

TOWN HALL
1360 North Niels Hansen Lane | www.ci.pinetop-lakeside.az.us



Town Citizen

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Town Citizen

Town of Pinetop-Lakeside
1360 North Niels Hansen Lane
Pinetop-Lakeside, Arizona 85929

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WHAT'S UP WITH WOODLAND LAKE PARK

Since incorporation in 1984, the Town has been working to secure the 583-acre Woodland Lake Park (WLP) parcel, the very heart and soul of our community. Previous decades of effort focused on trying to acquire the parcel as a "gift." And though the U.S. Forest Service would indeed like to rid itself of the parcel, now an unmanageable island surrounded by private land, the laws and regulations that guide the agency simply won't allow them to "give it away." Many residents aren't aware that the Town doesn't own WLP, and even more are unaware of its precarious status. Twice in as many years the Federal government has put WLP on a list of Forest Service parcels to be sold to generate funds for rural schools, underscoring its risk of falling into private ownership. On the positive side, a 1998 Federal law, passed at the request of the Town, stipulates that only the Town may purchase the parcel without further action by Congress. It provides breathing room under which to develop a comprehensive set of strategies to secure WLP. This is now one of the Town's highest priorities, and a diverse group of citizens and Town staff are working feverishly to craft and implement strategies to secure WLP.

The WLP task force was mobilized by the Town in June. It is guided by the *Woodland Lake Park Tract Master Plan* submitted to the Town last May by the University of Arizona. The task force's mission embodies key principles that further guide its activities. First, as stressed in the master plan, all avenues to secure WLP are being pursued concurrently, including both non-development and development options. Though keeping the park in its undeveloped state is the desire, this is recognized as a difficult task. As such, the task force is being pragmatic and is committed to making tangible progress over the next few years under a sustained, focused campaign. Should efforts to secure the entire park under non-development options fall short, limited development might occur in the context of helping pay to acquire portions of WLP. Another guiding principle is the task force's pursuit of partnerships to yield diverse solutions, including the White Mountains Land Trust (WMLT), Blue Ridge Unified School District (BRUSD), The Nature Conservancy and others, and with involvement by Congressman Renzi's office and the Forest Service. WLP is recognized as a regional resource whose use, enjoyment, and economic impact go far beyond our Town's boundaries. The Town must be prepared to maintain acquired portions of the park for the benefit and safety of the public, itself a costly proposition. A very important guiding principle is the task force's commitment to openness and transparency in pursuit of all options, even where they may be controversy, recognizing the intense citizen interest in this issue. All agendas, notes and other materials are posted on the Town's website (www.ci.pinetop-lakeside.az.us). Citizen participation is welcomed at task force meetings held on the third Thursday of each month, at 9:00 a.m. in the Town offices. Previously, there was no mechanism for the public to support the acquisition of WLP through donations. The Town and WMLT have partnered to form the *Save Our Park!* fundraising campaign, with all the necessary legal and financial measures in place to ensure that the funds are held in a secure account and are used only as intended. Now it's time for the community to step up and support this campaign to secure WLP.

The 40-acre Big Springs Environmental Study Area has been managed under permit by the BRUSD for over 20 years. The task force believes that it should be eligible to be acquired as a school facility for \$10/acre under the Education Land Grant Act (ELGA), especially with a new nature center planned by the White Mountain Wildlife and Nature Center on adjacent Town property. However, the very 1998 law intended to protect WLP by limiting its purchase only to the Town precludes BRUSD from acquiring Big Springs under ELGA. We're actively working with our Congressional delegation to address this and ensure that Big Springs continues to offer outstanding environmental educational opportunities.

One option the task force believes holds promise in acquiring WLP is creation of a park acquisition and maintenance district, embodying the principle that WLP is a regional resource. Instead of the limited population and assessed valuation solely within our Town limits, a larger district overlaid on the BRUSD boundaries would yield more assessed valuation, thus reducing the impact to individual homeowners and generating more funds. A modest assessment could generate substantial funds to both acquire and maintain WLP. This option would require action by the Legislature, much public involvement to assess its "willingness to pay to play," and must be passed by voters. The task force is working with 6 counties interested in pursuing such an approach over the next 2 years.

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WHAT'S INSIDE

FALL/WINTER 2007

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Woodland Lake Park (continued from Page 1)

Much attention has been given in the past to having the Forest Service designate the parcel as a national monument recreation area. The Town will soon file an application to have all or part of the area conferred special recreation status, focusing on its high recreational, stream and wetland values as well as highlighting healthy forest management. Lastly, the task force has evaluated potential development for portions of WLP. These options provide a fallback approach should the *Save Our Park!* and other non-development options fall short in securing the park given its \$30-50 million price tag. Several developers have been consulted to refine options in the master plan, as they're the best ones to give us needed input. The task force learned that the "conventional" development approach is a viable one where the improved park facilities, Big Springs, and the Walnut Creek core area could be "gifted" to the Town as part of retail, resort and residential development of the remaining acreage. Conversely, the "non-conventional" development option, with more intensive retail and commercial development on a smaller area may not be as viable in helping secure other WLP acreage due to high cost and risk, though more evaluation is needed. It's important to stress that the task force and Town have made no decisions or commitments in this regard.

The Town has embarked on an unprecedented and committed effort to pursue a range of options to secure WLP. For the first time, citizens have a mechanism in which to make donations to the acquisition of the park, and more importantly to help control its destiny. Now, more than ever it's time to get involved and make a difference!

YELLOW JACKET YOUTH CENTER HOLIDAY EVENTS

The Yellow Jacket Youth Center will be hosting some holiday events this year! We are taking over the Holiday Lighting Contest. Residents and businesses within Pinetop-Lakeside are welcome to participate, and prizes will be awarded to the first and second place entries in each category. Entries are due by Friday, December 7, 2007. Judging will take place the week of December 10. Entry forms can be picked up at the Parks and Recreation Department at Town Hall, 1360 N. Niels Hansen Lane, or call 368-6700 extension 232 or 234 for more details.

Santa Claus will be at the Old Jail on Saturday, December 8 to take pictures. Hot chocolate and cookies will be available. There is no fee for your picture, however donations will be greatly appreciated! If you have any questions, please call the Yellow Jacket Youth Center at 368-2900 or email us at yjycmember75@yahoo.com.

Happy Holidays from all of us!

"Shop with a Cop" Program 2007

The Annual "Shop with a Cop" Program will be held this year on December 12, 2007. "Shop with a Cop" is an annual event conducted by the Show Low and Pinetop-Lakeside Police Departments in conjunction with the Show Low Wal-Mart. Children who are selected need to be at Wal-Mart by 7:30 a.m. on December 12th. The program is traditionally financed by local businesses, Show Low and Blue Ridge School Districts and private citizens.

Applications for this event may be picked up at either the Show Low or Pinetop-Lakeside Police Department. Applications must be returned to either department by December 4th.

As many children as possible will be selected based on the contributions received. If anyone is able to donate and wishes to write a check, please make it payable to "Shop with a Cop," and leave it with the dispatchers at either department. During normal working hours checks may be left with either Officer Kevin Loeffler at the Show Low P.D. (537-5091) or Det. Bud Miltenberger at the Pinetop-Lakeside P.D. (368-8803). Any amount is truly appreciated. Questions may be directed to either of the above officers.

Only those selected for the program will be called. In the past several years we have been able to select over 100 children to participate in this very worthwhile program. Help us make it a joyous holiday season for the needy children in our communities.

Support the acquisition of Woodland Lake Park
with the
SAVE OUR PARK! Campaign
Please make tax-deductible donations to the
White Mountains Land Trust

P.O. Box 803
Lakeside, AZ 85929
www.wmlandtrust.org

A spectacular DVD highlighting the park is
offered as a gift with donations over \$100

**Snow Removal Philosophy of
Pinetop-Lakeside**

When the snow is starting to fall and accumulates to two (2) inches or more, as observed by the Police Department, the Town's full "snow shift" will be deployed. These crews will continue working until the storm is over and the removal is accomplished.

The schedule is prioritized on a "greatest need" basis. The streets are plowed in the following order:

- Arterial Streets
- School Bus Routes
- Major Collectors
- Minor Collectors
- Residential Streets
- Remaining Streets

Sometimes because of heavy snowfall, we have to stay on the arterial streets longer than we would like because they are the top priority. This allows some mobility within the community and keeps emergency service access as open as possible. Once these routes are accessible, side streets and cul-de-sacs are plowed.

The Arizona Department of Transportation is responsible for snow removal along the entire length of Highway 260, including the incorporated limits of Pinetop-Lakeside.

To speed up snow removal, please do not park your vehicle on the street during or after snowstorms. Any motor vehicle that presents an obstacle to efficient snow removal may be towed away and stored at the owner's expense.

Plowing snow without leaving a "berm" is impossible. To protect the surface of the road, and to make room for snow from future snowstorms, the snowplow operator must pile the snow as far off the shoulder as possible. Individuals are responsible for removing the berm from mailboxes, driveways and business entrances. Please do not shovel the snow back into the roadway. The elderly and handicapped may receive assistance with berm removal by contacting the Public Works Department at 928-368-8885 ext. 233. Berm removal will not occur until the roads are clear.

Do you need
Help
reducing your
Fire Fuel?

Lakeside Fire Department has a grant that may help.
If you live in the Lakeside Fire District;
Contact LSF at 928-368-6112.

The funds available may cover part of your cost
to reduce the amount of fire fuel on your property.
Call us, so we can help you, help our community.

Town Plans for Holiday Season

The Holiday Season is once again drawing near and the Town of Pinetop-Lakeside, along with the Holiday Lighting Committee, is preparing for our annual Woodland Holiday Lighting Festival to be held on Saturday, December 1st. The festivities start at 2:30 p.m. and culminate with the lighting ceremony at 5:00 p.m. next to the covered bridge in Woodland Lake Park.

Come join us for an afternoon visit from Santa, local entertainment, face painting, hot chocolate and homemade cookies. Donate canned goods that will go to the Love Kitchen to help less fortunate members of our community. Receive a ticket with each donation for prizes in the Holiday Raffle throughout the event.

The Holiday Lighting Ceremony is a wonderful way to start this special season. The White Mountain Apache Tribe has again provided the magnificent tree that serves as the centerpiece for this occasion. We greatly appreciate their continued assistance and generosity. Numerous local businesses and organizations also contribute to this event and we are grateful for their time, resources, and enthusiasm.

Share your seasonal spirit with the community by entering the 2007 Holiday Lighting Contest. Enter your residential or commercial display for first and second place prizes. Entry deadline is December 7th with the judging the week of the 10th. Entries are available through the Pinetop-Lakeside Parks and Recreation Office: 368-6700 Ext. 234.

Youth Basketball Program

Registrations will soon be taken for our youth basketball program. This recreational based program teaches skills and the basics of this great sport to both boys and girls grades third through sixth. The program begins in January and runs through March. Games are played on Saturdays from 8:30 to 1:00. Volunteers are the backbone of this program and we need as many volunteers as we can get. So, come out and support this program. For more information on this or any of our other programs, please call 368-6700 Ext. 3

The Parks & Recreation Department would like to wish everyone a happy and safe Holiday Season and we hope to see you at the Woodland Holiday Lighting Festival!

EVENT OF THE MONTH
SATURDAY,
DECEMBER 1, 2007
CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING AT
WOODLAND LAKE PARK