

# Alpine Ranchos residents meet to 'determine their own destiny'

By: Gamin Summers  
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Residents of Alpine Ranchos, an area of 40-acre parcels off Leupp Road north of Winona, held a meeting Jan. 31 to learn how to make their community a town. They invited Bryon Smith of the League of Arizona Cities and Towns to explain the incorporation process.

Missy Paulsell, an Alpine Ranchos resident since 1999, says this process all started with one neighbor's complaint about other neighbors.

In this vast landscape of spread-out lots, three residences are close enough to see each other, says Paulsell. One of the property owners was annoyed by her neighbors' "unsightly" yards. The disgruntled resident filed a complaint with the county.

A county inspector came to investigate and proceeded to cite other residents as well, issuing a total of 38 citations for violations ranging from non-working cars to mobile homes without permits. "The people who were cited were upset, so they put out fliers" calling for a meeting of area residents in November of last year,

recalls Paulsell. The group has held at least six meetings since then, with as many as 40 residents present. The complaining resident has not attended.

These neighbors have united with a common desire to "determine their own destiny," says Paulsell. Having no utility services, they have invested in their solar and wind power systems. They have goats, chickens, horses and other animals, and they "can ride four-wheelers without bothering anybody." They just want to continue their unique way of living. "We are self-reliant," she says. Because Alpine Ranchos is within 10 miles of a national monument, Sunset Crater, the population requirement for incorporation is 500 instead of the normal 1,500, Smith explained. Paulsell says the area has at least that many people, though she doesn't know exactly how many. She claims recent census figures didn't include many of the area residents, some of whose properties are difficult to find.

Paulsell believes the general consensus among residents is to put the incorporation idea on hold. They "found out it makes more government," when what they really want is "less government meddling." Incorporation would also mean more taxes, she says. At the Jan. 31 meeting, Coconino County Supervisor Deb Hill mentioned the option of creating an area plan. "A committee would be formed of area residents, anyone who wishes to volunteer, and they would work with county community development staff," explains Hill. They would review a standard format for area plans, then determine what they want for their area in terms of development, nature of area, trails, etc. The county encourages the committee to offer open houses while creating an area plan, thus providing a forum for community input. Hill says the plan "serves as a guide for Planning and Zoning and for the Board of Supervisors. It is not force of law." If someone requests a permit for something questionable or if a development project comes along, it would be reviewed in the context of the area plan.

Hill will further discuss area plans at the next Alpine Ranchos meeting, Feb. 28 at 4 p.m. at the Star School on Leupp Road.

### CROMER SCHOOL CELEBRATES WITH MUFFINS FOR MOM

Chris Fonoti, principal of Cromer School, is pleased with the success of Muffins for Mom, the first of what will be an annual event to honor mothers and children.

"It was fantastic!" she says.

More than 500 moms, grandmas and children came to the Feb. 11 celebration, filling the cafeteria. Her staff had come the night before to decorate with tablecloths and pink, white and red hearts. Teachers served blueberry and banana nut muffins, coffee, hot chocolate and juice. Some of the students played the piano as background music. Student teachers even came early to help, she says.

Cafeteria workers made the muffins from mixes donated by Bashas'.

The idea came from Fonoti's secretary, Georgia, whose daughter had attended a similar event in the Valley. She coordinated preparations for the event with Cromer's PTO.

Fonoti sees the celebration as a way to "involve parents, show appreciation for all they do for us, and get out the message that the PTO is fantastic."

Carol Sandall, mom to three Cromer students, enjoyed the outing. "Teachers served and mingled with the students and moms, and moms had the chance to visit with each other," she says.

Next on the docket is Donuts With Dad, slated for March 10, 7:30-8:15 a.m.

### AREA ROADS TO HAVE NEW SIGNS; ADDRESS PLACARDS ALSO AVAILABLE

Summit Fire Department has received about 100 new road signs, which will be put up in the next two weeks by volunteer and staff firefighters. Coconino County Supervisors Deb Hill and Liz

Archuleta helped provide funding for the project, says Fire Chief Don Howard.

The new, national standard for road signs is 9 inches in height, compared to the previous standard of 412 inches. The cost went from \$70 each for previous signs to \$200 for the new signs, says Howard. He also expressed concern for how these larger signs would weather the area wind.

Howard also wants to remind residents that the department has free home address placards with reflective numerals. These help the fire department locate a homes in times of emergency.

Residents with health concerns should have their address numbers clearly displayed.

For more information, call Summit Fire at 526-9537.

Gamin Summers is interested in your news of Doney Park, Timberline, Fernwood and surrounding areas. Email her at [gamin@commspeed.net](mailto:gamin@commspeed.net).

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