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Rancho del Cerro Rattler

Where friends and neighbors come together

The Community Association of Rancho del Cerro
P.O. Box 85074, Tucson, Arizona 85704-5074
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RDC HOMEOWNER SPEAKS

Recently, a Rancho del Cerro homeowner contacted RDC Board President Bill to express his views on a couple pertinent issues. To conserve space, his remarks have been condensed. Your humble editor takes responsibility for the following condensation.

1. Light Pollution: Tucson and the surrounding area is home to several telescopes of note. Of course there's Kitt Peak. The Smithsonian also has a major Observatory, including the 6.5 meter MMT telescope, south of the city at Mount Hopkins, in the Santa Rita Mts. The University of Arizona also has several infrared telescopes up on Mt. Lemmon. And just 60 miles NE, up at 10,000' on Mt. Graham, sit both the recently commissioned Large Binocular Telescope (the largest in the world) and the nearby Vatican Observatory.

Why all the telescopes surrounding Tucson? Pima County has adhered to the Dark Skies Association guidelines for about 40 years, it has become a world center for Optical Astronomy and Optics R&D. We use shades on street-lights and also use low pressure sodium (or mercury) lights that do not interfere with the visible band of the optical spectrum. We also learn how to direct outdoor lights down on our own land and down on the side of our own house and not to point them away from our own house. These last lights send stray light up to the sky and create harsh shadows that create safe havens for snakes, crooks, muggers, mischief-makers, etc.

As Rancho del Cerro has become almost completely settled, the use of relatively bright night-lights has become more prevalent. These bright side lights do not increase safety. (The police concur.) So our small section of Pima County is becoming more polluted with light at night. The

resulting pollution interferes with astronomy. Incidentally, Phoenix, which has four million people, though further away (120 miles) from Kitt Peak than is Tucson (45 miles), makes a larger impression on Kitt Peak's nighttime sky than does Tucson.

Finally, bright lights directed sideways violate local county ordinances. Good neighbors should not illuminate other people's houses at night. Be considerate of your neighbors and illuminate only your own dwelling. All of us live in Pima County and generally have dark skies for a solid *economic* reason.

Let's keep it that way at the neighborhood level.

2. Buffleggrass Infestation:

(The last issue of the Rattler included an article about buffleggrass and that these plants were visible on many RDC homeowners' property. Ed.) Is not the entire roadway the responsibility of the county? If they have to clear the roadway "island" divider, would they not also be responsible for the edge of the paved road?

The roadside infestation is already area-wide (even outside RDC. Ed.). If one person, or Pima County, were to clear out the infestation along their own "section of responsibility" of the roadway, and their neighbors (next door, across the street, in the next subdivision, etc.) do not do likewise, the first area will become infested repeatedly through no fault of the owner.

Some of us cannot physically do the spade work or dig deep holes in the rocky soil any more. And, it would be extremely dangerous what with high speed cars coming up and down hills and around blind curves. Anyone can see that your (the RDC Board) proposed solution (individuals would do the clearing) is clearly unsatisfactory as well as unsafe.

You cannot simply leave it up to the individual homeowners to do their roadside clearing properly (roots and all in sealed bags). Considering the outward appearance of some properties in our association, it's

reasonable to assume that there are homeowners in RDC who will not do ANY extra work to keep up their property.

The obvious, most efficient solution is to have one agency do the clearing of roadside buffleggrass before the infestation spreads into lots from the roadsides.

Your Council presently is considering just such a solution. Barring any rapid County effort with some Federal

Stimulus money, assess each of our association's lot owners a small fee (\$10 to \$20) to cover the cost of having the removal done properly, and now.

OR... We now have a large number of local teenagers without summer jobs. Our homeowners' financial

See **Homeowner** (on Reverse)

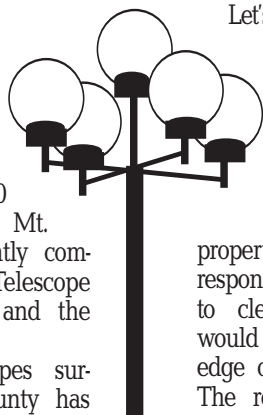
ANOTHER YARD SALE?

Our own Terri Roberts, a member of the RDC Board, is one of two homeowners who put on what appears to have been fairly successful yard sales on May 23rd and 24th, has a couple suggestions for whoever might want to do the same in the future.

1- Shoot for a cool day (time of year) and run it from 8:00 am to 1:00 pm on Saturday only, not both weekend days.

2- Have plenty of signage in the neighborhood and advertise on EBay or Craig's List and in the newspaper. Terri's news ad cost \$35 and ran Friday and Saturday in the (hard copy) Arizona Daily Star, and online.

It seems the rest is determined by how good a sales person you are!



SALE

Mission Statement - Friends and neighbors coming together to improve their neighborhood community through sharing and cooperation, keeping in touch, and communicating their needs, wants, abilities and available services.

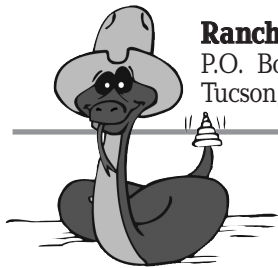
HOMEOWNER (Continued)

"kitty" now stands at \$6,277.54 (the latest Rattler issue). Why not use a small portion of our "kitty" funds for buffleggrass removal by this group of local teenagers? They would benefit from an active ecological activity. We homeowners would benefit from that solution in the long run. Or, is that money in the "kitty" only meant for litigation?

(Ed.- Your Association Board has decided to have the buffleggrass removed from a portion of the median, on Paseo de los Rancheros, at Association expense. Hopefully this experience will enable us to more accurately estimate what the entire project might cost. It's felt that this is the prudent course and avoids the possible depletion of the Association's funds. This information will then be presented at the next "all homeowners' meeting" for further discussion and action.

Regarding light pollution, the Board generally agrees that we should use a minimum of night lighting in the interests of both energy conservation and "stargazing". Each homeowner needs to balance safety, ecology and conservation in his or her own case.

The Pima County Sheriff's Auxiliary is encouraging observance of a Neighborhood Watch event by hosting block parties, pot lucks, flashlight walks, youth activities, etc. on **OCTOBER 10th** from 3:00 pm to 9:00 pm.



Rancho del Cerro Neighborhood Association

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DO NOT FORWARD

SILVERBELL IMPROVEMENT

Your humble editor joined President Bill at a presentation of a plan called "Silverbell Road-Grant Road to Ina Road Design Concept Study", held on August 12th at El Rio Neighborhood Center. The presentation was handled very professionally and varied topics received TLC considering that at this point, discussions are of a very general nature, the goal being to gather as much neighborhood(s) and business(es) input as possible. All ideas were encouraged and will be considered as the design phase moves ahead.



This is going to happen quicker than many of us had believed. The design phase is under way (but still subject to changes inspired by the input of those Tucsonans {including Rancho del Cerro} most impacted by the improvements.) We can expect the actual construction to take place **between 2012 and 2017** for the stretch between Grant Road and Camino del Cerro. From Camino del Cerro to Ina Road, the construction will occur **between 2017 and 2022**.

A Citizen Task Force of 15 people made up of business owners whose establishments front on or near Silverbell Road, and homeowners nearby, will be selected in the near future. Your editor

has submitted an application to represent our Association and it is said that no particular experience is required. If you would like to apply for the Task Force, go to: <http://dot.tucsonaz.gov/projects/silverbell>. The deadline is August 28, 2009.

A FEW SECONDS WITH THE MINUTES (of the Board Meeting)

One of the many topics discussed at the July 13th meeting of your homeowners' association is the following, which affects all of us and was voted on and approved.

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION OF RANCHO DEL CERRO, INC.

Pursuant to Article VII of the Corporate Bylaws of the Community Association of Rancho del Cerro, Inc., upon unanimous vote of the directors present at a duly constituted meeting of the Board of Directors, Article II, Section 7 of the Bylaws is amended as follows:

Section 7. Annual Meeting of Members. An annual meeting of the members of the Corporation shall be held annually on a date and time established by the Board of Directors. Members are directed to view the website for the next annual meeting date - www.ranchodelcerro.com.

All that remains is for President Bill and Secretary Sue to sign the resolution making it the law of the land, or at least the neighborhood.