

Mt. Lemmon Echoes

F E B R U A R Y 1 9 8 9

THE BOARD SPEAKS

On the issue of reorganization of the Mount Lemmon Fire District

Last November our elected Fire Board advertised for applications for Fire Chief as the contract was to expire on 31 December 1988. Over 20 applicants came forward to be considered and the Fire Board subsequently chose Chuck Hammel to fill the position previously held by Fred Keers.

A petition to reorganize our Fire District was filed with the Pima County Board of Elections, apparently as a result of the Fire Board's actions, as the petition was signed by Fred Keers. If successful, the reorganization would lead to a tragic situation for the Mt. Lemmon community. WE ARE OPPOSED to this reorganization.

State law allows fire districts to be governed, as ours is, by a three member, elected board of trustees (who serve gratis) or a paid chief and secretary/treasurer.

A fire district may be reorganized by the voters. To force a vote on the question of reorganization of a fire district requires a valid petition, signed by 25% of the voters. In most districts, getting 25% of the voters to sign a petition for anything is a substantial undertaking. On Mount Lemmon, because most property owners vote in Tucson, only 18 signatures were required. Many signers were not property owners.

It must be remembered that an elected Chief and Secretary/Treasurer set their own salaries and are not subject to the open meeting law. This is a serious flaw as the greatest virtue of an elected board is the requirement to make all decisions in an open public meeting.

The petition will be considered by the Pima County Board of Supervisors in a public meeting on Tuesday, 7 February, 1989. If approved the Board will then set a date for a special election for the voters of Mount Lemmon to decide how the district is to be organized. The cost of this election will be paid by the Mount Lemmon taxpayers.

If the reorganization election were to decide in favor of a chief district, we could end up with an unqualified, unsupervised and completely unaccountable fire chief for four years. There are no experience requirements to be elected chief. We need our current system of checks and balances provided by an elected board. And, we need a chief who is hired, based on qualifications and experience in fire fighting, not elected on popularity.

According to the Board of Trustees, the Fire board based their decision to change chiefs because of dissatisfaction with Keers's performance and the 20 years of experience of Chuck Hammel. Fred Keers has had approximately six years experience with the Mount Lemmon Fire District.

The board members had nothing to gain from this carefully considered

action other than fulfillment of their duty as elected officials to provide this district with the best possible fire protection services and personnel. In short, Chuck Hammel, the new Fire chief, was the best qualified for the job. Chuck has worked effectively with the board in what has been a difficult change over.

According to a Pima County attorney, the two times a district was run by a chief in Pima County, it ended in disaster. Both districts have since voted to return to an elected board of trustees. In one instance the district's tax payers are being forced to pay off a huge debt run up by the un-checked Chief. This district has since been dissolved and absorbed by Golder Ranch Fire District, and the tax payers are still paying off the debt. Do you, the tax payers of Mount Lemmon, want this to see this happen in our district?

Because many of you are registered voters in Tucson you are not able to vote on crucial issues affecting your homes on Mt. Lemmon. This does not mean your voices can't be heard and your opinions felt! We urge you to call your district supervisor today and let them know how you feel about this issue before the Tuesday meeting.

Please don't sit idly by and allow the whim of a very few decide the fate of our future taxes and fire protection. Your Homeowners Board of Directors, by motion carried unanimously, pledged their full support to the actions taken by the Fire District Trustees.

The Homeowners Board is resolved to fight this petition legally and asks for the membership to make their voices heard at the Pima County Board of Supervisors. Please call your supervisor today at 792-8126.

TRAVELING UP THE MT. LEMMON HIGHWAY

Those of you that have driven on the mountain highway recently might have noticed the sign for the new vista. "Babat Duag" Vista is the name and of course, the next question to all that travel the road is what is a Babat Duag? A tribute to former governor Babbitt? A tribute to Vietnam veterans? Well folks, it means in Papago Indian language, Frog Mountain. History has it that the Papago Indians named the Santa Catalinas before Father Kino arrived on the scene. Who was here before the Papagos? Who made the decision to name this vista and why? Soldiers Trail Vista has a better ring, don't you agree?

Farther up the road approximately milepost 5 to your right driving up from Tucson, it appears someone is homesteading with a house and corral, but a call into the Forest Service confirmed that a movie set was being built for the television movie "Desperado".



Susan Garcia

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by Sheri Lee

SARA PLUMMER LEMMON

(Fourth in a series)

The Lemmons had been trying to climb the front range of the Catalinas, but it was too difficult. They returned to Tucson with plenty of botanical specimens, and sought help with their climb.

In town they conferred with Colonel Poston and General Rice, for whom Rice Peak was later named. Both of these men were interested in mining on the north side of the Santa Catalinas and suggested the Lemmons try climbing from that side as it was less steep. Mayor Robert Leatherwood suggested they stop first at the Stratton Ranch.

Sara and John took the stage to Oracle Camp and slowly started up the mountain with their things packed on a burro. A few days later they reached the home of E. O. Stratton. Mrs. Stratton and her two girls had not seen another white woman for eight months.

Taking this as an opportunity for a hunting trip. Stratton equipped the expedition with horses. He took his rifle as much to defend against roving Apaches, as to shoot any deer. On the way up the mountain they stopped at Copper Mine Camp. Since it was the first time a white woman was seen on the mountain, the miners celebrated by a party in the superintendent's cabin.

The next day the Lemmons continued. Soon the trail disappeared and they were compelled to dismount and lead the horses. Stratton had never

climbed as high, but he was able to select a passable route and slowly, hour by hour, they ascended the mountain.

In his memoirs, E.O. Stratton writes that the first time he saw the Lemmons, "Dr. Lemmon was riding a small burro and she was walking behind." Stratton continues, "We went to the highest Peak of the)

Santa Catalinas and christened it Mt. Lemmon in honor of Mrs. Lemmon who was the first white woman up there. I chopped the bark off a great pine tree on the very top and we all carved our names."

Finding mule tracks, the climbers followed them to a crude cabin. Inside were two grizzled hunters, almost starved to death from the heavy winter that had just passed. They were shocked to see a woman in the party, feeling it was not possible for a woman to do what Sara Lemmon had done.

While the Lemmons collected plant specimens. Stratton hunted. He killed 10 deer, hanging one up by a tree one night, intending to bring it in the next morning. According to the Lemmons a lion took the deer, carrying it away in his mouth. The lion was so big that the full grown buck dragged neither antlers nor hoofs on the soft ground as he was carried away. In addition Stratton killed wild turkeys that weighed at least 40 pounds each. Part of the meat was left with the starved men and the remainder packed back to the Stratton ranch.

The Lemmons went on to make climbs of other peaks in the area. Sara did many other noteworthy things in her life besides climb our mountain. Read about them in the May issue.

The preceding is an excerpt from articles written by Frances Morse and reprinted here with her permission.

ZIMMERMAN ACCOMMODATION SCHOOL

by Florence Koch

BOOK IT!, which is a Pizza Hut sponsored reading incentive program, has been completed and we qualified for a pizza party! All of the students read four books per month for at least four of the five months from October 1988 through February 1989. The following students read four or more books per month during all five months: Alexey Buglewicz, P.J. Buglewicz, Christina Cooper, Jodi Hopkins, Leland Vought, Jaimee Wilson, Dave Lemke, Clara Peterson, and Daniel Vought.

Paul Hopkins, a first grader, received the outstanding reader award because he far exceeded the minimum of four books per month and continues to enjoy reading without the monthly pizza award.

Field trips we have taken are the Arizona Historical Society Museum and Wilmet Library as a follow up to research projects. The second through sixth graders went to the Southwestern Arizona Science and Engineering Fair, and the Sonoran Arthropod Museum (insect zoo).

The Public Health Services have administered vision, hearing, and dental checks for the children. We received materials to reinforce dental information to help us keep our teeth forever with proper care.

On the lighter side, to celebrate a very important holiday, we had a "Green Tea." Each child brought a green food to share on St. Patrick's Day.

Can you imagine being chosen from the zip code book and receiving mail from others across the U.S.? Well, that's what has happened twelve times in conjunction with the "Great Mail Race." We have received letters from these states: Colorado, Michigan, New York, Louisiana, Missouri, Rhode Island, Georgia, Wisconsin (2), and Minnesota. Along with the student letters, we received questions for us to answer and they are surprised at our replies. We are forming some pen pals because of this letter writing experience.

Parent-Teacher meetings have been on the first Monday of each month. During the March meeting, Lisa Johnson of the Sheriff's Department's Community Resources presented a program in the regard to Drug Prevention Education for parents as a follow up to the children's session earlier in the year.

Mount Lemmon Women's Club

by Cathie Brown, President

The Mt. Lemmon Women's Club members enjoyed the Southern District Conference in Nogales on April 1. The G.F.W.C Arizona-State Convention will be at the Holidome April 29 - May 2 1989. Mt. Lemmon Women's Club are the Tote Bag Chairman.

Regina Rhind hosted a lovely spring luncheon on April 5 for M.L.W.C.

May 5, 1989, installation of officers for 1989-1990 will be at Dannie Hayhurst's home in Tucson.

Thanks members for a most successful Bakeless Bake Sale. Thanks to the community for speaking on the dumpster service issue at the upcoming Annual Homeowner's meeting April 25th.

The Professor and his wife set out from Tucson in March 1881. Sara Lemmon was 45 at this time and her husband was 49. She wore a short suit of heavy material; firm calfskin shoes nailed along the soles and heels with gimp tacks, and strong leather leggings to protect from cactus and snakes. A broadbrimmed hat with a buckskin mask, and heavy gloves, a botanical portfolio, and a long staff completed her outfit.

Using a deserted stick and mud cabin at the foot of the mountains as headquarters, the Lemmons set forth every day at sunrise searching the foothills for plants. It took a week for them to explore and find a route that could supposedly be climbed.

Following a dry creek bed, they discovered a cave in the side of a ravine. The interior resembled a half-opened clam shell. Bits of pottery were in the dust of the floor, but there were no signs of snakes nor any other animal except bats and moths. Sara set about making the cave a temporary home. Wooden pins were driven into cracks in the wall. Cords were stretched from these pins and soon the week's rations were suspended from this rope in little bags and cans.

The first day was spent on the stone porch of their cave, digging thorns and spines out of their hands and feet, repairing their clothes, discussing the past few days, and planning the next day's ascent of the mountain.

By 10 AM the next morning they were well on their way up the first bluffs of the ridge giving them an extended view of the plains below. Nearest lay the square parade ground of Fort Lowell surrounded by tall green poplar trees. Farther out on the plain to the west lay the old city of Tucson, bunched together for protection against Indians. But every

way they climbed they were turned back by deep chasms, impossible to cross. For a week they tried, resting every other day, but each route became impassable, each a little higher up the mountain.

Dejected they returned to Tucson without reaching the top of the mountain, but with heavy bundles of plants and full sacks of fern roots.

They were never able to reach the top via the south side. Read about their ascent of the north face in the March issue.

The preceding is an excerpt from articles written by Frances Morse. Reprinted here with her permission.

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A HISTORY OF THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

It was the Mt. Lemmon Homeowners' Association who created the Fire Dept. The first mention of the idea occurs in the minutes of March 1970. What follows are some of the highlights of the process. (There were far more frustrations than highlights.)

The first funds raised were \$154.00 by Russ Forni. That amount sat in the treasury for 4 years. In July 1974 Chuck Molander, a Tucson training officer, was elected the first Chief. By April 1975 there was a 250 gal. truck and that September there were 3 training sessions for 25 volunteers.

One weekend in June 1976 a Fire House "barn raising" was staged. A garage for the truck was partially built. It lacked electricity, doors, and a siren for several years, but by 1980 it seemed to be finished.

The decision to create a fire district was made October 1976. Madonna Miller of the Homeowners' Board became chairman in Oct. 1978 and from there on she worked hard and kept moving forward. One memo refers to her as "the bully-in-charge". In the Oct. '78 minutes she stated, "for all intents and purposes we do not have a fire department yet. The truck doesn't run, there are not enough firefighters (sometimes only one), and communications are bad."

Jack Chilson became the next Fire Chief in Nov. 1978. He was an experienced fireman. Madonna, Jack, and Chuck Molander began fundraising. They sold t-shirts, pens, Christmas trees, smoke detectors, and fire extinguishers. Many spaghetti dinners were held.

A fire district was formed in Aug. 1979 with Madonna, Fran Zimmerman, and Fred Keers being elected to the

first Fire Board. In March 1980 a 1000 gallon truck was acquired. That May, Gary Mitchell became Chief, and Don Miller his Assistant.

The following information is from old ECHOES as the Fire Board began keeping their own minutes.

July 1981 Fred Keers resigned from the Board due to health reasons. In Sept. 1982 he became the new Chief. That Nov. Bob Zimmerman was elected to the Board, where he is now serving his 3rd term, along with David Brookey, who served a partial term. It is known that Tom Mangano and Bob Murphy served partial terms on the Board. Bill Brown and Roy Garcia, (now in his second term), served full terms, and Mary Moran is the most recent addition.

In December 1982 fundraising began for the present firehouse. By Dec. 1986 they moved in. In the Fall 1987 our fire insurance rating dropped to a 9, and February '88 it became an 8.

MT. LEMMON POST OFFICE

No, it isn't a manger scene and it isn't a livestock pen and it isn't a cattle ramp! IT IS our new handicap and wheelchair ramp. The Mount Lemmon Post Office is now accessible to those who cannot easily climb our stairway entrance. For a long while during Christmas time a few inches of straw were places over the hardening cement portion of the ramp making it look like an animal stall. If we had manger figures, it would have fit in with the season. If you have ever had trouble getting into the mountain post office, I sincerely hope you will come by and try out the ramp and let us see your smiling face. Thanks.

Mark Hopkins - Postmaster
Mount Lemmon, Az 85619-9998
602-576-1427

by Roy Garcia, President

Mid-winter is here, but it's certainly hard to tell. We have had the freezing temperatures without very much snow fall. Without a protective blanket of snow in many areas, the ground has frozen to a depth of 18 inches or more. Mike Stanley, the Systems Operator is reporting this to be the worst year for freezing in the last 4 to 5 years. There have been numerous main line freezes and breaks resulting in outages and water loss problems. Mike is working hard to stay on top of the situations as the come up. If you encounter a problem, please call Michael Stanley 576-1538, Ross Quigley 576-1461 or myself 576-1468.

Also, once again, PLEASE, turn off your meter, drain and winterize your system. If you need advice or assistance, call us.

One cabin owner had shut off the unprotected valve on his side of the meter, but not the meter. His valve froze and broke, creating a loss of approximately 200,000 gallons of water and quite a bill for the customer.

Finally, if this type of winter continues with little snow fall, we can expect low water yield from our springs. This would require additional conservation this spring and possibly through the year. I will continue to advise you on this situation as time goes by.

by Chief Chuck Hammel

A Note From The Fire Chief

For those of you who have not met me my name is Charles (Chuck) Hammel. I am 47 years old and have spent the last twenty plus years with the Tucson Fire Department. I am a newlywed of just under a year. My wife's name is Karen and she works in Tucson for the Pima County Sheriffs Office. I have four adult sons. Two of them live in Tucson and two are in the military.

At the fire station we have set a goal to have the construction of the inside of the station to be completed prior to spring. As soon as construction is completed we are going to start on an inspection program that will include, but not be limited to the lease land area. The inspection of private homes is a voluntary program. If you wish to have your home inspected, please contact the fire station after the first of March at 576-1201. We will also be passing out numbers for your home, given to us by the phone company. Also, you will be seeing the fire department trucks driving the streets of the home areas drawing a map showing your houses and the location of propane tanks and other fire hazards that we might spot.

I would like to start a program of training each person who lives on the mountain in C.P.R. The paramedic foundation of Tucson Fire Department has agreed to teach these classes for a fee of ten dollars per person. This is a worthwhile program. As the more people that know C.P.R. the better off we all are. For more information, call me at the fire station.

We are currently in need of volunteers for the department. The requirements are that you be willing to

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Fire tip of the day.....

Keep dry weeds and brush away from your home. Only you can prevent fires. That's all for now.

HERE YE HERE YE ! THE MAYOR SPEAKS

by Psycho Manley, Mayor

Another big political happening was December first. I was cordially invited to the Mt. Lemmon highway road closure, or was it opening? Yes, I believed they closed the road to open it. So it became official the first 3 miles of the highway is completed. The party held by the officials at the big Coronado National Forest sign was quite picturesque. Of course, in the pictures you cannot tell the wind is blowing the designed road speed of 30 m.p.h. The asphalt was loaded with dignitaries and officials. A continental breakfast was served. All liquids had to be served in antiwind cups. The cups worked well, but the wind would gust at least a swallow or two to the person next to you. I shared my drink with Board Supervisor Eckstrom. All who attended had a great time. The locals are glad this phase is over. The next construction project is in 1990. This will be a greater challenge for all of us.

Most of us know it is winter. This has been the coldest, driest winter in a long time. My alter ego has worked since the cold spell hit about Christmas. Of course, the 12" of snow on Thanksgiving stranded many people, got the snow plows running and covered the water lines with a blanket of white stuff. When that

melted off, all the water lines started to freeze up in Upper Sabino Canyon. The road is frozen 16" to 18" deep. It has been like Michael Goodrich said it would be, "drier and colder".

That's hard to believe when it's 65 degrees in Tucson. Now he says six more weeks of winter then warmer weather. Guess we'll see.

I wish all of Mt. Lemmon the best New Year and hope to see all of you this summer.

THANK YOU

Many thanks to the Merchants and Homeowners that decorated the outside of their buildings for the holidays.

Special thanks to Postmaster Mark Hopkins, Pam Rinella and Martin Mollo, owners of the Mt. Lemmon Cafe, for taking the time to decorate the large blue spruce tree with lights by the Post Office. It was beautiful! It certainly added a festive mood to the mountain. Hope we can continue this every year. Thank you all.

The Echoes is the publication of the Mt. Lemmon Homeowners Association for its membership. Membership dues are \$15.00 per year. Renters and friends of the mountain may obtain an associate membership for \$7.50 per year. The Echoes will be published in 1988, the 3rd week of April through September, November and February. Photo ready ads, articles and letters to the editor of interest to the general membership should be submitted by the 15th of the month prior to publication. Send these articles to "Echoes Box 699, Mt. Lemmon, Az 85619. Ad rates: 3 x 5 business card - \$10.00; 2 x 3.5 \$5.00. For other sized inquire to the editorial staff.