

## **Rustic Ridge Association Annual Meeting August 6, 2011**

In attendance: Alan and Janet Abel, Jeannie Bubriski, Dennis and Leesa Campbell, Joe Chromey, Doug and Margie Conner, Doug Denise, Cena Dwyer, Dottie Foster, Elaine Harned, Lucy and Phil Livingston, Charlotte, Chris and Roy Martin, Kurt Nelson, Dave and Lucia Powell, Jeff and Pam Read, Sue Ross, Martha Schoonover, Mary and Warren Snyder, Norman Stanhope, Ann and John Stearns, Donna Thomas, Joanna Walker, Marilyn Williams, Dick and Lillian Young, Bob and Carol Ziegenhagen

1. Call to Order – Joanna Walker
2. Invocation – Dr. Dennis M. Campbell
3. Minutes of the 2010 Annual Meeting
  - a. Carol Ziegenhagen asked for any corrections or deletions. There were none. The minutes will be filed as originally recorded.
4. Reports and Activities
  - a. President's Report – Carol Ziegenhagen
    - i. In 1991, the Rustic Ridge Association accepted the cottages on Linden Avenue into the organization. William J. Peck (Carol's great-grandfather) bought her family's original cottage. Carol thanked the Association for deciding to include these cottages.
    - ii. Carol gave the following funny gifts as tokens of appreciation for service to the Ridge Association:
      1. Gave Alan Abel a toy truck for his work on the roads.
      2. Gave Warren Snyder pencils for his work auditing the books.
      3. Gave Joanna Walker a notepad for her work as the Clerk.
      4. Gave Lucy Livingston watercolor paints for her work on signs.
      5. Gave Elaine Harned Chicken Soup for a Mother's Soul for her work honoring members of the Ridge community when they die.

6. Gave Charlotte Martin a phone handset and flowers for her work nominating Rustic Ridge Association Board members.
  7. Gave Bob Ziegenhagen a USB port for his work on the Rustic Ridge website and Board.
  8. Gave Sue Ross and Dave Powell golf tees for representing the Ridge Association in Northfield.
  9. Gave Janet Abel flowers for organizing members of the Ridge community to sing at the annual Rustic Ridge church service.
  10. Gave Margie Conner flowers for her work on the Board.
  11. Gave Doug Denise a silly Uncle Sam hat for his work on the Board.
  12. Gave Lucia Powell a piggy bank for her work as the Treasurer.
- iii. Northfield Inn Pool – Thank you for supporting the pool. It's getting better.
  - iv. The Northfield Historical Commission has been granted \$20,000 to professionally survey homes in East Northfield by gathering historical data about them and photographing them. Some of the cottages on the Rustic Ridge will be included in this survey. This will increase the historical record of these homes, which could help protect them for the future.
  - v. Northfield Mount Hermon owns the woods surrounding the Ridge and has decided to thin the woods to generate revenue for the school. **Mike Manzy (name correct?)**, the forestry consultant in charge of this project, has offered to lead a 2 hour walk in the woods on Monday, August 15<sup>th</sup> at 9:00am to explain how the woods is being managed.

- vi. Dickinson Memorial Library has saved materials about the Rustic Ridge through the years in archival boxes.
  - vii. Thanks to Bob Ziegenhagen for his work on the website, and thanks to everyone who contributes to it and keeps it alive.
  - viii. The Ridge Association is going to start a PayPal account to enable Members and Associate Members to securely pay their dues online as opposed to writing a paper check.
  - ix. Carol would like to challenge the Ridge community to think about what we want the Ridge to look like in 20 years - the year 2031. Who will be here? What will the cottages look like? What will the activities be? She would like to increase involvement from Associate Members since she assumes that they will probably be the future of the Ridge...but maybe not. She wants to start a blog or something to start this conversation and keep it going.
- b. Roads Report – Alan Abel
- i. Downed Limbs and Debris/Brush Removal
    - 1. Lots of limbs and debris came down this winter which Steve Wiggin cleaned up. He also did extensive trimming. This cost \$1,800, and we can't afford that every year.
    - 2. As a solution, the Ridge Association hired Ed Shearer and his boys, Ryan and Stephen, to come pick up brush piles left next to the road on July 29th. **Steve Severance will be doing this again at the end of September (which day?).** There is no charge for this service as long as the pile is less than 8 ft. in circumference and 3 ft. tall. If the pile is larger, the resident will have to make special arrangements with Ed. His rates are \$10 per hour and \$20 per

truck load. He is available for other work as well. Among other things, he will clear brush and weeds and straighten up an overgrown property. Ed Shearer's phone number is 413-498-2730.

ii. Roads

1. Steve Wiggin and his crew devoted most of their time this summer and last to doing projects for C.S. Lewis College. Hopefully, most of that work is completed and Steve can now devote more time to the Ridge roads.
2. Of the 3 corners that were to be widened last summer, the one at Heath and Spring was built up with boulders, gravel, and TRG. That will be finished with blacktop in the next month or two, along with the other 2 corners at Mountain and Wood, and Willows and West.
3. In early July, the roads were cleaned with a leaf blower and the sides of the lower Willows were mowed.
4. A goal is to get as many roads covered with blacktop as possible. In the near future, the corner at Pine and Ledge will be widened, as well as Ledge and East, with blacktop extending 127 feet down East Lane. At the top of the Willows, Steve Wiggin will add rip rap rocks and blacktop. The last section at the bottom of the Willows (72 ft.) will be blacktopped.

iii. Culverts

1. By late fall, culverts and ditches leading to them will be cleaned and edges of the roads will be trimmed.

iv. Additional Projects

1. One or two more road projects will be identified by Alan and Bob Ziegenhagen to be completed with the \$9,000 in funds carried over from the 2009-10 and 2010-11 budgets.
2. When the work is finished, the results will be posted on the Rustic Ridge website.

c. Auditor's Report – Warren Snyder

- i. Told a funny story that started with “Things that smell:” about encountering a skunk while tossing corn husks in the woods, but, luckily, not getting sprayed.
- ii. He said that our books do not smell. He has audited the 2010-2011 financial records and found them to be complete and accurate.

d. Treasurer's Report – Lucia Powell

- i. The Association is doing well collecting dues this year.
- ii. Thanks to everyone who contributed to the Reserve Fund. Even \$5 helps. This fund is our backup, and can also be used to make the road improvements that are so important.
- iii. Security – Thanks to Joe Chromey and Bob Huber for keeping an eye on the Ridge during the winter. The Ridge came through the winter pretty well this year.
- iv. Last year's charitable contribution (10% of collected dues) went to the Northfield food pantry, which has since closed.
- v. Our Directors and Officers insurance is up to date for both this year and next.
- vi. The Ridge Association is in the black, and well-equipped to do the road work that is needed.
- vii. The 2010-2011 books were accepted by the Association.

viii. Lucia went over the proposed budget for 2011-2012.

e. Memoriam – Elaine Harned

- i. During the past year, Elizabeth Heydenreich was called to her eternal rest. As is our Ridge custom, a book is being ordered in her memory for the Dickinson Memorial Library.
- ii. Some of you may remember a friend of the Ridge, Joyce Peck, who also died this year.
- iii. Do stop by the library and look at the impressive collection of Rustic Ridge memorial books. Librarian Deb Kern is extremely helpful in advising us on appropriate titles, and the books have a wide circulation. A list of titles can be found on the Ridge website and at the library.
- iv. In the event of a death of one of our Members, please notify Elaine and send along an obituary that can be posted on our website.
- v. A moment of silence was observed for all the Rustic Ridge friends who are no longer with us.

f. Signs Report/Lobster Fest – Lucy Livingston

- i. There is a new green and white sign for North Lane that will hopefully be more visible.
- ii. There will be a new yellow “SLOW” sign for the sharp corner (under the mirror).
- iii. Talked about the politics of the Ridge signs:
  1. It can take years for a man who marries into the Ridge community to get his a sign with his own name on it. Jeff Nickel, Trish White’s husband, has finally earned his own sign.
  2. “The Ridge is divided” between short names and long names, and (which road?) is the divide.

g. Town Representative – Sue Ross

- i. We can leave brush in her field for her to burn if we want. We can also take it up into the woods to create habitat for wildlife.
- ii. Northfield had the opportunity this past year to hire a new Town Administrator, Tom Hutcheson, who will be able to interact at a higher level with administrators from Northfield Mount Hermon and C.S. Lewis College. Sue thinks this is a very positive thing for Northfield.
- iii. Sue encouraged us all to go on the walk to Garnet Rock with **Mike Manzy** (name correct?), the forestry consultant for Northfield Mount Hermon, and make our preferences known (i.e. that we still want a view from Garnet Rock). She thinks that Mike will have a significant impact on what happens in the forest.
- iv. Talked a little more about the historical survey of East Northfield. This project is just getting off the ground.
- v. Bill who owns the Pizza House also owns another building in town, and he told the Northfield Selectboard that he wants to open a gas station, but Sue doesn't know where this stands. She said Bill wasn't as prepared as he needed to be for such an undertaking.
- vi. Schell Bridge is still standing. There was an economic impact study done in conjunction with UMASS that found that if Schell Bridge was turned into a recreational bridge (no traffic, for walking and biking, etc.) the local economy could realize more than \$15 million in increased business.
- vii. The owners of Centennial House on Main St. have been leaders in the community and they were instrumental in creating the new printed Visitor's Guide to Northfield, which is available on the back table.

viii. Someone asked how fundraising for Schell Bridge is going. Sue said it is slow. Fundraising in Northfield is hard because there are so many churches and civic organizations, and there is not wealth here the way that there is in the Berkshires.

5. Guest Speaker - Leonard Crossman, Chief of the Northfield Police Department

- a. Introduced himself. He grew up in Orange and still lives there with his wife and two daughters, ages 4 and 6. He also works part-time doing security at Greenfield Community College.
- b. C.S. Lewis College has had 24-hour security for the past year. They monitor who is on campus and who is driving up the Ridge.
- c. The Northfield Police is a small department. They try to be on call as much as possible, but sometimes they can't be. If they aren't on call, a 911 call would be directed to the State Police station 22 miles away in Shelburne Falls. The response time would obviously be significantly slower in this circumstance.
- d. There are very minimal reports of crime on the Ridge, and in our area of Northfield in general. They sometimes get medical calls. They don't patrol the Ridge much in the summer, because they know there are lots of eyes up here in the summer.
- e. They just started a canine program. The Erving Police Department has a Bloodhound for search and rescue and for investigating burglaries, and the Northfield Police Department can use him too.
- f. Dave Powell asked what happens when we call 911.
  - i. Chief Crossman said that, if you have a landline, they will know exactly where you are via GPS, as well as the history of what has happened at that house, when you call. They will come even if you don't say anything. They will come even if you tell them that calling 911 was a mistake.



- ii. If you call from a cell phone, they may know your exact location, or they may just know where the nearest cell phone tower is. If you are relying on a cell phone to make emergency calls, it's important to make your cottage visible to emergency personnel.
- iii. Elaine Harned wanted to know how to get an ambulance. It's the same procedure - call 911. There is an ambulance for Northfield. It's usually available and shows up quickly. Same thing in the event of a fire. Just call 911 and they will dispatch whoever you need.
- iv. Northfield can now transfer people to larger hospitals.

6. New Business

a. Nominating Committee Report and Election – Charlotte Martin

i. The following 2011-12 Board was proposed:

- 1. Carol Ziegenhagen, President
- 2. Doug Denise, Vice President
- 3. Lucia Powell, Treasurer
- 4. Joanna Walker, Clerk
- 5. Lucy Livingston, Assistant Clerk
- 6. Janet Abel, Class of 2014
- 7. John Powell, Class of 2014
- 8. Marsha Heydenreich, Class of 2013
- 9. Ann Stearns, Class of 2013
- 10. Roy Martin (replacing Scott White), Class of 2012
- 11. Bob Ziegenhagen, Class of 2012

ii. The Association voted to elect this Board as proposed.

7. Guest Speaker - Charlie Olcott, Executive Vice President of C.S. Lewis College

- a. Brings greetings from Dr. Stan Mattson.

- b. He and his wife Suzanne just returned from London where they attended a triennial C.S. Lewis conference that had amazing speakers and included spending time in beautiful 1,000 year old churches.
- c. He thanked Carol Ziegenhagen for inviting him.
- d. Hobby Lobby bought the campus 18 months ago. They are looking for C.S. Lewis College to raise a significant amount of money by early 2012. Right now, they are trying to raise \$500,000 to develop their fundraising platform. They just started a \$15 million capital campaign in England. Charlie is traveling around the country soliciting very large contributions from C.S. Lewis fans and Christians.
- e. He brought some development materials that we can help ourselves to.
- f. He covets our prayers and he covets our introductions to people who might be interested in what he does.
- g. Joanna Walker asked him to elaborate about how the Great Books curriculum is different from other forms of higher education.
  - i. He said that typical higher education institutions graduate bright and talented people who have specialized training in something because they had to declare a major early. In the Great Books curriculum, students read 45 great books a year and sit around a table with about 13 other students and a world-class tutor and learn to defend their viewpoint. The idea is that this is a return to the classic liberal arts education that has been lost.
  - ii. Charlie said that it will not be a narrow Christian environment. For example, students will read Darwin and Freud.
- h. Margie Conner asked when the first entering class will start. Charlie answered MAYBE in 2013. It depends on how much money they raise. They have to have 2 years of operating expenses in escrow before they can start...and that's a lot of

money. They are not allowed to solicit students at this point. However, people have heard about this new school and have been calling to inquire. He says that, when they are able to open, people will be “knocking down the door.” They only intend to have about 150 students per class. They will probably start with a freshman class, then another freshman class, etc. Or, they may start with a gap year program (between high school and college).

- i. Dave Powell introduced Eric Donaldson, Project Manager for C.S. Lewis College, who was standing in the back of the room.

#### 8. Website Report – Bob Ziegenhagen

- a. He is happy to show anyone how to do anything on the website (i.e. how to post things on the calendar).
- b. Please keep him updated on your family happenings. He wants to know and will put news on the website.
- c. If you want to be involved in the website let him know. He can teach someone the basic html code that they need to know, and he will eventually need a successor.