



# PMPO

www.PMPOinfo.com

Spring 2020 - Volume 31

The Palomar Mountain Planning Organization

**Board Members:** Mike Appelman, Lafe Ball, Cecelia Borland, Glenn Borland (Chair), Robert Carlyle, Elizabeth Getzoff, Mary Ellen Harshberger (alternate), Rosemary Johnston, John Lesac, Michael Pique (Secretary), Rigel Rafto (Treasurer), Elizabeth Tainer (alternate), Linda Thorne (Vice-Chair), Yvonne Vaucher, Michael Walsh, Jack Weisgerber

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

by Glenn Borland



Welcome to the 2020 edition of the PMPO newsletter. The Palomar Mountain Planning Organization is a nonprofit public benefit organization whose purpose is, not only to provide planning oversight for the Palomar community, but also to organize responses to particular Mountain needs. These needs range from road traffic and safety to representing the Palomar Mountain community in county planning issues. The board consists of fifteen members that are elected to three-year terms. Five member positions come up for election every year and candidates are drawn from Palomar Mountain residents, property owners, and business persons. If you would like to participate in board activities, please do not hesitate to contact any of the board members, or email [secretary@pm-po-info.com](mailto:secretary@pm-po-info.com).

Due to the coronavirus, the May 23rd General meeting has been postponed to a future date. The PMPO Pancake Breakfast has been cancelled for this year. It is hoped that the General Meeting will be held by perhaps July 25th. The form of this meeting is still to be determined.

This last year we continue to see changes on the mountain. Not the least of which, speed limits have been set on both South Grade and East Grade roads. Also through the efforts of Lafe Ball, we now have resident tags for all mountain residents. These tags have

been a very effective aid in helping the CHP regulate the traffic traveling to and from the mountain top during snow days.

Palomar CERT under the leadership of Bill Leininger continues its monthly training schedule. Personal preparedness and safety are the themes of the current meetings.

Weekend South Grade and East Grade traffic continues to be improved, due to the efforts of Alan Serry and Burt Hulbert. The speed limit signs have continued the improvement in road safety and noise reduction that was started during the previous years by the increased presence of the CHP.

Staffing of the fire station by the San Diego County Fire Authority continues to be exceptional. Thanks to Captain Dean Kowalski and all of our fire fighters! Construction of the new crew quarters is scheduled to start some time this year. The timeframe will be dependant on the lock down status in the State of California and the County of San Diego.

The Fire Safe Council continues to support the community by sponsoring workshops, safety courses and dumpster days. Serious commitments to fire prevention and brush clearing on our properties must remain a high priority. An important part of preparedness is the maintenance of our access roads. The

Fire Safe Council is currently working with land owners and the PMFD to ascertain where work needs to be done. The question is not whether we will have another fire, it's simply when, and how prepared will we be? On this note, the PMPO gives thanks to the PMFD for their ever-present vigilance, Cal Fire with their wider venue of the forest and surrounding areas, and the Forest Fire Lookout Association with their group of volunteers who keep an eye out for all of us.

The Board of Supervisors approved a Community Sponsor Group for Palomar Mountain. Initial members are: Mike Appelman, Micah Beard, Robert Carlyle, Clifford Kellogg, William Leininger and Teresa McCarthy.

It is my hope that the various articles in this newsletter will give you a feel for the activities of the various boards and the communities they serve.

As you read this newsletter, you are looking at the work of not only the contributors who wrote the articles, but also the work of publisher Susan Humason, editors Mike Pique and Libby Getzoff. Many thanks for their hard work. And to all of the other people that have contributed to the activities of the PMPO: a hearty thanks.

Annual Pancake Breakfast  
**CANCELLED**



PMPO Annual Meeting  
**POSTPONED**

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**Palomar Mountain  
Planning Organization (PMPO)  
Box 145  
PALOMAR MOUNTAIN, CA 92060-0145**

This newsletter is produced annually and distributed in May of each year. Without the help of many volunteers, this newsletter would not be possible.

Coordinator: Glenn Borland  
 Publisher: Susan Humason  
 Editors: Michael Pique/Libby Getzoff  
 Photography: Michael Pique

Article Contributors:  
 Thank you to all contributors who make this newsletter possible.

Assemblers:  
 Thanks go out to the individuals, especially Michael Pique, who help each year with the assembly and mailing of the newsletter.

If you have any information that you would like to contribute to future newsletters, please email the information to

Glenn Borland at:  
[chair@pmpoinfo.com](mailto:chair@pmpoinfo.com)  
 attn: PMPO Newsletter

Thank You to Our Paid Advertisers who help offset the production and mailing costs.

## Palomar Mountain Planning Organization

### TREASURER'S REPORT

2019 - 2020

*By Rigel A. Rafto, PMPO Treasurer*



The financial status of the Palomar Mountain Planning Organization remains strong and stable, consistent with the past several years.

The 2019 Breakfast was another successful event, thanks to our many volunteers led by Cecilia Borland. In 2019, the PMPO was the grateful recipient of 16 generous donations from our supporters, totaling \$1,585. Donations to the PMPO are tax deductible, and along with the acknowledgment letters sent to all our donors, we also included our tax-exempt information.

In addition, thanks to the leadership of Lafe Ball, we funded the production of 500 resident placards, which were sold for \$5 each and available for purchase by local residents, please support the Palomar Mountain community.

	Jan 2019	Jan 2020	Difference
Checking	\$16,133.02	\$16,366.40	+\$233.38
Savings	<u>\$33,405.90</u>	<u>\$33,869.49</u>	<u>+\$463.59</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$49,538.92</b>	<b>\$50,235.89</b>	<b>+\$696.97</b>



## Mountain Forestry Services

- Stump Grinding
- Tree & Brush Work
- Firewood



**Robert Carlyle  
760-742-1891**

*This is a Paid Advertisement.*

# PMPO Needs Your Financial Support...

All property owners, residents, and any parties interested in the Palomar community are members of the Palomar Mountain Planning Organization. PMPO is recognized by both Federal and State Taxing Authorities as a tax-exempt organization. This means that your gifts are income tax deductible.

The Palomar Mountain Planning Organization (PMPO) studies and tackles issues of importance to Palomar Mountain, its residents, and visitors. Your financial support represents the Mountains' ability to make its voice heard and have its concerns expressed to the applicable local government agencies.



## Palomar Mountain Planning Organization -- 2020 Contribution --

RETURN TO:  
PMPO, Box 145  
PALOMAR MOUNTAIN, CA 92060-0145  
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# Thank You

## PMPO BOARD MEMBERS...



We would like to thank all of the Board Members who are currently serving and who have served over the many years that the PMPO has been active.

Our active Board Members are listed on the cover page under the PMPO banner.

Please take a minute to thank them for all of the time and effort they put into serving this vital organization.



### 2019-2020 Board of Directors

Standing: Michael Pique, Lafe Ball, Rigel Rafto, Glenn Borland, Michael Walsh, Mike Appelman. Seated: Elizabeth Getzoff, Mary Ellen Harshberger, Cecelia Borland, Linda Thorne, Yvonne Vaucher, John Lesac.



## ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER ANYONE?

If you would like to receive the PMPO annual newsletter electronically in the future, please email [newsletter@pmpoinfo.com](mailto:newsletter@pmpoinfo.com) and let us know.

Your email address will not be shared or distributed in any way.





Friends of  
PALOMAR MOUNTAIN STATE PARK

# FRIENDS OF PALOMAR MOUNTAIN STATE PARK

By Rosemary Johnston and Michael Walsh

The park has been closed and, as of April 22 (Happy Earth Day), it is not clear when it will reopen. It is closed to vehicular and foot traffic even if visitors park outside the entrance. The renovated amphitheater cabinets look great, and we look forward to a dedication event later this year to honor the Wescott family who donated the funds in memory of their late father. We have also completed a strategic plan to guide our progress for the next two years.

Right now, we are obtaining estimates to renovate the entrance kiosk with interior painting, new flooring and a shelf display of the items we offer for sale there to benefit the park—mugs, water bottles, hats, etc. Park staff has been able to upgrade technology in the kiosk to more easily check people into the park. We are eager for the park to re-open as summer nears and look forward to more hiking, camping, and just ‘hanging out’ in the outdoors there. We will keep PMPO informed when

the park is open for business again. In the meantime, don’t forget we count on your donations to help us fund deferred maintenance projects and pay our park interpreter’s salary. Go to [www.FriendsofPalomarSP.org](http://www.FriendsofPalomarSP.org) and make our day and yours too!



## Palomar Mountain Happenings



Photos Courtesy of Michael Pique



# PALOMAR MOUNTAIN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

## REPORT FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Cliff Kellogg**, President  
**Glenn Borland**, Vice President  
**Mike Pique**, Secretary  
**Keith Ronchetti**, Treasurer  
**Robert Carlyle**, Member at Large

Construction for the new crew quarters behind the existing fire station is slated to begin later this year by EC Constructors of Lakeside, CA. Our new building, Mount Laguna's new station, and Sunshine Summit remodel will be done concurrently. Also, widening and paving of the driveway around the building, enhancement of the handicapped access to the community center, and a permanently installed generator to power all the buildings in an emergency will be included. Once the project is complete, the firefighters will have new, modern living quarters and the Palomar Mountain Community Center will be turned back over to the community.

The Palomar Mountain Fire Department board of directors recently approved funds to place two donated 2,500-gallon water storage tanks across from the Lodge on Crestline Road. In cooperation with the lodge owner and the Palomar Mountain Mutual Water

Company, the tanks were set, hooked up to the PMMWC underground water supply, and a standpipe and supply head (wharf hydrant) was installed for easy access for firefighting engines and water tenders. The Crestline and Birch Hill areas now have a reliable 5,000-gallon water supply for firefighting purposes. We want to thank Mike Probert, PMMWC Systems Operator, lodge owner Dr. Brad Sanders, and Jeremy Dyson, who leveled the area and dug and backfilled the trenches for us with his excavator, for their assistance in this important addition to the community.

Our fire department is still a "must cover" advanced life support station. This means that if our fire engine is called to assist in a structure or vegetation fire off mountain, a back up engine and crew must come up and cover the community. We always have at least one paramedic on duty. Palomar Mountain is also a training hub for the new county reserves. Each reserve that is hired by the county fire department must serve nine shifts at Palomar and have their task books signed off for skills, policy, etc. before they can staff other county fire stations, so our community will often see 2 paid,

full-time, career firefighters plus one or two reserves each day.

The Palomar Mountain fireboard continues to work with County Fire and CalFire. Senior station personnel attend every board meeting to keep the department and the community up to date on what's going on with staffing, building plans, call volumes and administrative issues. Palomar Mountain residents are always welcome to our board meetings held on the first Saturday of the month at 9:00 am at the station. Attending board meetings is the best way to get accurate information on current happenings with the fire department. Get involved! There are three board positions opening up this fall.

Our newest battalion chief, Robert Reynolds, has been touring the mountain and meeting with observatory staff, Palomar Christian Conference Center, and members of the community. Chief Reynolds takes his position seriously and is attending most fire safe council, fire board, CERT, and PMPO meetings to become more familiar with our community.



# Thank You

## FOR SUPPORTING THE PALOMAR MOUNTAIN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

(760) 742-3701 • FAX: (760) 742-0574 • [www.palomar-fire.org](http://www.palomar-fire.org)  
21610 Crestline Road • P.O. Box 235 • Palomar Mountain, CA. 92060



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# PALOMAR OBSERVATORY

## SPRING 2020



*By Steve Flanders,  
Public Outreach Coordinator*

As the coronavirus pandemic is dominating the news and just about everything else, let me begin with a statement from Andy Boden, the deputy director of Caltech Optical Observatories.

### **Caltech's COVID-19 Response**

In the same way that activities have been curtailed all over the mountain, Palomar Observatory has responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by radically reducing its operations. In mid-March, we closed the Observatory and suspended science operations on the Hale Telescope. Only the two robotic telescopes – the 48-inch Samuel Oschin Telescope and the 60-inch telescope – are continuing to collect data for the Zwicky Transient Facility.

Almost everyone is now working from home and all of the Observatory's staff members, those living here on the mountain as well as those further away, report they are healthy and safe. We hope that all of you remain in good health and are similarly well sheltered and provisioned.

In closing the Observatory, we have worked to implement the mandates published by the state and county health authorities while being mindful of our responsibilities to local community. We are of course grateful to all of the first responders and other essential workers, men and women across the region who put themselves at risk to maintain our supply systems and medical services.

As we all look forward to the end of this crisis, Caltech is thinking about how best to resume operations on the Hale Telescope and eventually to reopen the Observatory. Yet, however anxious we may be, the Observatory will not be reopened until we can be certain that doing so poses no risk to those of us who work and live on Palomar Mountain.

### **Palomar Science and Discoveries**

Discoveries are being made by the survey system named the Zwicky Transient Facility (ZTF). Located in the 48-inch wide-field Samuel Oschin Telescope, the ZTF camera photographs the entire visible sky every three nights and a machine-learning system in Pasadena compares the recent images to past images looking for things that have moved, changed, or appeared for the first time. One item worth

noting, ZTF recently discovered an eclipsing binary star system that has the shortest known orbital period. J1539, as it is catalogued, is composed of two white dwarf stars so close to each other that they revolve about their common center of gravity in just 6.9 minutes. Caltech astronomer Kevin Burdge has confirmed that this system is shedding energy by generating gravitational waves and as a result the two stars are drawing toward each other exactly as predicted by general relativity.

### **New Instruments and Programs**

The Hale Telescope's 70 years of outstanding performance is attributable to the careful maintenance it has received and to the upgrades that have been made to its cameras and other detectors. Although several development efforts are temporarily on hold, one particularly important project is still getting attention:

The Wide-field Near Infrared Transient Explorer (WINTER) will image the accessible sky every night. With methods similar to those used by ZTF, a machine-learning system will compare recent images to earlier images looking for anything that has changed in the near-infrared universe. The first major survey of its kind, WINTER will locate supernovae and other high-energy events that often are obscured by dust and cannot be seen at visible wavelengths. The program will use a new 36-inch telescope to be housed in the small dome seen across the road from the dome of the 200-inch telescope. Until recently, this dome housed a rarely used 24-inch telescope that Caltech now has donated to Palomar College. During the shutdown, work is continuing on WINTER as several of our staff members program the telescope's control system from their homes.

### **State Funding to Protect Forest Health**

Observatory superintendent Rick Burruss recently announced that Palomar Observatory has been awarded a grant by the state of California. The Forest Health Grant Program, initiated by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire), targets restoring forest health, protecting watersheds, promoting long-term carbon storage, and minimizing the loss of forest carbon from large, destructive wildfires. The grant was arranged, and will be managed by, the Fire Safe Council of San Diego County acting on behalf of a partnership that includes the Cleveland National Forest, the Pauma Band of Mission Indians, the La Jolla Band of Luiseño Indians, and other Palomar Mountain land owners.

Caltech owns 2,029 acres on Palomar Mountain, 1,690 of which are forested. While this forested land has not been actively managed, no fires have impacted areas now belonging to Caltech in recorded history.

Our proposal was submitted in November 2019 and accepted the following January. With work now scheduled

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## PALOMAR OBSERVATORY (CONTINUED)



to begin in the fall of 2020, Palomar Observatory will receive \$950k to cover expenses for up to three years. Forestry specialists have identified for priority treatment 312 acres on Observatory grounds that require mechanical thinning, mastication, and brush removal. A 31-acre fuel break will be cleared along the Palomar Truck Trail to serve as the primary fire suppression access route along the upper ridge of Palomar Mountain. Brush and smaller trees will be cleared for a distance of 100 feet on either side of the Truck Trail. In addition, during the first phase of the project, trees standing within 10 feet of Observatory structures will be trimmed back.

Preliminary mapping and habitat identification has already started and a Cal Fire project planning review and final approval is scheduled for September 2020. The present plan will be amended as circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic require.

### Public Outreach

As we are temporarily unable to receive visitors at Palomar, Annie Mejia has been enhancing and extending the virtual tour that you can find on our website. Among its many improvement, the most notable is the addition of locations like the Samuel Oschin Telescope that are not open to the public. The tour can be found at:

<https://www.astro.caltech.edu/palomar/visitor/media/palomartour/>



## NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

*By Katie Michelmore*

Neighborhood Watch has had an active year, between snow events on major holidays, squatters, and other “watchable” activities on the mountain. As always, if you see something, say something! The best way to report activity and get assistance from your neighbors is through the NextDoor portal. To access NextDoor, please go to [nextdoor.com](http://nextdoor.com) and set up an account. Your neighbors are already using this tool to communicate with each other, and regular updates from your Neighborhood Watch team are posted here. You can also contact Neighborhood Watch lead Katie Michelmore with any concerns at [katiemich@gmail.com](mailto:katiemich@gmail.com). Stay safe and healthy, and don’t forget to keep an eye out for yourself and your neighbors.

Burt Hulbert, Cliff Kellogg, Alan Serry, and Katie continue to foster a nice relationship with our snow emergency law enforcement team. The team comprises participants from the sheriff’s department, CHP, CALFIRE, US Forest Service, County Parks, County Roads, and others. We had a prep meeting in November 2019, and a lessons-learned meeting in early January 2020, after we had two substantial holiday weekend storms. We have a good system in place for communicating when we, the mountain team, think we will need assistance. The various law enforcement agencies have been supportive in allowing for overtime shifts for employees. A potentially promising development for future snow events is that both the sheriff’s department and CHP are looking into using their volunteer staff to patrol on “snow days”, when chain checks can’t really be implemented, but congestion at the summit is a real issue.

People have been more engaged with using 602s to protect private property. I can provide electronic copies of 602s. Please contact me at [katiemich@gmail.com](mailto:katiemich@gmail.com) if you would like a 602 form. The forms can be turned in to Porscha Snow at the Valley Center Substation. Once the form is filled out, it can be sent to the station via fax, email, or mail. Fax is the preferred method. The station fax number is 760-751-4430, her email is [porscha.snow@sdsheriff.org](mailto:porscha.snow@sdsheriff.org), and the address is San Diego County Sheriff’s Dept. Valley Center Station, 28201 N. Lake Wohlford Rd, Valley Center, CA 92082. Forms for residents are good for up to a year; for unoccupied property, they are good for up to 30 days.

We have a new Crime Prevention Specialist, Heather Mitchell. She is in the Valley Center Substation two days a week. Her telephone is 760-751-4408, and her address is as above.





# THE COMMUNITY CENTER OF PALOMAR MOUNTAIN

*By The CCPM Board:*

*Jack Weisgerber, President - Bonnie Beckman, Vice President*

*Noreen Kirby, Secretary - Rosie Lopresti, Treasurer - Nanci Healy, Member-At-Large*

The CCPM Board was very pleased to welcome Noreen Kirby to our Board.

Our annual meeting with elections will be held Labor Day weekend (hopefully) at the Palomar Mountain Fire Station or at another location TBD. If you are interested in becoming a Board member, please get in touch with any of our Board members. There will be 2 seats up for reelection.

In 2018, the CCPM sponsored two events. In the Spring, an Easter Egg Hunt was held at the Crestline County Park. A dozen mountain kids went searching for eggs, making sure the little ones had as many eggs as the bigger kids.

Our Annual Picnic was held on the Saturday of Labor Day Weekend. Sixty plus mountain residents showed up with their favorite potluck dish. The Jamey and Stacy Ericksen Family graciously provided exciting games for the Palomar Mountain kids to enjoy. The CCPM Board offers an immense thanks to the Ericksens. Our opportunity drawing was a success

with proceeds being \$200. Some of the items donated were cat gourds, lovely glassware, board games, jewelry, a slow cooker set and more. Special thanks to Gary and Lynda Lockard and Sharon Dall for their generous donations to the Opportunity Drawing. The income from the drawing helps the CCPM offset their costs for event insurance and picnic supplies. Each year at this event, the various mountain groups have display tables with information which provide valuable information to mountain residents. Thank you to Bill Leininger for the CERT table, Keith Ronchetti for the PMVFD Fire Board table, Yvonne Vaucher for the Palomar Mountain Fire Safe Council table and Sharon Dall for the Friends of Palomar Mountain State Park table. A special guest appearance by the Kirkes (Jim was a former PMVFD Fire Chief) was a pleasant surprise. We hope to see Jim and Diane at future events! The Labor Day weekend event is a great time to visit with old friends or make new ones on our beautiful mountain.

The 2020 Picnic will not be held this year in order for us to support any events the PMPO may schedule for that Labor Day weekend.

The big question surrounding the Board is what will happen when the Community Center house is vacated by CALFire. The CCPM Board will work with the PMVFD Board to ensure that the house is once again available to the community. We welcome input from the community during this transition.



## Palomar Mountain Happenings



Photos Courtesy of Michael Pique





# PALOMAR MOUNTAIN FIRE SAFE COUNCIL (PMFSC)

A 501c3, non-profit organization dedicated to helping keep Palomar Mountain fire safe

*By Yvonne Vaucher, President PMFSC*

Thank you, Palomar Mountain residents, for your continued support of the PMFSC's efforts to help make our community fire safe. With your enthusiastic cooperation we have utilized 9 ½ days of free chipping serving 42 residents, distributed 36 Barricade Home Kits partnering with Palomar Mountain CERT, and moved 20.4 tons of refuse from the mountain in the 6 dumpsters all provided by the Neighborhood Reinvestment Program Grant from the County Board of Supervisors just last year. Thank you PMVFD for sponsoring two additional dumpsters. We were also able to provide two 2500-gallon water tanks which were moved from Valley Center and placed across from the Lodge by Robert Carlyle, plumbed by PMVFD, and filled by PMMWC. Thank you Jeremy Dyson for the dirt work. Thank you Alan Serry and Dr. Sanders for permission to place the tanks. Thank you Cliff Kellogg for arranging for all the plumbing.

In the coming months we will be utilizing a grant from CalFire to clear fuel from around critical infrastructure, to maintain fuel breaks, and to clear and widen some of

our narrow roads, making them more easily passable for the large fire engines and other emergency vehicles. Our Neighborhood Reinvestment grant will again be used for free chipping days (10), dumpsters on the first weekend of the month (8), and more Barricade Fire Retardant Gel. We will also be partnering with the San Diego County Fire Authority on an evacuation plan for the mountain.

We encourage everyone to continue to work on clearing the brush, weeds, and other combustibles from around their homes, to keep the valleys and gutters on their roofs clean, to install ember-resistant vents in their attics, enclose their eaves, and to rake corners that collect leaves and twigs.

As Palomar Mountain residents, you are all members of the Fire Safe Council and are all welcome to come to our board meetings, which are held the 4th Saturday of most months. Meeting time and place are announced on Nextdoor Palomar Mountain and on the Community Bulletin Board, as are Dumpster Days and educational opportunities.



# PALOMAR MOUNTAIN MUTUAL WATER COMPANY

*By Joanne Marugg, President*

The Palomar Mountain Mutual Water Company continues to provide pristine water to its shareholders. Our water is tested regularly and continues to meet all state regulations. As shareholders we are always reminded that water is a precious commodity that should be conserved. The limited amount of water stored in our tanks is dedicated for household usage only and may not be used for outdoor irrigation.

During the last year our large water tank finally failed. A large crack appeared on the side of the tank and slowly grew larger. A new water tank was installed in record time thanks to the hard work of Mike Probert and Jeremy Dyson. They were able to remove the old tank and prepare the ground for the installation of a new 40 thousand gallon tank. Once the water tank was installed and sanitized it was put to use. Our goal is to install yet another new tank to replace two smaller ones sometime in the near future.

We appreciate your continued cooperation and support. Always read the conservation sign located at the bottom of Crestline Road. During an emergency, Mike Probert will change it to "Mandatory" conservation.

For additional information, recent board minutes, or other important communications from our staff please check our website : [www.palomarmountainwater.com](http://www.palomarmountainwater.com) .

# COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM

## SPRING 2020 *By Bill Leininger*

**COVID-19/Coronavirus Impact:**

Due to the public health restrictions on public gatherings through May 2020, Palomar Mountain CERT has been limited in its activities this spring. Activities of note for the past year:

House Number Sign outreach – we got over 35 new signs to mountain residents, making it easier for Fire Fighters to respond to emergencies.

- Grant Funding – through a grant from the California Office of Emergency Services, we received funding for equipment, added insurance, background checks and a storage trailer for our gear.
- Barricade Fire gel training - helped residents prepare their own homes to be as fire safe as possible.
- Resilient Communities planning – worked with other Palomar Mountain groups to guide the San Diego County Fire Authority and CALFIRE on addressing our most urgent needs for disaster preparedness

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) is about readiness - individually, for your family, and in our community. CERT is about people taking care of themselves and helping their neighbors. CERT training is a positive and realistic approach to emergency and disaster situations where citizens themselves can make the difference.

For more information on CERT, go to:

[www.sandiegocounty.gov/oes/community/oes\\_jl\\_CERT.html](http://www.sandiegocounty.gov/oes/community/oes_jl_CERT.html)

With the end of winter, fire season has started. Before the Santa Ana’s return, make sure your home is ready. While all the vegetation is green, now is the time to clear your defensible space and get your evacuation plan updated. Go to [www.readyforwildfire.org](http://www.readyforwildfire.org) for more details, and to sign up for wildfire notifications.

For more good information on disaster preparedness, try this site:  
**San Diego Office of Emergency Service [www.readysandiego.org](http://www.readysandiego.org)**

- Sign up for AlertSanDiego (mobile reverse 911)
- Explore the San Diego County Emergency App – download it for free, so you know what to do before, during, and after an emergency
- See how to Make a Plan, Build a Kit, and Stay Informed

### PMFD CERT

For more information, visit us our booth at upcoming community events, or contact:

**Bill Leininger**  
[Palomar.mountain.cert@gmail.com](mailto:Palomar.mountain.cert@gmail.com)  
 760-807-6923

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## FOREST FIRE LOOKOUT ASSOCIATION

### SAN DIEGO/RIVERSIDE CHAPTER 2019 REPORT

*By Shane Harris, Chair*

The San Diego-Riverside chapter continued to operate two restored lookout towers on Palomar Mountain in 2019. High Point Lookout (Register#735) is owned by the Cleveland National Forest, and Boucher Hill Lookout (Register #394) is owned by the California State Department of Parks and Recreation. The chapter deployed approximately 90 volunteer lookouts to staff each tower.

*Below are the stats for both towers for 2019:*

Statistics	High Point	Boucher Hill
Formal Smoke Reports	19	34
Information Smoke Reports	12	47
Lightning Strike Reports	40	0
Visitors	1098	10,673
Days Staffed	215	212

It was an unexpectedly quiet fire season in San Diego County for which we are thankful.

For residents of Palomar Mountain who want to stay updated on Smoke and Lightning reports throughout the year, as well as other wild fire-related issues, please visit our Facebook Page at [www.facebook.com/fflasdr](http://www.facebook.com/fflasdr).



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# GOLD SPOTTED OAK BORER (GSOB) BEETLE INFESTATION



*By Joelene Tamm*

The first time I learned about the Gold Spotted Oak Borer beetle was ten years ago, when I read the literature posted on the park office. I remember being frustrated when I tried to tarp my woodpile. I also remember having a hard time identifying the different emergence holes, and I completely understand the feeling of not being able to do anything that would make a difference. Over the past eight months, I have been working with GSOB related issues, and I have learned that we are lucky to live in this point in history where the government is funding fire prevention, fuel reduction, and invasive insect management on private lands. This shift in policy is largely due to the catastrophic effects of firestorms causing more damage than it costs to actively manage fuel loads in the wildland-urban interface (rural communities).

GSOB has killed many trees on Palomar and elevated already high fuel loads. Every land-managing government agency (CAL Fire, US Forest Service, State Parks, County Parks, and many others) has people working to mitigate GSOB damages. There is funding to manage these issues, but it is only available to community organizations that are actively seeking to manage their resources. While there is no easy fix, I write this article to share my knowledge and inspire a few people to volunteer with the PMPO or the Fire Safe Council to address GSOB damages.

There are many identification pictures and research articles provided by UC cooperative extension offices at GSOB.org including the following information. GSOB has a cryptic lifecycle, meaning that for most of the year it lives underneath the bark, eating within the bark, destroying the nutrient and water systems that keep the tree alive. On the outside of the tree we can't see much, except that the tree is starting to lose more leaves, cracked bark, or staining, and oftentimes we can see tiny D-shaped exit holes. Trees typically die in 2 to 3 years, but sometimes they appear to die overnight, or they can live many years producing adult beetles every spring. The Forest Service is available to help with GSOB community outreach and education; we hope they can come to the next Palomar community event, after the COVID-19 threat has passed.

GSOB can only reproduce successfully in a few types of oak species, which are called host species. The available hosts on Palomar are the black oak and coast live oak. Canyon live oak can be used as a host, but it is an intermediate red oak species and I've heard that it is not experiencing significant mortality on Palomar at this time.

Many wood damaging insects can be spread in firewood, not just GSOB – Invasive Shot Hole beetle, the mountain pine beetle, Gypsy Moth, and many others. All firewood should be considered infested: buy locally. Only move infested wood if it has been debarked, or cut down for more than two years. If you know the wood is infested, tarp or screen in your firewood between the months of April to October, if you can.

Palomar is a tight community and has the potential to successfully work together. The first step is learning about critical issues that threaten forest health (GSOB). The second step is identifying exactly what the community needs, and voicing those needs is the third. Many communities in southern California are actively working together to address GSOB issues with successful results.

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## Survey Info

There is an app you can pull up on your phone called OnX that offers a free 30-day trial. It is amazingly accurate. The land that borders a client's property had been surveyed years ago. My clients had found a couple of pins that marked the shared property line, but not all. He tried the app, entered his parcel number and downloaded. Downloading is important so the data is on your phone, even if your phone doesn't work on your land. In just a few minutes, the app took him right to the pin. Knowing where your corners are is always a big plus. Of course, I need to say that corners are to be marked only by licensed surveyors. It is a good investment and here are tips for you. The wooden stakes leading you to the small pin in the ground, deteriorate so quickly and then corner pins are hard to find. You might take photos, showing large rocks, trees or buildings. Then, install steel stakes with the tops painted in a bright color. It can save a lot of time and expense when it is important to locate those corners in the future. For more info, visit [www.palomarmountainnews.com](http://www.palomarmountainnews.com) and search 'Survey Info'.



## Burn Permits

Folks with mountain property always seem to have downed branches especially after storms. Wondering what to do with all the trimmings after 'parking up' your property? Would you like to have a campfire or burn your cut brush? A permit is required. Permits are available only when the U. S. Forest Service deems it is safe. After a rain or snow is often a good option. Call the US Forest Service Lake Henshaw station (760) 782-3472, or Ramona office (760) 788-0250 to help keep our forest green and fire safe.

## Palomar

### Kids



In 2008 our Public School was closed. There were only a couple kids up here and no toddlers or babies. Now we have about 50 kids living on the mountain full time, mostly all home-schooled and loving it. There always seems to be babies on the way, lots of toddlers and kids now in their teens. Stacy Eriksen orchestrated a wonderful Kids Club a few years ago that met weekly with all these kids looking forward to getting together again. In December, my daughter-in-law Heidi Phelps directed a play with 18 of our mountain kids. Over 70 folks showed up to see Palomar Mountain Kids Theater perform *The Best Christmas Ever*. Please stay tuned to [www.palomarmountainnews.com](http://www.palomarmountainnews.com) for info for their next show coming up in the fall. They are hoping to perform *Robin Hood* outside in the forest. Fun times ahead!

## Rattlesnakes Are Out!

Those rattlesnakes have been hibernating just like the rest of us and are now out cruising around!!! They are not practicing social distancing at all and refuse to wear a mask. We have all this pent-up energy to get outside too. Be extra careful where you step, and it always makes sense to wear long pants or gaiters and boots, and carry a long stick to probe ahead in the grass. Stay safe and continue to enjoy every minute on our beautiful ever-changing mountain!



## Road Grooming

When I listed a cabin in the fall, the owner had a lot of tree trimming and brush cutting done, as they had not used the cabin in many years. After the last big snow, I was so surprised to drive in and have the brush scratch my car again! The snow had melted, but was so heavy that the branches on the brush were bent and didn't relax back up. So, we had three more big dump trailer loads cut and hauled out. If you haven't been to your cabin in a while, you might be surprised to see the brush and maybe even a tree down. There are many places on our little dirt roads where my car can barely get through, let alone a fire truck! It is the perfect time with all this sunny weather for neighbors to work together, get those chain saws out and open up the roads for safety during an emergency. Let's go out and get some great exercise – I'd love to help in your neighborhood, just let me know!



## Palomar History

I was just sent photos and stories from two families with interesting history of their time on Palomar. Waiting for a couple more items to include, then both posts will go up on PMNews. There are some interesting stories out there that are just fun to know and keep a record of. One of the most interesting from this past year was that a little 8-year-old girl who was rescued from the Titanic, grew up and came to the mountain with her husband. They first built a tiny cabin to live in while building their dream, *The Big House*. Both are enjoyed to this day where many more happy memories are being created.





## COMMUNITY TIDBITS . . . Continued

### Ready For WILDFIRE APP

CalFire has a great app for your phone to be 'Ready, Set and Go' for emergency situations. Also, Alert San Diego is where you can enter your cell and VoIP phones for 'reverse 911 calls. It pays to be prepared! Search [www.palomarmountainnews.com](http://www.palomarmountainnews.com) for the link to both.



### Mountain News

For all things Palomar, simply self-subscribe at [www.palomarmountainnews.com](http://www.palomarmountainnews.com). It's FREE! ! Opportunities abound for you to keep up on the latest or get involved. Have you already subscribed and you're not getting the News? Have you changed your email address lately? Simply re-subscribe. Also put 'Palomar Mountain News' on your White List. You can scroll through the archives or type in key words to locate information. You'll also find lots of photos of events and happenings on your favorite mountain! Several mountain authors have published their books; lots of events and ideas are always on the horizon. I'll keep all the news of your favorite mountain coming your way, and that's a promise!

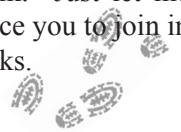
### Mountain Yellow Pages



When you need products or services on Palomar, you might visit the Mountain Yellow Pages. Don't see what you're looking for? Or, would you like to be added? Do you have a company that you were very pleased with? Just let me know. Additions and corrections always welcomed. [www.palomarproperties.com/yellowpages](http://www.palomarproperties.com/yellowpages)

### Neighbor Walk-Abouts

It is so nice to see mountain neighbors enjoying being outside again! Would you like a walking partner? It is fun to visit along the way and get in those steps! Most of the escrows that closed this past year are full-timers with quite a few who like to walk. Just let me know and I can introduce you to join in and meet some new folks.



## WOODPECKER FIREWOOD

Since 2017

Judah Phelps, President

— Kiara, Sunshine & Atticus —



### Directions

From the General Store, take State Park Road just over a mile. The stand is on the right – can't miss it! Payment is on the honor system so it is open 24/7.

### Kids \$5.00 Firewood For Sale

Would you like **bundled firewood** as a quick option for you or your vacation rental guests?

We have a great life living on the mountain, next door to our grandparents.

We work hard with our Granddaddy and Grandma to cut, split, and bundle prime, dry cedar.

### Fresh Eggs from Happy Hens

Scramble on over for fresh eggs, too.

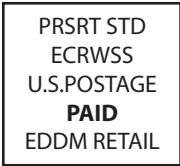
We keep our eggs in Grandma's refrigerator so please knock on the door or call ahead for organic eggs in every color from our flock of very happy chickens.

You are welcome to call or text Grandma Bonnie at **760-533-1742** to reserve wood and eggs.

We sure do thank you for your business!

Judah 12, Kiara 13, Sunshine 11 and Atticus 7

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## PMPO BOARD ELECTIONS

*By Glenn Borland  
PMPO Chairman, chair@pmpoinfo.com*



The PMPO Board consists of 15 volunteers, five of which are up for election every year. Normally these elections occur at the end of May during the Annual Board Meeting following the Pancake Breakfast. Due to the current State lockdown, The Pancake Breakfast, General Meeting, and associated elections have been postponed. The earliest possible reschedule date would be July 25, 2020. Depending on the lockdown status, the meeting may be held via teleconference. In the meantime, the current board will serve until elections can be held.

Membership on the PMPO Board is open to any individual resident, property owner, or business person in the Palomar Mountain area of San Diego who wishes to contribute time and effort to achieve the purposes of this Organization. Members may be elected for consecutive terms. Board members serve without compensation. Board members must meet the attendance requirements

as stated in the PMPO By-laws article 7.6. The Board meets a minimum of four times a year. A description of the PMPO and its various Committee activities, Articles of Incorporation, and By-laws can be viewed on the PMPO web site, PMPOInfo.com.

This year, five Board seats are due to expire and one seat is currently vacant.

**The following seats are available:**

- |                              |                |
|------------------------------|----------------|
| 1) Glenn Borland             | (expires 2023) |
| 2) Cecelia Borland           | (expires 2023) |
| 3) Robert Carlyle            | (expires 2023) |
| 4) Elizabeth (Libby) Getzoff | (expires 2023) |
| 5) Michael Walsh             | (expires 2023) |
| 6) Vacant                    | (expires 2022) |