

The Hitchin' Post

October 2005

Patsy Ward, Editor



A Community Oriented Newsletter for Weed and Surrounding Communities
"If You're Lucky Enough to Live in the Mountains, You're Lucky Enough"

Please keep Obie Manning in your thoughts and prayers as he recovers in Thomason Hospital, 4815 Alameda, El Paso, TX 79905, ph. 915-544-1200. Obie was injured in a nasty 30-foot fall off a roof the first part of September. If you would like to help the Mannings in any way, call the Newells at 687-4388 or the Mayhill Baptist Church at 687-3754.

The Bookmobile will be in Weed Tuesday, October 4, 1:15 - 2:30 p.m.

The Post Office will be closed October 10 in recognition of Columbus Day. The actual date is October 12.

The Sacramento Mountain Water Group will hold its next meeting Thursday, October 13, 6 p.m., at Camp Chimney Spring.



Make a Difference Day is the most encompassing annual national day of helping others -- a celebration of neighbors helping neighbors. Everyone can participate. Created by USA WEEKEND Magazine, Make A Difference Day takes place in October, with this year's event on **October 22**. If Saturday is your Sabbath, please volunteer Sunday, October 23. For more info, go on-line at www.makeadifferenceday.com or call 800-416-3824. If you volunteer regularly, great! If you don't volunteer now, here's an occasion to get started.

Daylight Saving Time ends October 31 at 2 a.m. Remember to set your clocks back one hour before going to bed Saturday night, October 30.



**Anniversaries, Birthdays,
Congratulations, Get Well,
Thank You, Welcome, Etc.**

Happy Anniversary to:

...Gary & Debbie Stone and Don & Anna Rae Brown, October 13
...Doug and Evelyn Miller, October 17
...Dub and Barbara Schuessler, October 23

Happy Birthday to:

...Floyd Nelson, September 16 (Belated)
...Dub Schuessler, October 4
...Zachary Comino, October 10
...Tom Ward, October 14
...Kyle Goss, October 15
...Mayiak Green, October 18

...Jincy Gage, October 23

...H. B. Newell and Lauren Comino, October 25

...Dee Hester, October 28

...Merle Smith and Lelana Pfaffenberger, Oct. 31

Here and There:

...Bro Don and Anna Rae Brown visited the first two weeks of September. It was so good to see them!
...Jeff and Louise Winkle were in the area Labor Day weekend. Good food and good friends made for a very enjoyable time for all.

...The Schuesslers hosted friends Bill and Susie over the Labor Day weekend. Bill and Susie are from Albuquerque and took over Dub's and Barb's Sunday school class when Dub and Barb moved to Weed.

...Barb Schuessler visited her daughter, son-in-law, and granddaughter in Pennsylvania in mid-September.

...Al and Teri Alvarez vacationed in Hawaii.

Upcoming Events in Weed and Surrounding Areas

...**Oktoberfest Juried Art Show**, October 1-2, Zenith Park, Cloudcroft. Enjoy good food while browsing booths filled with arts and crafts. 505-682-2733 or 1-866-UPHIGH7

...**Aspencade Tours**, October 1-2, Cloudcroft. Take a drive through the mountains and enjoy the fall colors. 505-682-2733 or 1-866-UPHIGH7

...**Lincoln County Cowboy Symposium**, October 7-9, Ruidoso Downs. Features entertainment on five stages, evening dancing, a chuck wagon cookoff, and kid's rodeo events at the Ruidoso Downs Race Track and Casino. 505-378-4142

...**Apple Festival**, October 15-16, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m., High Rolls. For information call 682-1151 or go on-line at www.highrollsfestival.com.

...**Harvestfest & Pumpkinfest**, October 29, Burro Avenue, Cloudcroft. Pumpkin carving contest, hayride, pumpkin races. Join the fun! 505-682-2733 or UPHIGH7

EMT News

- E. Wright

For many long months now, Sacramento Weed Volunteer Fire and Rescue folks have been working with authorities in the surrounding counties to set up procedures for taking patients to Artesia General Hospital or Lincoln County Medical Center. Previously, it wasn't clear that the rules would allow our rescue truck to head in those directions, since for many of us the closest hospital is in Alamogordo.

But now there are mutual aid agreements in place with the corresponding EMS services and counties involved, and dispatchers at the Sheriff's Office will coordinate the intercept with advanced life support ambulances from those areas.

There are often good reasons for heading in the other directions. For example, if you are under the care of a physician in Artesia or Ruidoso, you have a good medical reason for wanting to be taken there in an emergency, rather than to a hospital where nobody knows you. Also, given our mountain roads and iffy weather, it's not always clear that the closest hospital is always the shortest trip. And, it is clear that Artesia really is closet for some folks in Piñon.

Finally, if you are the victim of a serious accident or are suffering from a life-threatening medical problem, your local EMTs and firefighters may decide to call for a helicopter. In those cases the helicopter crew will take you to a regional trauma or medical center that is staffed and equipped to handle your serious problem, and will probably bypass all the smaller regional hospitals.

Of course, as in most things in life, there are no guarantees. Worst-case scenario: Your condition is life-threatening, the helicopter can't respond for some reason (this has not happened in our area, but it could), and you must be taken by ambulance over the road. The ambulance crew must exercise its judgment in deciding where to take you. In these cases, a few minutes may mean the difference between life and death and you may be taken to the closest hospital regardless of your wishes.

Water Matters!

- R. Wright

What's Happening On The Water Scene?

Thank you to all of you who showed up on September 8 at the Sacramento Methodist Assembly for the SSWG meeting. The New Mexico State Engineer, John D'Antonio, Estevan Lopez, Director of the Interstate Stream Commission, and several of their staff, including Sara Rhoton, were there and presented the *Draft of the Lower Pecos River Basin Water Master District-Specific Rules and Regulations*.

Many of us live in the Peñasco Water Basin, and many of our neighbors who live in the Salt Basin get their water from the Peñasco Basin. The Peñasco Basin is part of the larger Lower Pecos River Basin. The Lower Pecos River Basin stretches from just south of Santa Rosa to the Texas border south of Carlsbad and includes all of the eastern slopes of the Sacramento Mountains.

These new rules and regulations will establish a "Water Master District" to administer the Pecos River Settlement. To quote the State Engineer, this "is a landmark compromise of disputed claims between water rights holders in the Pecos River Basin. The agreement was negotiated by the Interstate Stream Commission (ISC), the United States, the Carlsbad Irrigation District (CID) and the Pecos Valley Artesian Conservancy District (PVACD) to reach a settlement of the CID water rights adjudication lawsuit. The agreement was executed on March 25, 2003."

So why should you care about the new rules and regulations? Because:

It gives the Water Master the power to administer all waters within the Basin and to regulate and control waters to prevent waste or

illegal diversions. It gives the Water Master the right to:

- a. Establish a Basin office and sub district offices and apportion costs to the Counties (including Otero);
- b. Enter your property to ensure compliance (see another article in this issue about this specifically);
- c. Require the attachments of meters and require reporting, at your cost, to
 - I. Private domestic wells
 - ii. all diversions
 - iii. delineate livestock vs. domestic use
- d. Issue and enforce curtailment orders
- e. Limit domestic wells to a yet unspecified amount to "Out-of-Priority" domestic wells

The informal comment period ended September 23. The SSWG submitted comments on the proposed rules from the points brought up at the September 8 meeting and/or later submitted by individuals.

The SSWG comments included actual proposed wording changes to the regulations, summarized as:

Concern over the punitive tone of the document.

The lack of wording in the regulations about grandfathering of properties, although the State Engineer said at the public meeting that there would be grandfathering.

The lack of relief for costs to land owners who live at the poverty level.

The complete absence of incentives to conserve water and bring this range back to levels of water production that existed at the time of the signing of the Compact.

The SSWG also went beyond specific wording changes, however, to lay out the broader issues that face us here in the mountains. The letter stated that there are three issues that the State Engineer's Office *must* address *now* if there is to be a rational water policy in south central and southeastern New Mexico.

"In your (John D'Antonio) remarks to the public on September 8, you noted that the Sacramento Mountains are the source of waters for the basins surrounding the mountains. We wholeheartedly agree. We trust that in acknowledging that fact, you also acknowledge that if the surrounding basins are to survive, much less prosper, the watershed in the Sacramento Mountains must be preserved and restored.

"First: The State of New Mexico has the power to pressure the US Forest Service to increase it's thinning programs. The programs in place now must be both accelerated and enhanced. It is the pathological overgrowth of the forests that has caused the streams, wells, and springs to dry up in our part of the state. The drought is certainly a factor, but in the absence of a rational policy for maintaining healthy forests, there is no hope for sustaining this watershed even in times of plentiful moisture. Please do not continue to take a passive role in this matter. Rather, use the power of the State of New Mexico to convince the

stewards of the national forests to do what they must do to preserve, protect, and restore the waters of our state.

"Second: We fully support your efforts to garner some control over the growth of individual wells in our area. We believe that the continuing subdivision of our ranch lands into small plots will destroy the watershed. We have no objection to development...after all, we are newcomers who arrived here only 6 years ago. But our well is on 75 acres. We believe that domestic well permits can and should be limited. We intend to contact our legislators on this issue as well.

"Third: We hope you will seriously consider the changes to the draft rules and regulations in regards to the Water Master's power to enter onto private property. We understand that this is a power granted by statute. However, we also believe that at the very least, a process for ensuring courtesy and respect for the private property owner will go a long way towards developing the kind of relationship you hope to have between the Water Masters and the communities where they work.

"Fourth: The South Sacramento Water Group (SSWG) was conceived and has survived during the past 8 or 9 months because the people in these mountain communities understand, at their core, that water is their lifeblood and that they must become activists in order to protect and restore this watershed. The SSWG has no monetary resources other than what has been collected by passing a coffee can. The SSWG has no paid staff. The SSWG is comprised of citizens who are willing to give their time, as volunteers, to save their water and their neighbors' water. The SSWG desperately needs the support of the State of New Mexico in order to retain and maintain itself. It needs financial resources. Even more, it needs the expertise of the OSE. These people are ready and willing to step forward and find creative, innovative and previously unheard of solutions to the water problems in this part of the State. If you will send your experts to inform and guide the group in its efforts, you will be going a long way towards accomplishing your goals for this area of the State."

If you are interested, you can obtain a copy of the full comments and proposed changes to the regulations by contacting Russ Wright at 687-3073 or rewright@pvt.net.

." New Mexico Statute 72-3-2 gives the water master "charge of the apportionment of waters in his district under the general supervision of the state engineer, and he shall so appropriate, regulate and control the waters of the district as will prevent waste."

Can The Water Master Come Onto Your Private Property?

The proposed new Water Master rules and regulations that have been the subject of much discussion lately include one provision that is the cause of considerable heartburn to many folks who value their privacy and who would rather not have state officials wandering around their land and homes uninvited. The proposed regulation reads:

19.25.16.106 WATER MASTER ENTRY ON PRIVATE OR PUBLIC LAND: Pursuant to NMSA 1978, s.72-8-1, the Water Master shall have the right to enter private or public lands in order to
A. Install, inspect, read, and adjust Measuring Devices and require the calibration, replacement or repair of such Measuring Devices;
B. Inspect and adjust head gates or require the repair of such head gates;
C. Make seepage evaluations;
D. Conduct inspections of canals, wells, wasteways or sluiceways;
E. Prevent waste and prevent illegal water use;
F. Cap, lock or otherwise temporarily disable any mechanism for Illegal Diversion; and
G. Perform such other duties as are required to accomplish Administration.

The SSWG submitted comments to the OSE asking for changes to this provision such that the Water Master would be required to give written notice to a property owner before coming onto private property, and in advance so that the property owner could take action to object to the entry or, at the very least, ask for a more convenient date and time for the visit. The written notice would have to state the specific purpose of the visit, the date and time of the visit, and would inform the property owners of their right to be present during the visit. The Water Master would confine his business on the property to the specific purposes stated in the notice. Finally, the Water Master would not be permitted to enter a residence without the specific written consent of the owner.

The State Engineer can accept or reject some or all of these suggestions. We'll have to wait and see.

But why fool around with changes at all? Why not just tell the State Engineer that the Water Master shouldn't have this power at all?

Well, it turns out that there is already a statute in place in New Mexico law that allows this. The "new" rules and regulations just fill in the details. The statute already in place states:

NMSA 72-8-1. Injuring works; interference; misdemeanor; liability for damages; arrest; state engineer and water masters; right to enter private property

*Any person, association or corporation interfering with or injuring or destroying any dam, headgate, weir, benchmark or other appliance for the diversion, carriage, storage, apportionment or measurement of water, or for any hydrographic surveys, or who shall interfere with any person or persons engaged in the discharge of duties connected therewith, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and shall also be liable for the injury or damage resulting from such unlawful act. The state engineer or any authorized assistant shall have power to **arrest** any person offending against the provisions of this section, and deliver him to the nearest peace officer of the county. It shall be the duty of the person making the arrest to make complaint at once before the court having*

jurisdiction thereof. The state engineer, the water masters and their authorized assistants, and agents may enter upon private property for the performance of their respective duties, doing no unnecessary injury thereto. (emphasis added.)

So if you don't like it, you should contact your state senator and representative and ask them to change it.

Want To Play A Part In Drafting A Locally Based Administrative Response to the Water Master Approach? At the present time the Peñasco Basin does not have a Water Master, and the State Engineer does not expect one to be appointed for 6 to 12 months.

If we act now we can suggest an alternative approach for the Peñasco Basin. The *Draft of the Lower Pecos River Water Master Rules and Regulations* makes reference to the formation of "water rights owner groups." Estevan Lopez, Director of the Interstate Stream Commission, stated that the State Engineer's Office encourages the development of such groups. This group currently exists as the **South Sacramento Water Group (SSWG)**.

At its upcoming meeting on October 13 at 6 p.m. at Camp Chimney Springs, the SSWG will discuss how best to create an alternative plan for this basin. Come and be part of this historic opportunity. If you can't make it and wish to be part of a task force that will draft such a plan, call or email Russ Wright. (687-3073 or rewright@pvt.net)

Your fresh ideas, your knowledge of the area, and your experience with water issues in this part of the country are needed!

Area Churches

Mayhill Baptist Church - Norman Green, Pastor. Sunday School for all ages begins at 10 a.m., with worship services beginning at 11 a.m. Children and youth Bible drill and adult and youth Discipleship training, 5 p.m. Evening worship service begins at 6 p.m. Children and youth Bible study and adult Bible study and prayer meeting, Wednesday, 6:30 p.m. Men's breakfast and devotional, Thursday, 7 a.m.

Mayhill Church of Christ - Marlon McWilliams, Pastor. Sunday Bible class begins at 9:30 a.m.; worship service begins at 10:30 a.m. Evening worship is at 6 p.m., and Wednesday Bible Study is at 7 p.m.

Piñon Baptist Church - J. B. Craft, Pastor. Sunday School for all ages begins at 10 a.m., with worship service beginning at 11 a.m.

Piñon Church of Christ - Ralph Skelton, Pastor. Sunday worship service begins at 10:30 a.m. Wednesday evening Bible Study begins at 7 p.m.

Sacramento Mountain United Methodist Church - Dulaney Barrett, Pastor. Regular Sunday worship service begins at 10 a.m., with Sunday School beginning at 11 a.m.

The Annual Church Conference is planned for October 5. It will begin with a potluck supper (built around homemade ice cream and green chile stew) at 6 p.m. in the small dining room at the Sacramento Methodist Assembly Dining Hall.

World Communion Sunday will be observed October 9 at the 10 a.m. service of worship. A special offering will be received for the Committee on Relief and will go for hurricane victims relief. All are welcome.

Weed Baptist Church - Tom Dusak, Pastor. Sunday School begins at 10 a.m., with the worship service beginning at 11 a.m. A potluck luncheon is held after church on the third Sunday of the month. Bible Study class is held each Wednesday at 2 p.m.

Weed Church of Christ - Ralph Skelton, Pastor. Bible study is taught from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. every Sunday; worship service begins at 10 a.m. Sunday evening services are from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Weed House of Prayer - Dub Schuessler, Pastor. Services are held every Sunday in the home of Jimmy and Frances Goss. Prayer and singing begin at 10 a.m.; a sermon and children's classes begin at 11 a.m. Wednesday prayer service is held at 10 a.m. A potluck luncheon is held after church on the first Sunday of the month.

Farmer's Almanac October Gardening Tips (*This Bulletin is determined by the Almanac's age-old formula and applies generally to regions where the climate is favorable.*)

1-2 Grub out weeds, briars and other plant pests.

3-4 Fine for sowing grains, hay and forage crops. Plant flowers.

5-6 Favorable days for planting beans, peas, squash, sweet corn, tomatoes, lettuce, cabbage, kale and celery. Where climate is suitable, start seed beds.

7-8 Do clearing and plowing but no planting.

9-10 Plant tomatoes, peas, beans and other aboveground crops, indoors in the north, outdoors in lower south.

11-12-13 Poor planting days. Kill poison ivy, weeds, clear land, but do no planting.

14-15 Favorable days for planting aboveground crops. Extra good for vine crops where climate is suitable.

16-17 A barren period.

18-19-20 Good days for planting beets, carrots, onions, turnips and other hardy root crops where climate is suitable.

21-22 Poor days for planting. Seeds tend to rot in ground.

23-24-25 Best planting days for fall potatoes, turnips, onions, carrots, beets and other root crops where climate is suitable. Also plant seed beds, flower gardens.

26-27-28-29 Grub out weeds, briars and other plant pests.

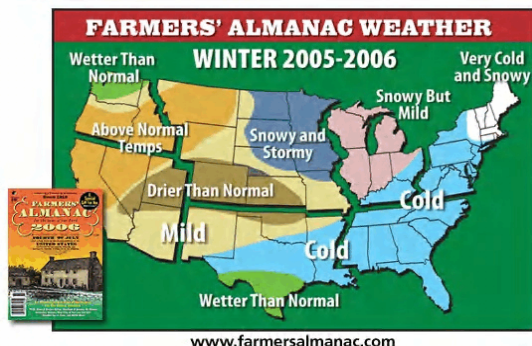
30-31 Favorable days for planting root crops. Fine for sowing hay, fodder crops and grains. Plant flowers.

More Farmer's Almanac Tips

...Tomatoes are ripened by warmth not sunlight. Store tomatoes upside down - they will stay fresher for a longer period of time. Place green tomatoes on shelves in a cool area so they can ripen slowly.

...Harvest your vegetable plants often. The more you pick tomatoes, cucumbers, and squash, the more they will grow.

...Harvest vegetables before the first frost. Parsnips, turnips, and carrots may be left in the ground. Some gardeners say this improves their flavor. Fall is also a good time to pull up annuals and prune perennials.



Hunting Dates for Unit 34

- Bear September 23 - November 30
- Elk October 1-5 (muzzle loader only)
- Elk October 8-12
- Deer October 22-26 (muzzle loader only)
- Deer October 29 - November 2

Cloudcroft Sports Events - October 2005

CHS Bears Football				
October 1	Hobbs JV/Black	Away		7 p.m.
October 8	Hagerman	Home		2 p.m.
October 14	Capitan	Away		7 p.m.
October 21	Mescalero	Away		7 p.m.
October 29	Carrizozo	Home		2 p.m.
CJHS Bears Football				
October 6	Carrizozo	Home		4 p.m.
October 13	Mescalero	Home		4 p.m.
CHS Lady Bears Volleyball				
Oct.1	Lordsburg	Away	2/3/4 p.m.	C/JV/V
Oct. 4	Mescalero	Home	4/5 p.m.	JV/V
Oct. 6	Tularosa	Home	4/5 p.m.	JV/V
Oct. 11	Hatch	Away	4/5/6 p.m.	C/JV/V
Oct. 15	Lordsburg	Home	2/3/4 p.m.	C/JV/V
Oct. 18	Tularosa	Away	4/5 p.m.	JV/V
Oct. 20	Mescalero	Away	4/5 pm	JV/V
CJHS Lady Bears Volleyball				
Oct. 1	Mountain View	Home	10/11 a.m.	7 & 8
Oct. 4	Holloman AFB	Away	4/5 pm	7 & 8
Oct. 6	Mt. View	Away	4/5 p.m.	7 & 8
Sept. 20	Chaparral	Home	4:30/5:30 pm	7 & 8
Sept. 24	Tularosa	Home	10/11 am	7 & 8
Sept. 27	Capitan	Home	4/5 pm	7 & 8
CHS Cross Country				
Oct. 1	Las Cruces Mayfield			
Oct. 8	Las Cruces Oñate			
Oct. 15	Mescalero			
Oct. 20	Ruidoso			
Oct. 29	District 4 Championships, Cloudcroft			
Nov. 5	State Championships, Gallup			

How Safe is YOUR Money?

You have homeowner's insurance, car insurance, and health insurance to cover you from these risks, but what about **economic risk** ... the least understood and potentially most devastating of all risks?

Dr. Larry Bates will conduct a seminar on this issue Saturday, October 15, 9 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. at NMSU

Taves Center, 2400 N. Scenic Drive in Alamogordo. Dr. Bates, an economist, publisher, editor of "Monetary and Economic Review" and "Unraveling the New World Order," is a former member of the Tennessee House of Representatives and chairman of its powerful Committee on Banking and Commerce. He is a former bank CEO and an internationally recognized expert on political systems and the Federal Reserve and how they affect the economy and your investments. He is also the author of "The New Economic Disorder" that has been published in five languages.

Registration for the seminar is \$15/person or \$25/couple. Call 1-800-336-7000, ext. 221, for reservations or information.

2005 "Constitutional Chaos" Seminar

Proudly presented by the Paragon Foundation, October 22, Alamogordo Civic Center, 800 E. First Street. Lunch begins at 11:30 a.m., and the seminar will begin at 1 p.m. Price is \$20/person, \$30/couple. The seminar will feature Judge Andrew D. Napolitano, author of "Constitutional Chaos," as guest speaker. Other speakers include C. F. Hadley of *Range Magazine*, Derry Brownfield of Common Sense Coalition and Dan Martinez, Forest Allotment Owner. There will also be a special concert by Toni Harms. For registration details, call 1-877-847-3443 or 505-434-8998.

Our prayers and sympathy go to Merle Smith and family on the loss of Merle's mother, Mrs. Washburn, on September 20.

Oops! We missed another belated birthday. Hope you had a happy one Don Sadauskas, September 16.

We're happy to report that Paul Comino's brother survived the hurricane. Our thoughts and prayers go out to all survivors and their families.

Who was that "stranger" seen holding hands with and kissing our favorite Postmistress, Debbie. Glad to see you back on the mountain, Gary.

The Breakfast Group gets together every Tuesday and Friday at the Weed Café. Come join us!

Not many weeks ago, someone drove their vehicle off the Agua Chiquita Canyon Road near the sharp curve, through the fence, and on to the property of the Barretts (120 Agua Chiquita). The fence and posts were badly damaged. There is some evidence that the vehicle was a shade of green with black plastic parts. The person is asked to come to the Barretts and give them the vehicle insurance information so the fence can be repaired or you can repair it under the supervision of Dulaney Barrett. If this was your accident or you know who did it, please call the Barretts at 687-4016.

From the Editor

Thanks to everyone who contributed to this month's issue! **YOU** are what makes the *Hitchin' Post* successful. I couldn't do it without you. News for the *Hitchin' Post* may be mailed to P.O. Box 565 or sent via e-mail to patrice@cavemen.net anytime during the month; however, **deadline for submissions is the 25th of each month.** If you have information you want included in the newsletter, call Joy Garrett, 687-3862; Evelyn Miller, 687-2170; Barb Schuessler, 687-2513; or Elaine Wright, 687-3073, with your news.