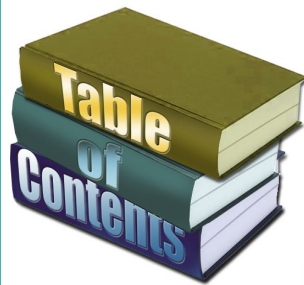


The Cougar KITTEN



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Oktoberfest Celebration & BINGO



Members of the community came together on a crisp Saturday evening in October to celebrate Oktoberfest and play BINGO. Dinner included brats and hotdogs complimented with hearty buns, relishes, sauerkraut and chili. Participants also filled up on salad, desserts, coffee and juice. Then everyone settled down to some serious fun!!



Young and old participated in the after dinner BINGO games played on old-fashion bingo cards. Each game was played to a different winning pattern and nearly a half dozen players went home with some extra cash in their pocket.

2016 Membership Drive & Contest



Our 2016 annual membership drive and fundraiser gets underway the first quarter of 2016. In the previous year, approximately 70 Cougar Gulch households participated by paying membership dues of \$25 per family. With over 300 homes in the area, we encourage all members to spread the word about Hall events, membership benefits and rental opportunities. This year our goal is to increase our membership to at least 100 families.

Your membership dues and contributions pay for the Hall's necessary expenses including electricity, propane, building insurance and taxes. Funds also support our Hilander 4H club and provides supplies for rentals and community events and pays for minor

improvements to the Hall. Your contributions are TAX DEDUCTIBLE. This yearly membership drive is vitally important to help maintain the Hall as a strong community connection for all families of the Gulch and offers wholesome, fun events throughout the year.

Again this year, we will hold our "early-bird" contest. All families paying their 2016 membership dues between January 1 and March 31 will be in the drawing to win a \$50 VISA card. The winner will be selected at our regular April board meeting.

Remember, all contributions to the Sam Rodius Memorial Park Association (SRMPA) are tax deductible. The membership application is available on page 8. Fill it out and mail in today!



Community Hall Capital Improvement Project for 2016



It started with a leak. A small roof leak in December, 2014. The leak was discovered in the storage area. In 2015, the board hired a contractor to provide an estimate to fix the leak and paint the exterior of the Hall. This started our journey of discovery.

In the summer of 2015, the contractor informed the board that the current exterior condition of the Hall was in such dire condition that cleaning and preparing it for new paint was not feasible. The roof leak was repaired in the final months of 2015 and the board then began investigating options to preserve and save the Hall's exterior. A resident volunteered her time and

met with a builder at the Hall. The discovery was that the foundation is sound and solid but the Hall needs to have insulation blown in to the existing structure and then be resided. Estimates for this work—supplies and labor—come in at approximately \$30,000.

This is undeniably a daunting task being faced by our board and we certainly cannot undertake this effort alone. We will need lots of community support. Our current financial report for December puts our operating finances at approximately \$3,000. This is money from donations, rental fees and membership dues. We use this money to operate the Hall on a monthly basis. The board approved a \$300 transfer of funds to our Savings Account and that will become the basis for our capital improvement fund for insulating and siding the Hall in the future.

The board brainstormed some opportunities to raise money for this effort at our last meeting. Look for these and other fundraiser ideas that you can participate in the future. They including the following:

- Ask the community to donate—consider asking for a 1-time, \$100 tax deductible gift from all residents.
- Hold an auction of donated items from residents.
- Hold a music/social event and charge admission.
- Increase rental rate to \$200 for non-members and organized social groups.
- Publicize and promote the Hall to increase our Hall rentals.
- Sell community “discount cards” to residents and others in the community.
- Ask for volunteers from the community with skills to blow in insulation and attach siding when appropriate funds are available. *Fully half of the cost of insulating and siding the Hall is for labor. Everything we can save on this front will help reduce our overall costs.*
- Consider updating one side of the Hall per year as building funds are available.
- Investigate and apply for appropriate grants to augment the fund.

We would love to hear your ideas on how we can raise money to save and preserve our Hall. Please send your suggestions to julielinez1951@gmail.com. All suggestions will then be presented to the board. Consider getting involved and helping to manage a fundraising event. All volunteers are welcome.

The board has approved all monies to support this project will come from fundraisers and donations (other than membership dues) and go directly into the savings account earmarked for this capital improvement effort. Look for additional information on this long-term project in the near future.

Volunteer: A person who freely offers to take part in an enterprise or undertake a task.





YOUR Volunteer Board



Your elected community board of trustees holds monthly meetings at 6:30 pm, the first Thursday of each month, from Sept. through June.

Julie Schmidt, President	425-319-0915
Julia Mangan, Vice President	208-661-5375
Courtney Beebe, Treasurer	208-447-8159
Karen Thurston, Secretary	208-660-1359
David Foster	Director
Jason Shanley	Director
Dawn Myers	Director
OPEN	Director
OPEN	Director
OPEN	Director

The board welcomes all community members who would like to drop in to a meeting, listen to the proceedings and provide ideas. We also encourages anyone who would like to join the board to please contact Julie Schmidt for more information and meeting locations.

November Barn Dance

An old-time barn dance was held at the Hall to support the Inland Northwest

Food Network in November. The event featured live music by Arvid Lundin and Deep Roots

with Emily Faulkner calling.

Over fifty people enjoyed square dancing and a tasty potluck-style spread.

For more information, check out the Inland Northwest Food Network website at:

www.inwfoodnetwork.org or contact Char Beach at 208-416-1534.



Community Hall For Rent



The Cougar Gulch Community Hall, located at 8088 W. Meadowbrook Loop, can be rented by any local neighbor or resident of the Gulch. The Hall is also available to social and organized groups or companies. The Hall boasts a stocked kitchen with a propane wall heater, a large entertainment room with a stage, tables and chairs for approximately 80—100 guests, and a wood burning fireplace. The kitchen is moderately stocked with refrigerator, stove, microwave and utensils, bowls and cooking equipment including coffee and coffee pots.

Paper products (plates, cups, napkins, paper towels, toilet paper) and cutlery are provided as well as firewood to heat the Hall in the colder months. Consider having your next event at the Hall. It's a great spot for family reunions, weddings, private functions, garage sales parties, plays and concerts! There is parking on site with an overflow parking lot immediately above the Hall for larger functions.

Please contact Julie Schmidt at 425-319-0915 to reserve your rental date. Paid family members can rent the hall for their personal use with a paid membership for \$75 per day. Companies and organizations can rent the Hall for \$200 per day. All renters will be provided a rental agreement to fill out prior to renting and a renter checklist for ensuring the Hall is clean at the end of each event. These documents will be provided at the time a rental date is secured.

Please note: The board does not have the means to plow the property in the event of snow.

Holiday Wreath Making Events



The holiday wreath making events, held on two successive nights in December, were a huge hit with the community. One evening was dedicated to women and one was dedicated to families and children.

Your Community At Work

This past fall your Community Hall got a very nice facelift. Earlier in the year the handicapped entrance was moved to the side of the hall. In October, Gulch resident **John Hand** donated his time and talent to rebuilding our old, dangerous wooden stairs at the front of the building. We owe John a big thank you for restoring solid, long-lasting stairs to the front of the Hall.



Another big THANK YOU goes out to **Katie and Zach Bane**. These Gulch residents donated over \$800 to the Hall to defray the cost of materials for these stairs. WOW!



A big shout-out also goes out to **Gregg Schmidt** for donating his time and equipment to spreading and contouring tons of gravel purchased by the board to level out the front of the hall and bring the stair height up to code. We appreciate all of our volunteers. Without them, we would not be able to do all of the things we do. THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU all.



Worley Highway District Notes



Thanks to all who assisted in clearing roads of fallen trees following the windstorm of November 17th. Road district crews cleared 80 trees from roads, but I know there were more trees down than that. Many residents took the initiative to clear at least a travel way. Your help is much appreciated. Thank you!

Before the ground became too wet, we replaced several culverts and we did some brush clearing to improve sight distance. Delineators were installed along some roadways where experience has indicated drivers have difficulty seeing the road in a snowstorm. The crew also prepared their respective snow removal equipment in anticipation of winter. As conditions permitted, gravel was spread and grading done on gravel roads. Rains and relatively warm temperatures breed potholes but freezing temperatures put a stop to that. As much as I enjoy mild weather, colder is better in these conditions.

Four crewmen began an education program that will lead them to being designated as "Road Scholars". Idaho's T2 Center does the training on our behalf. The knowledge they gain will help them do a better job of maintaining your roads.

You can keep up with what's happening in the district by visiting our web site. There you will find copies of meeting minutes, the budget for FY 2016, road load limits, and maps. Visit us at: www.worleyhwy.com.

As always, start your trip early, slow it down, and enjoy the ride. **Jim Mangan, Commissioner, Sub District 1, 208-660-7956.**

Members—Advertise FREE!

Send us your business card!

Send us your business card and we will place it in the next KITTEN and also put it online at our website, CougarGulchCommunity.com through all of 2016.

All residents with paid memberships can advertise for free! Non-members are also welcome—\$25 for a year of business card advertising.

- ◆ Would you like the KITTEN to showcase your business?
- ◆ Would you like to showcase your business on the community website?
- ◆ We would love to write an article about your business!

Contact Julie Schmidt at 425-319-0915 or by email at julielinez1951@gmail.com

4H in 2016



The Cougar Gulch Hilander 4H Club will kick off the new year with their first meeting of 2016 at the Hall on Sunday, January 3rd at 4 pm. ALL members and potential members are most welcome to attend!

"This year is shaping up to be a great year" according to Dawn Myers, 4H leader, "with about 16-20 possible members." Their livestock projects include goat, swine, poultry, dog and rabbit. They will also have some traditional projects such as cooking and photography.

The group is still in need of adults to guide projects for archery, robotics and government. Please consider volunteering your time to this worthy organization. Contact Dawn at 208-667-4044 or email her at:

dawnmyersid@gmail.com.

- ◆ 4H is where 5-18 year olds have fun, make friends and learn by doing.
- ◆ When you join 4H, you meet others who share your interests and do activities that excite you.
- ◆ 4Hers take the lead in healthy living.

JOIN ~ VOLUNTEER ~ JOIN ~ VOLUNTEER ~ JOIN

Holiday Dinner at the Hall

The community Hall hosted the annual Holiday Potluck in December for about 45 people. Ham, dinner rolls, pies and drinks were provided and attendees brought delicious side dishes. It was a great way to kick off the holiday season!



2016 Yoga Classes



The first Anusara-style Yoga class, started in December, 2015, will be coming to an end this January. With the popularity of the first class, instructor Aneeta Lekven Barlow is entertaining options for a second, five-week session.

Aneeta's classes are held at the community Hall, typically on a week day morning for one hour. The 5 week class is \$40 and drop-ins are always welcome for \$10 per class.

If you are interested in attending a new session where traditional Yoga postures are used individually and in sequence to challenge your strength, flexibility, balance and focus, this is the class for you! Please connect with Aneeta at:

ailekven@gmail.com, or call her at 208-964-5263.

Wanted: A few good people..... To join our Community Board



The Cougar Gulch volunteer community board is seeking energetic, family-oriented residents to join the board. There are open director positions just waiting to be filled! Our board meets once a month (first Thursdays at 6:30 pm). The meetings are lively, fun and friendly. If you would like to get more involved in your community, here's your chance. The time commitment is about 2-3 hours per month.

No special training or skills are required. All you need is a bit of time and the desire to get involved. Each meeting has an agenda and our goal is to provide activities to support the community and actions that preserve the Hall. Please call Julie Schmidt at 425-319-0915 or email julielinez1951@gmail.com. We'd love to see you!

Woodpecker Woes

Article submitted by Deb DeSalliers

Like many people in Gulch, we experienced problems with woodpeckers carving out 1-2 inch deep holes on the house siding. After many exasperating efforts to dissuade them, we realized we were losing the war. The number of holes were increasing, and we were completely baffled.

Needless to say, we began researching the problem. After a lot of reading, we found out that woodpeckers have an Achilles heel. These birds dislike bright colors...especially yellow.

The solution turned out to be an easy one. After putting up two brightly colored wind socks, we have had zero problems with woodpeckers. The motion and bright colors immediately repelled them.



At first they would sit in a tree adjacent to the site of their previous assaults on the house and squawk loudly to let us know they were not pleased. After a while, they went on their way to another, better, place for drilling holes. For once, the humans prevailed.

It has been more than a year now, and the birds and the humans remain on good terms. There have been no further incidences with woodpeckers for us.

The only downside is the flags/wind socks have to be placed close to where the birds are drilling on the house. That may not result in the most symmetrical positioning of the flags, but the house siding will thank you, and you will have yet another happy story to tell the grandchildren.



Thank you for observing the posted speed limits in the Gulch!

Upcoming Community Events



JANUARY

4H starts up their new year on Sunday, January 3rd at 4 PM at the community Hall.



FEBRUARY

Plans for a pancake breakfast and Hall fundraiser are in the works. Stay tuned for more details to come.



MARCH

Plans for a Spaghetti feed and BINGO are in the works. Stay tuned for more details to come.

Thank you Don & Peg



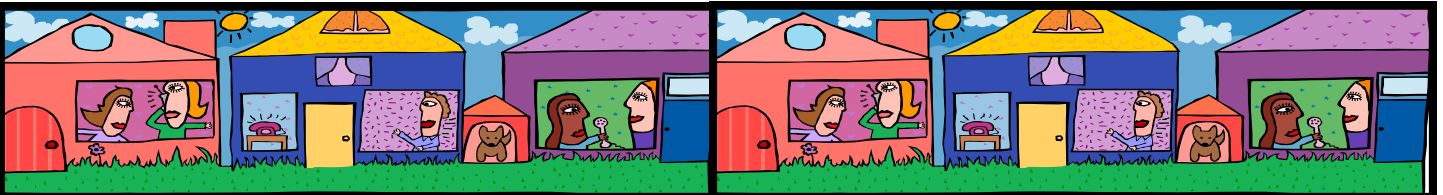
Every year, the community Hall boasts a big, beautiful evergreen tree for the Christmas season. This is thanks to the generosity of Don and Peg White, owners of the Carousel Christmas Tree Farm in Cougar Gulch (see related article from the Oct-Dec 2014 Kitten online at CougarGulchCommunity.com).

This year was no different. Below was our 2015 Christmas tree in it's "before and after" states of being. Thank you Don and Peg for the yearly gift to the community. We appreciate your contribution and value your great support!



Cougar Gulch Membership Application

Annual membership is generally due the first quarter of each new year, however, we are always open to new member applications (valid through the end of each year) and donations. Your dues help maintain the Hall and provide for community events that take place all year.



2016 Cougar Gulch Community Membership Application

Tax Deductible Registration Form

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Current Email: _____

Home Address: _____

Annual Dues: \$25. Please make check payable to SRMPA.

Additional Donation: \$ _____ TOTAL donation: \$ _____

I would like to have the Cougar KITTEN sent to my personal email.

____ YES ____ NO

Please mail this registration and your dues to:

SRMPA Treasurer

6637 W. Meadowbrook Loop Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814