



# BLACK FOREST NEWS

&

## PALMER DIVIDE PIONEER



Black Forest's Community Newspaper since 1960

Vol. 48 No. 36  
April 24, 2008

35  
CENTS

## "If you're gonna' keep from burnin' hot - cut a few trees, trim a few limbs, clean up the slash..."



### EXTRA! EXTRA!

Don't miss out on this Saturday's Forest Stewardship Event featuring the Forest Chorus, GREAT DOOR PRIZES including TWO chain saws donated by Ayer's Saw Shop, oodles of information on Noxious Weeds, Defensible Space, Dwarf Mistletoe, Beetles, Live tree-cutting demo - get handouts, ask questions of the experts - YOU NAME IT - WE GOT IT if IT has to do with management of forests and grasslands.

9:00 a.m. SHARP at the Black Forest Community Hall - bring your neighbors and the Newbies.

**BE FIREWISE!** Presented by **SAMCOM**

### Corral Bluffs hike and meeting fosters call for Regional Park - but not for motorcycles



District 2 Commssioner Amy Lathen (left) held a meeting for residents to hear residents' concerns about the proposed OHV Park at the old Falcom Middle School last Saturday afternoon at 2:30. Here she speaks with Jackie Hilaire, a neighboring property owner to the proposed OHV Park. State Representative Marcia Looper (background), and Mark Waller (background), who is challenging Douglas Bruce in the upcoming Primary, also attended the meeting. Lathen made it clear that she was talking to both proponents and opponents of the proposal among both her immediate consitutency in District 2, and a broader range of County citizens. She stated that she was not taking a position on this controversial proposal at this time.

by Judith P. von Ahlefeldt  
Black Forest News

Many citizens who attended the meeting held by County Commissioner Marsha Looper last Saturday expressed their desire to see Corral Bluffs become a Regional Park for eastern El Paso County - but not a place for motorcycles to use.

Jackie Hilaire, whose property abuts the 522 acres the County wants to purchase as the nucleus for the motorcycle park said "A resource like this (badland topography in the plains with paleontological, archaeological, historic and open space merits) is a valuable resource to the entire state".

Norm Bishop, whose land at the base of the Corral Bluffs cliffs is surrounded in part on three sides by the proposed OHV Park said, "We are living in a high desert. Aztec has two tracks - they water them down.

Corral Bluffs - page 4

### Ruth Ann Steele, Black Forest's Foremost Professional Citizen

is the sparkplug for **SAMCOM**, the **Slash And Mulch COM**mittee. A decade and a half ago Ruth Ann was President of the Colorado Forestry Association and she was tired of "talk.". "We must make a decision to do something", she said. A CSU student had just completed a Master's Thesis showing that Black Forest had the highest probability of wildfire in the State. The need action was clear.

Ruth Ann told the *Black Forest News* that John Fisher of EP County Solid Waste had a grant for fire mitigation, and her new Slash and Mulch Committee had the energy and commitment - and so Black Forest's Slash and Mulch Program was born in 1994. It has been a model for many other communities. **Don't miss Ruth Ann's Forest Chorus** telling the story of people and the land in song this Saturday at 9 a.m. at the Community Hall. Have you got the "Doghair Blues"? Over 400 volunteers donate nearly 1800 hours each year to this unique program to care for our land.



# Weekly Weather around The Divide

The Black Forest Community Church presents the 1st Annual  
**Spring Fling Dinner & Dance Fundraiser**  
 Saturday, May 10, 2008 5:30—9:30 pm  
 Black Forest Community Center  
 Tickets for sale thru 4/30  
 \$20 - Adult , \$10 - Child (12 or under)

For more information, including purchasing tickets, call Carlene Peters at 495-4770, the Black Forest Community Church at 495-2207, or visit [www.bfcc-ucc.org](http://www.bfcc-ucc.org)  
 All proceeds to benefit the BFCC Youth Group.

The only weather information specifically tailored for the Palmer Divide

**Bill Kappel Meteorologist**

Quiet, "spring-like" weather greeted us for most of the 3rd week of the month.

The week started off on the warm side with highs jumping into the 70's on the 14th and 15th along with sunny skies. Only some gusty winds took away from the warmth.

These were the warmest temperatures we'd send since late October. Oh, but just when you thought it was safe to put the snow shovel away, a storm system moved through the region by early the next morning.

A cold front pushed over the Palmer Divide around 2:30am on the 16th and we said goodbye to the 70's and hello to snow.

This storm brought 4-8 inches of snow to most of us from the morning of the 16th to the



**Forecast for Friday, April 25 to Sunday April 27**

Seasonal conditions should dominate over the weekend; expect partly cloudy skies with a slight chance of isolated showers as a couple of weather systems move by to our north. Highs should rebound well into the 50's and 60's with overnight lows hovering around freezing.

Remember, weather affects all of us everyday and is a very important part of life for us on the Palmer Divide, and we want to hear from you. If you see a unique weather event or have a weather question, please contact us at [blackforestnews@earthlink.net](mailto:blackforestnews@earthlink.net).

For more detailed weather forecasts and Climatology of the Palmer Divide, please visit Bill Kappel's Weather Web page at <http://www.thekappels.com/Weather.htm>.

morning of the 17th. With temperatures holding in the 30's both afternoons.

Temperatures did quickly rebound behind the system under sunny skies, as highs reached back into the 60's for the rest of the week and through the weekend.

Again, only gusty winds each afternoon put a damper on the otherwise quiet weather.

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**Corral Bluffs from p. 1**

That won't happen on 20 miles of trail. Those bikes on this fragile land can turn into a desert. The dirt is going to billow up out of those canyons as a dust storm. Turning this particular pristine area into a dust bowl will impact the quality of life in this area."

Bishop's property is also adjacent to Aztec Family Raceway's land on two sides.

Parks Administrator Tim Wolken said at the last public meeting hosted by Parks on April 15, that "It made sense" for Aztec to be the concessionaire in the proposed "public-private partnership" which would operate the new OHV Park which Wolken claims will not cost any taxpayer money.

Although he insisted that no commitment had been made, he refused to directly answer a citizen question of whether the concessionaire would be placed for competitive bid.

Citizen concerns ran the gamut from concerns about the financial viability of the proposal - several people cited OHV Parks in other states that required heavy subsidy to operate. Others were concerned about the effects of existing wildlife and plant cover - seventy five species of birds are known from the rugged area which has had little modern human presence. Many citizens were concerned with property values primarily because of noise and dust. Others objected to the county spending money on a park which would be for

the exclusive use of motorcycles, and possibly ATV's or other Off-Road vehicles, when there were insufficient County resources to fund law enforcement and health services in Eastern El Paso County.

State Representative Marsha Looper stated that the need for places for OHV recreation was a statewide problem as BLM and U.S. Forest Service were placing tighter restrictions on off-road use in order to protect wildlife and other resources.

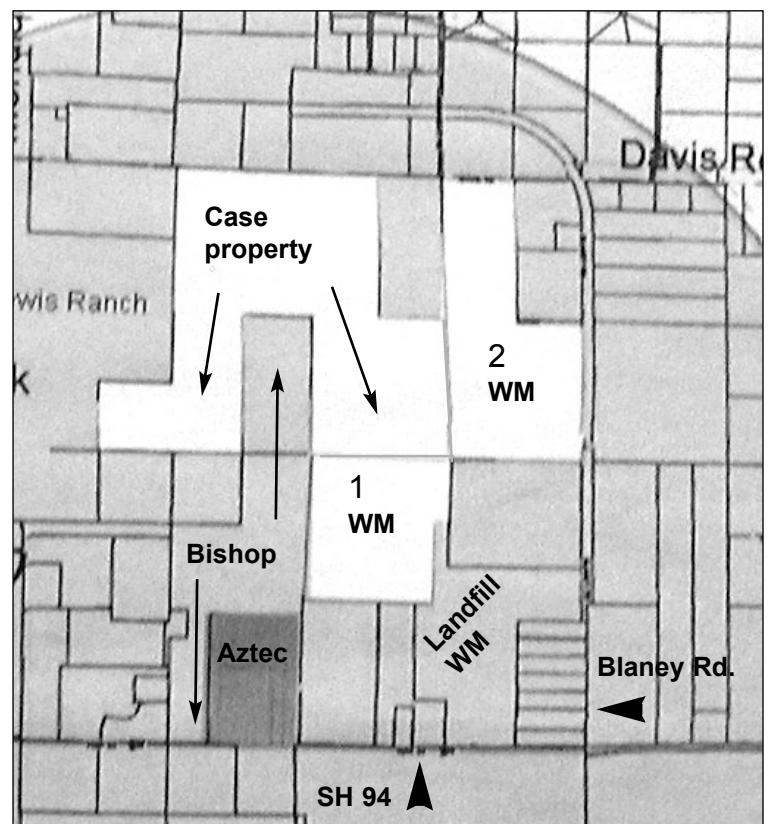
Looper, Lathen and many citizens agreed that an OHV Park

in El Paso County was desirable but citizens were adamant that Corral Bluffs was not the right place for it.

Lathen said she was doing "due diligence" to inquire about alternative site choices.

The proposal for acquiring the 522 acres of the Case property using state funds, and money generated from the OHV sticker program, is not the limit of land affected by the proposal.

There are also two parcels **cont next page**



The 522 acre case property proposed for purchase by EPC Parks for the motorcycle would be augmented by two other parcels of land, also including Corral Bluffs, leased from Waste Management (WM 1 and 2 above). This totals more than 900 ac. Map is from Corral Bluffs Alliance material available at the April 19 public meeting

## SYLVIA SAGE - THE WISE OLD GAL OF THE FOREST

Dear Sylvia,

What are some of the things you look for when dining out?

*Cuisine fiend*

Dear Fiend,

First thing I look for is a restaurant.

Generally I go for ones that have names in American.

I'd shy away from someplace called Chez Henrique, but I'd belly right up to Hank's Place.

I don't like them big places they call steakhouses - they remind me too much of a feed-lot.

Folks line up like cattle and there's so much different stuff to eat they don't seem to know better and just eat everything. I



don't know about you, but I don't fancy feelin' as dumb as a finishin' steer, nor as fat.

If I was settin' at a table and a feller comes up wearin' a diamond stud in his nose and two colors of hair stickin' straight up, and he says "Hi, my name is Fitch and I'll be your server tonight", I reckon I'd spook right outa there like a pony from a den of mountain lions.

If a gal come up with a pencil behind her ear and an apron which ain't exactly spotless, and she says "What'll ya have?" then I reckon I could eat

there.

I don't like to spend more money on one dinner than I'd earn in two whole days of workin' an honest job.

I'm not much interested in a wine list; beer on tap or in a bottle is variety enough for me. I like pie or maybe ice cream for dessert, if I got room; I don't want no dessert that's on fire or got some kinda sauce on the plate underneath it.

Also, the parkin' lot's gotta have room to park a full size pickup, and the privy's gotta be clean.

There's somethin' else that's been botherin' me about eatin' out:

Why is it that these days they'll bring you yer fish not even cooked, and yet you can't get a steak but burnt clear through?

comments about the Corral Bluffs land use issue.

The approval of funding (which is \$20,000 of state money matched by \$20,000 of County funds) to hire the OHV Park planner was scheduled for the Consent Calendar at the Monday, April 21 BoCC meeting, which was not held due to lack of a quorum. **The Consent Calendar was moved to Thursday, April 24th BoCC meeting.**

Objections to physical impacts to the greater Corral Bluffs area, not just the land proposed for the OHV Park, also come from professionals in archaeology and paleontology, both of whom have performed some investigations in the area proposed for the Jimmy Camp reservoir in the Corral Bluffs badlands just west of the proposed OHV Park Site.

The Jimmy Camp Reservoir, connected to the Southern Delivery System as a storage site proposed by Colorado Springs Utilities, would flood, or impact by dam construction, archaeological and paleontological sites which have received little study to date.

Dr. Bill Arobgast, a UCCS Archaeological professor objected to the Jimmy Camp reservoir site in 2005. Arobgast's research began in 1997 and continued in 1998, 2002 and 2004 under contracts from Colorado Springs Utilities ((Colorado Springs Gazette - Oct. 2, 2005 by Bill Vogrin).

Arobgast nominated the Jimmy Camp area for the State Register of Historic Places and said "We need to protect and investigate it... and "need a plan to preserve it or recover the significant data from this site."

owned by Waste Management with 5-year renewable lease options which would be included in the park. These would open even more of the Corral Bluffs topography to motorized use, creating an area of over 900 acres (See map).

Commissioner Jim Bensberg is an advocate of using the Case property as a nucleus for the motorcycle park.

In a blog on Thumpertalk.com (a blog site for motorcycle/ATV enthusi-

"Thursday morning, April 24, at the County Office Building, anut 9 a.m. the Board of County Commissioners will decide whether to spend \$35,000 of your OHV sticker money on a park planner pursuant to our original grant request. The anti-access folk will be out in force to protest this next stop in the plan. The point needs to be made by someone other than me, that 18" of singe track for 20 miles = 3.5 acres out of a proposed 900-acre park. Can you say "Open Space?" Sure ya can!

If the motorcycle community wants to be heard, this is a prime opportunity. Otherwise, all the Board will hear is the constant whining from the likes of Lee Milner and the NIMBYs.

So spread the word. If motorcycles continue to be underrepresented at the critical public meetings, they will get nothing in return. Democracy requires participation!! (www.thumpertalk.com/showthead.php?t=633149&page=2)

asts) published on Tuesday, April 22, Bensberg was quoted. This blog site also contains other motorcycle park advocate

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