

The

# Mt. Lemmon Echoes

*Serving the Homeowners of Mt. Lemmon*

Mountain Rains Road Closures Big News in July

## Stranded In Paradise?

by Larry Waldron,  
president MLHO

By now I think many of you have either experienced the bone jarring thrills of the control road or heard of the Mt. Lemmon road collapse of July 15th. I have often thought how nice it would be to be isolated on Mt. Lemmon with nothing to do. Be careful what you hope for as it may come true. The reality of the road collapse was very evident to all of us on the mountain by Friday afternoon. There were 60 apprehensive listeners at the Summerhaven Coffee House for a town-hall meeting on Friday at 4 PM. There were concerns of getting down the control road, lack of food, lack of medicine, loss of employment, etc. Our Deputies (Marty and John) relayed to us as much information as they had regarding the details of the highway damage and the possible problems of traveling the control road travel Saturday. Considering the immensity of the damage, the community medical concerns, and logistics of getting all the campers and residents down the control road, I personally think the evacuation went quite well. The most important thing to remember is



7/17/99 view of milepost 13- photo Deputy M Miranda

no one was injured.

An analysis by officials confirmed that the rainfall on that morning exceeded that of a 100-year flood. At a rain gauge above the Palisades ranger station 5.91 inches of rain was recorded in a 6-hour period. A majority of the rain fell in the last 4 hours. Satellite estimates of measured rainfall indicate other areas near the Palisades rain gauge more than likely exceeded 5.91 inches. The water over the Sabino dam increased to over 7 feet after 6 AM. It is a scary to think of what might have happened if that amount of water had fell on the Summerhaven

community.

The highway is now open and we all are very thankful for the enormous efforts of all agencies involved. Their efforts were tremendous. This damage was disheartening to Mt. Lemmon summer cabin owners and visitors. However, we should all consider the significant loss that the Mt. Lemmon businesses and full time residents experienced. I

suggest we all encourage and support our local businesses and their employees during the next few months.

Now, where do we go from here? There can and should be improvements for notification and evacuation of all campers, visitors and residents from the mountain. We have an opportunity to review these events and discover errors of commission and omission. A real emergency is the best way to evaluate and develop disaster management programs. A severe forest fire involving the highway area will not allow a 24-hour analysis before acting.

There is a lesson we could all learn from some that were stranded. Have extra food and medical prescriptions on hand in case of emergencies.

## Bunko

### August

### 21st

is a repeat of July!!

Saturday

August 21st, 6:00

PM on the patio

the Alpine Lodge.

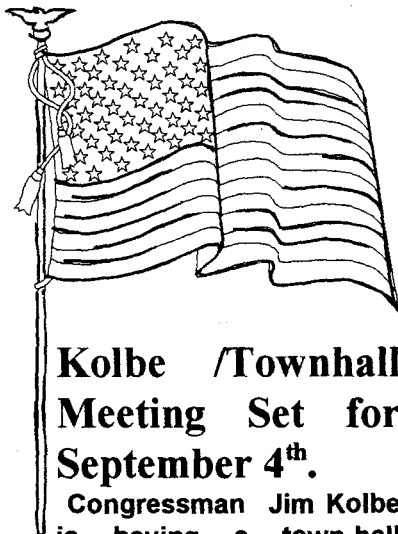
Dinner: Barbecue ribs or chicken for \$12.14 (Tax & tip included)

We realize the Echoes is giving short notice, but please **RSVP**

by August 16 to Linda Mulay

327-4615 with menu choice.

**Everyone welcome!**



## Kolbe /Townhall Meeting Set for September 4<sup>th</sup>.

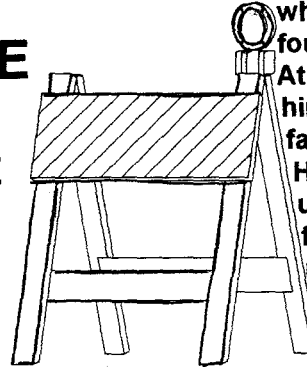
Congressman Jim Kolbe is having a town-hall meeting at the Mt. Lemmon fire station September 4th from 1:30 PM to 2:30 PM. He'll talk briefly about what's going on in Washington, and how it affects YOU! He then has a question and answer session, and brings staff with him, so if you have questions - come and meet the

congressman and find out 1<sup>st</sup> hand what's really going on in the capital. The Mt Lemmon Woman's Club will be serving cookies and coffee, so come and keep informed about what your government is doing for you and to you.

## MY WHITE KNUCKLE EXPERIENCE ON THE MT LEMMON ROAD

7-15-99.

By LUANN WALDRON



Larry spent the week on the mountain, while I commuted each day. Larry became the chief cook and bottle washer. Thursday morning (the 15th) was typical of most monsoon mornings except we had a steady rain all night. The morning news indicated reports of flooding on some Tucson streets and flash flood warnings in Sabino Canyon.

I decided to leave early because of possible traffic delays. I left the cabin at 7:15 with no apprehension. Every thing was fine until I reached the palisades ranger station. The rain became heavier and there were rocks on the roadway with water running across the road. I had to remove rocks to proceed. In the rose canyon area fog became very heavy. I had trouble seeing and by then my knuckles were white. I pulled over for a minute or two, but decided it was not a good place because there were rock outcrops above me. Geology Vista was just ahead

and that area had a larger parking area. I imagined the fog to be similar to what John Roads had told us "In case of a fire the smoke is so heavy you will not be able to see in front of you. You will need to know road markers, sometimes only trees, to know where you are". I certainly found that to be true in fog.

At 7:45 I called Larry to tell him I was not going any farther until the fog lifted. He called me regularly to update me on weather forecasts. About 30 minutes later a car had joined me. It was a boy scout leader and 2 boys going to the camp. He

said at Rose Canyon there was a rockslide and he could not get around it so he decided to return to Tucson.

About 10:30 the fog lifted, the sun came out and we saw the canyon and road below. It was absolutely beautiful. Looking toward the left you could see a blue river running down the mountainside, and looking toward Bear Canyon it turned into churning rapids. We did see a car way down at Bear Canyon and it looked like it was floating on water. A helicopter was flying through the canyon. We stopped an on-coming county vehicle and asked the driver how the road was. He stated it was bad in some areas, and that the sheriff was at Windy Point with other vehicles. I decided to go to Windy Point and ask the sheriff about getting down. At Windy Point no one was there! That was a weird feeling. I told the scout leader I was going to continue, as the others had to be ahead of us. He decided to follow me. The road was not bad except for a few rocky areas until milepost 13.

The pavement was "broken up". My pathfinder went through first, very slowly, and I waited to see if the scoutmaster's passenger car could get through. Then we hit the Bear Canyon area! All the new paved area was rippled and water was rushing on each side of the road. At the lower end of Bear Canyon we caught up with the sheriff. Sand and debris was all across the road. The water was coming off the hillside at Bear Canyon with such a force it was hitting the roadbed. Almost every rocky outcrop had water "Gushing" over it. After the sand and debris area we entered an area where the road was partially washed away. The guardrail lay twisted down the side of the mountain. We stuck very close to the hillside of the mountain. I will say the new areas of construction had very little falling rock or water on the roadway. As much as I hate to think about the new road construction with all those delays it makes me hopeful this type of road destruction and fear of driving in bad weather will end with the new road. I'm just thankful no one was injured with the roads washing away.

*(Remember: Carry a camera and film in your vehicle - you never know what wonders you may experience and want to capture on film to share!)*

## THANK YOU, SUZANNE !!

Thanks to Editor & Chief Suzanne Hensel for taking being editor of the Echoes. The members of the Mt. Lemmon Homeowners Board and the community would like to take this opportunity to give our

sincere APPRECIATION to Suzanne Hensel for the outstanding job she has done in producing the "Echoes" for the past two years. While we are extremely disappointed to lose Suzanne as our editor, we share the excitement of her new job as the teacher at the Summerhaven School.

Congratulations Suzanne, and again, a big "THANKS" for the numerous hours of labor

contributed to this publication. We'll miss you as editor, but we'll still see articles about the school activities!

Suzanne will be the new school teacher for Zimmerman Accommodation.

Suzanne recently completed her Masters in Education with the University of Arizona. She is expecting 14 children to be enrolled in grades K through sixth. Four of those 14 belong to Suzanne and Steve Hensel.

School starts on August 16<sup>th</sup> (did we just hear a collective sigh of relief from some of those Moms & Dads?) Suzanne, Steve and many of the parents have been diligently cleaning up the school before the new term begins. Steve estimates the group has about 200 hours as of this writing in clean up time.

There will not be a teachers aide, so if any of you would like to volunteer some time to help with the school activities, please contact Suzanne at 576-1272. She could use all kinds of help. Do you like history or science? Call her. Enjoy helping out with younger kids? You get the idea.



## ACTION PLAN FOR REPAIR

In a 14 page information pamphlet prepared by Pima County Department of Transportation and Flood Control District regarding the flood water damage to the Catalina Highway, a proposed course of action to repair the highway is in place. The report was dated July 26, 1999. Phase one and two of the repair plan have already been accomplished, that being to repair temporarily the damage at mileposts 10 and 13 by blasting into the mountain side to allow an access lane. The estimated cost for phase one and two ranged between one million to one million three hundred thousand dollars.

Phase three calls for the permanent reconstruction of Mile posts 10 and 13 as part of Federal Highway's Administration's (FHWA) February 2000 Project. The County was working closely with the FHWA to ensure that the temporary repairs done during phase one and two would be consistent with the long term plans of the FHWA.

Some excerpts of information of interest from this report:

"A network of precipitation gauges maintained by PC Flood Control revealed that a total of 5.91 inches of rain fell in a period of just 4 hours near Palisades, more than 4.5 of that total amount fell during the last two hours of the storm."

"This magnitude of rainfall significantly exceeds the 100 - year return value that had been calculated for this area. The storm that unleashed the flooding and subsequent damage

little time to explore the net, or little desire because of all the trash sites, I thought I'd feature a few each issue, that could be useful to know about. Here are a few web sites that you might want to add to your list of sites to visit:

<http://www.asr.co.pima.az.us/>

a way to connect with the public records part of the Pima County assessors office - look up your property taxes, or your neighbors

<http://www.newspaperlinks.com/>

hosted by the newspaper association of America - a way to connect to newspapers around the country - Kids living in Florida - find out what the headlines for their neighborhood are.

<http://www.speedtrap.com/us-traps.html> self explanatory for those of you with a lead foot.

<http://mtlemmon.com/index.htm> an information site about some of the businesses on Mt. Lemmon - a local home page!

## Kids Club

by Olga Pace

Saturday July 31<sup>st</sup> brought a close the Kids Club meetings for this year. This meeting was held at Jeff and Brad Chestnut's cabin. Their mom, Wendy, helped the kids make eatable "birds nests" which even the parents enjoyed. Officer John McGeehee, our local game warden on Mt. Lemmon, talked to the kids about the many different animals found on the mountain. Then he passed around different animal skulls and pelts for us to identify.

Barbara Welsh, a long time docent at Sabino Canyon, helped the kids learn about

several of the more popular birds we see here on the mountain. Our meeting ended with fun and games directed by Patsy Riley and Suzanne



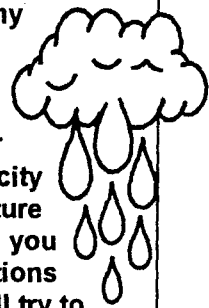
Hensel.

This is a sample of the kinds of programs the Mt. Lemmon Woman's Club, who sponsors these meetings, has tried to provide for the children for the last 3 years. Our goals are to provide a time and a safe place where kids ages 3-12 years, can gather, have fun, learn something interesting and meet new friends. We thank all the parents, many M.t Lemmon Woman's Club members, and community folks who shared their time and expertise with us. Be watching your Echoes for announcements about next years programs. Please don't hesitate to let us know if you have an interesting idea that we might incorporate into our future plans. Thanks so much!

## Water Co-op NEWS

by President of the Water Board, Chuck Autrey

Just a few weeks ago we were all worried about running low on water and the possibility of a serious fire. Now we are enjoying the summer, still aware of the fire danger, but the water supply is good and we hope to keep it that way. Don't forget to turn your water off at the meter if you're going to be gone from your cabin for an extended period of time. A stuck toilet or a broken water line in that goes undetected for a short period of time could result in a serious water shortage that will cost you big bucks and irritate your neighbors a lot. On the first of September your water company will start erecting a large new water tank in Sabino Canyon that will increase our water storage capacity and help with future filtration needs. If you have any water questions give us a call and we'll try to find a satisfactory answer. Everyone at the water company hopes the rest of your summer will be safe and enjoyable!



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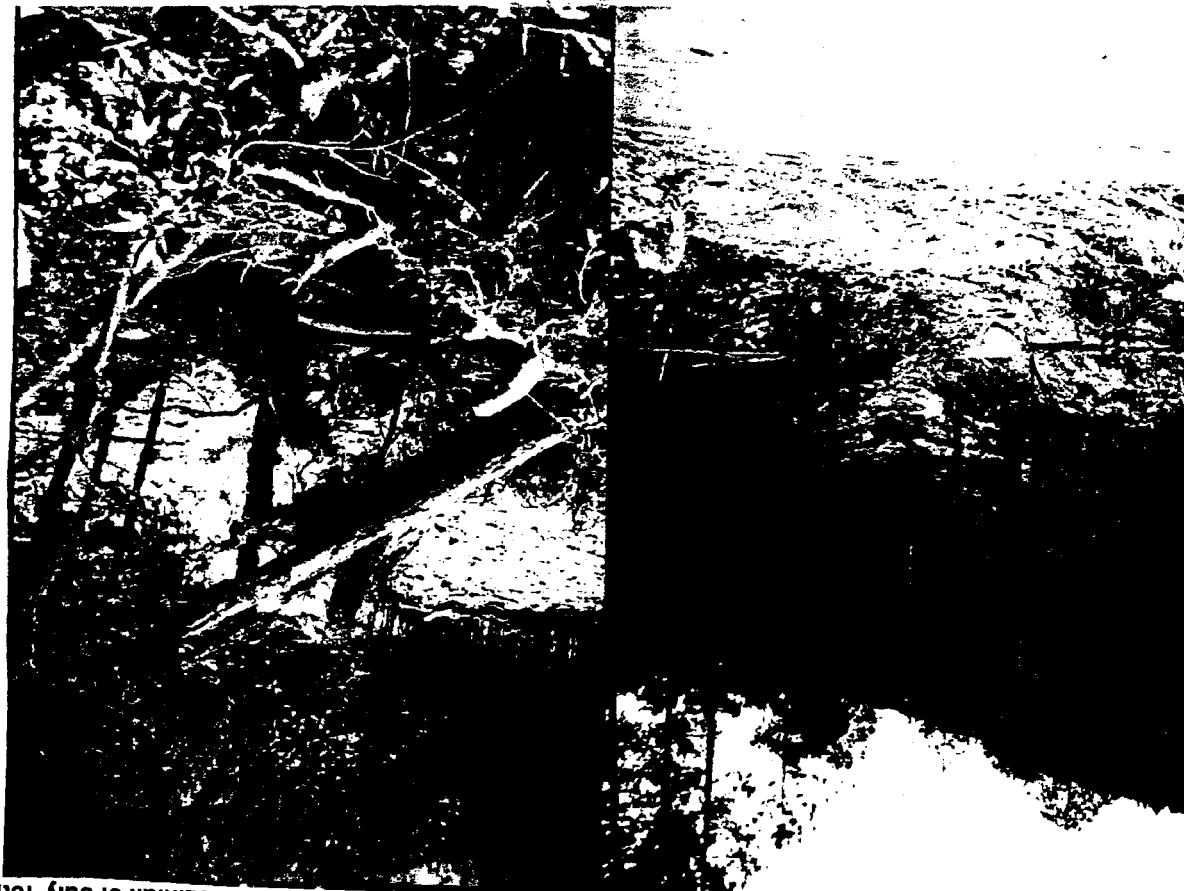


Photo of Rose Canyon area, above the road, and below the road, at new ravine since rainfall of July 15th

Mt Lemmon Homeowner's Board: Larry Waldron. President,  
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*Stamp*