the bird and end up in the bird dung on other trees. As the mistletoe berries are also very sticky, many of the little white berries get stuck to the birds' feet and beak. When the bird lands on another tree or branch, the berries come off the bird, get stuck to a new branch and start to grow on the new location. The second form of mistletoe growth is from a variety that literally explodes the seeds to other trees. It is reported that when the seed pods burst in the fall they can hurl seeds up to 50 feet.

Mistletoe is a slow growing semi-parasite, taking up to five years to mature and become visible on a tree. However, once a mistletoe plant takes hold on a tree branch it is hard to get rid of it. The most effective way to rid the mistletoe is to cut off the branch that the parasite is growing on. This harsh and difficult action will rid the tree of the mistletoe. Another method is to have the tree sprayed. As many clumps of mistletoe are high in our trees and difficult to reach, spraying is most helpful. However, the chemical spray only kills the exterior (green) part of the parasite. Next season the same mistletoe will be back again and the tree needs to be re-sprayed. Another way and least effective is to scrape or pull off by hand the mistletoe growth from the tree. This will only slow the growth of the parasite. But it is better than doing nothing. In any event, action against the spread of mistletoe should be taken prior to the fall when the mistletoe berries appear, mature and spread by the birds.

Mother Nature has another method of controlling the spread and growth of mistletoe. It is by use of fire. Forest fires can be beneficial to a forest and are a natural part of a forest's life. However, in the Ranch and around Prescott, that is one method we don't want to use. To learn more about mistletoe please go to the following websites: <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn7437.html>

http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2002/12/1220_021226_mistletoe_2.html

<http://www.hiltonpond.org/ThisWeek051208.html>