

Pine Brook Press

A Newsletter for, about and written by
Pine Brook Hills Residents

AUTUMN 2000

FIRE IN THE SOUL: BMFA Chief Don Whittemore

Driving down Linden, we are on our way to a luncheon interview when the fire pager squawks. It is a medical alarm from Boulder Heights. The Boulder Mountain Fire Authority (BMFA) Chief responds immediately, notifies the dispatcher of his location, sticks a red flashing light on the roof and we are off.

A young boy in rural Connecticut, a sixth generation Yankee, dreams of manning a fire lookout tower with his dog, deep in the evergreen forests of the mountain West. Life, as always, takes unexpected turns and detours, but the dream persists and today that young boy, Don Whittemore, is the full time Chief of BMFA, responsible for safeguarding our homes and keeping watch over all these acres of dry Ponderosas.

Of solid, sensible Yankee stock, Don grew up on a poultry and dairy farm started by his great-great-grandfather near Middlebury, Connecticut. Most of his family still lives there. His siblings went to sensible colleges and followed sensible careers. But Don was different. There was always, in him, a tension between doing the expected, conventional thing and following a more adventurous path. Thus he chose Hampshire College, where talented students are free to shape their own course of learning.

After college, he parlayed his computer skills in the early days of the PC into a job managing the inception and growth of the IBM clone-making division of a giant European company. A sensible job. But after a few years the excitement of a start-up was gone and the

tension pulled the other way. He quit the job on Friday, went wind surfing on Saturday, met the Vice President of an international company manufacturing windsurfing sails, and joined as manager for the fledgling U.S. division. Sales tripled in just under two years. But by now this was becoming another conventional job: time to move on.

And there was always the interest in fire. In fire-fighting there was, to him, a sense of adventure and romance, a mystique that would not let go. He says, "fire was always in my subconscious." In his early twenties, he got his CPR certification and became a volunteer with the local fire department. But he had not yet combined fire with a career. An enduring interest in the environment sent him back to college, to Yale, where he earned a Master's degree in Natural Resources Policy Management and Law. This led to his first job in the West, as executive director of a non-profit doing Forest Service policy work in Bozeman, Montana. Taking over an organization with one half-time paid position he built it into a six person operation in two years. By then the major challenges were over. When friends from Yale visited Bozeman and proposed starting a business in Boulder, he accepted. The business was ECOS, an environmental communications company, that among other things created the interpretive signs at the Denver Zoo and the large color displays along the Boulder Creek Trail.

Don moved to Boulder Heights and joined the



volunteer fire department at the bottom of the totem pole. In 1994 he responded to his first wildland fire. It was a small fire, about an acre, ignited by lightning, off Old Stage Road. The crew were digging a fire line, a small airplane tanker was buzzing and dropping fire retardant. There was action and excitement and the joy of working hard as part of a dedicated group. The Forest Service was helping the local crew. One hour later word came that 50 people were trapped by the South Canyon Fire near Glenwood Springs. Fourteen people would die in that fire, one of the worst tragedies in wildfire fighting history. The Forest Service personnel immediately pulled out and rushed to help their stricken colleagues. The camaraderie and desire to take care of their own made a deep impression. It was his first wildland fire, but Don was hooked: "That was just the best thing ever."

Finally he decided to "do fire full time" and signed up with the National Park Service as a prescribed fire specialist. His father had a hard time understanding why someone with a good degree and business experience would work long hours in primitive conditions, away from home for seven months of the year, for \$9 an hour. His siblings' reaction was more direct; they thought he was crazy!

But to Don, it was Nirvana. He was part of a pioneering group bringing state-of-the-art technology to the Park Service, providing detailed local observations that were vital for use in fire prediction algorithms. Eventually his father would understand, somewhat, how Don's experience with computers, the environment, business, and his passion for fires all came together in the country's wild lands.

The work was not without risk. In Bandelier National Park, New Mexico, he was part of a crew charged with doing a 1200 acre prescribed burn in one day. They were setting fire along a trail that dog-legged along a canyon edge with greater than a 1000 foot drop. They were bringing fire to the interior, away from the canyon. Big wind shifts periodically pushed the fire ahead of them and then turned it toward them, forty foot walls of flame. The only way to beat it was to put down more fire between them and the high flames and try to race ahead. Running down the trail, the more fires they set, the more intense the larger fire became. Heat and flames and people running forward and loading up from five gallon cans of fuel on the canyon edge. It was, he says, the scariest scene. They survived "by the skin of their teeth."

For two years, he was with the Park Service,

traveling to Florida, the Carolinas and all over the West. It was a hard lifestyle. There were times when the crew went twenty days without telephone access. It created an intense bond between the crew members and Don still keeps in regular contact with them. It was "as close as you can get" to childhood dreams.

However, there were other concerns. His marriage was failing, in part because of the long periods away from home. It was an impossible job for raising a family. So he quit and moved back to Boulder, rejoining the Boulder Heights fire department. Then the Boulder Heights and Pine Brook Hills departments merged and he became the first full time fire chief of the new Boulder Mountain Fire Authority.

He has been chief for one year now and there is a sense that this job brings together all his experience, his passion for fire work, and his family life in one harmonious whole. Merging the two departments has presented some of the challenges of a start-up, his business experience comes in handy in preparing budgets and other administrative work, and he is still working with fire. It is a service job, helping people and community, for him always a preference. He is newly remarried. His bride, Lauren, is on the Rocky Mountain Rescue Group and has qualified search and rescue dogs. When the beeper goes off at 2 a.m., it is question of finding out whose beeper went off.

The next big task Don sees is in reducing the fire danger in the district through fire mitigation and thinning our unnaturally dense forests. In terms of fire hazard, he says, "this is as scary a place as there is in the country."

We have turned onto Lee Hill Road and are negotiating the steep tight turns as the road weaves towards Boulder Heights. The radio squawks again. The medical alarm was false. We slow down, turn around at a side road, and drive back to Boulder. We pull into a parking lot off Iris and walk towards the restaurant.

"Good place," he says, "a lot of fire fighters eat here." This Yankee, who long ago dreamed of guarding western forests, is home.

WANTED; NEW MEMBERS AND/OR HELPERS
The Fire Auxiliary would love to welcome new members, especially to help with Mountain Expressions, our annual arts, crafts and baked goods sale in November. This is a great way for new and established Pine Brookers to meet their neighbors. All those interested please call Nancy Tamura at (303) 448-0225.

**PINE BROOK HILLS
HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION
BOARDS AND COMMITTEES**

PRESIDENT
Al Gerrish 443-7361

VICE PRESIDENT
Larry Tamura 448-0225

SECRETARY
Suzanne Adams 449-0997

TREASURER
Jack Walker 444-4710

MEMBER-AT-LARGE
Eric Erickson 447-0671

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ROAD SAFETY
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NEWCOMER WELCOME
Sally Ashby 440-0507
Shoni Kahn 786-9819

FIRE CHIEF
Don Whitemore 440-0235
FIRE BOARD PRESIDENT
Robert deHaas 443-5394
FIRE/MEDICAL AUXILIARY
Nancy Tamura 448-0225

WATER BOARD
Kirk Hendricks, Pres. 442-1308
WATER DISTRICT
Bob de Haas, Mgr. 443-5394

PINE BROOK PRESS

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

PUBLIC HEARINGS on the proposed Fire Department mill levy increase - 7 P.M. on Tues., Oct. 17, at the P.B.H. Firehouse, and Wed., Oct 18, at the Boulder Heights Firehouse.

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE - Meets 2nd Tuesday of every month, 7 P.M. at the Firehouse.

AUXILIARY FIRE AND MEDICAL - Meets 1st Sunday of every month at 6:30 P.M. at the Firehouse.

BIBLE STUDY - Meets weekly. For info, call Greg or Donna Johnson at (303) 449-1692.

FIRE BOARD - Meets 2nd Monday of every month at 7 P.M. at either the Pine Brook or Boulder Heights Firehouse.

PBH HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION - Quarterly meeting on Wed., Oct. 25. Potluck-Social at 5:30 P.M., Program at 7:30 P.M., at the Community Center/Firehouse.

PBH WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB - Next meeting on Tues., Nov. 28, 7 P.M. at the Community Center./Firehouse.

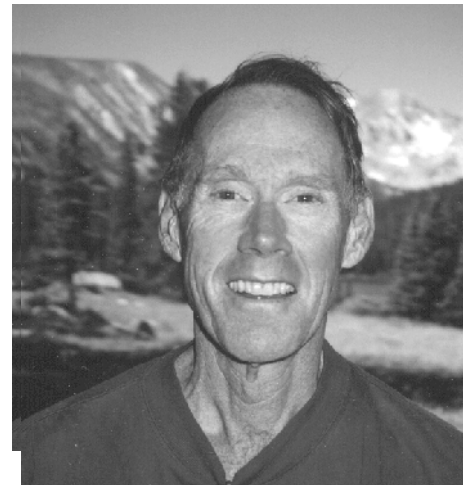
PHILOSOPHY CLUB - If interrested call Quentin or Eileen McKenna at 415-1111.

WATER BOARD - Meets 1st or 2nd Thursday of every month at 7 P.M. at the Firehouse. See marquee on Linden for dates.

Alluminations

By Al Gerrish, HOA President

Events in Pine Brook have proceeded at a brisk pace the last few months with a combination of fun and community building events. First off, the Square Dance was held on August 5 in the "new" Community Center and Firehouse. A good time was had by all and who knew we had such good square dancers in our midst? Next the Pine Brook Home Tour was held the weekend of September 9 and 10 and was a great success. Nearly \$5000 was raised to help close the gap for the final bill of the Firehouse remodel. And finally, the Pine Brook Chipping Project got underway the week of September 11. The participation by more Pine Brook residents than ever before demonstrates the support for good fire mitigation practices in Pine Brook. By the way, please thank our local Fire Department volunteers when you see them for the tremendous effort they extended recently for the Left Hand Canyon and Walker Ranch fires.



Our next Homeowners quarterly meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 25 and will feature our own Bob deHaas and the PBH Water District. This will be a very timely meeting in view of the recent drought and will give Pine Brook residents an opportunity to learn all about our water system. Have you ever wondered where our water comes from and what are all the steps our water goes through as it progresses from our water shed and wells to finally emerge from our faucets? This program will be the chance you've been waiting for! In addition to a video showing the latest technology, there will be a question and answer session enabling you to get all your questions answered. So please come October 25, get an update on Pine Brook events, meet your neighbors and learn about a very important and critical resource for Pine Brook Hills. Also, on your way down the hill don't forget to check out the new Pine Brook Community Center and Firehouse sign recently installed at the entrance to our new Firehouse.

Have a good Autumn,
AI

P.S. Copies of that delightful video REMEMBRANCE OF PINE BROOK PAST will be available at the October meeting for \$15.



STILL TIME TO BECOME A MEMBER

By HOA Treasurer AI Whitfield

A positive response to outgoing Treasurer Jack Walker's recent letter to those who had not previously sent in this year's dues brought our paid membership to 75%. Those who still wish to join their neighbors in supporting the many community activities of the Association, please send your check for \$50 to Pine Brook Hills HOA, c/o AI Whitfield, 137 Alpine Way, Boulder Co 80304.

Our thanks to all who have paid their dues for 2000.



"CHIPS AWAY" UPDATE

By Larry Tamura

As planned, our contractor began the chipping of slash early in the morning of September 11. After spending many days of cutting and stacking slash, many Pine Brookers have found waking up to the sound of chipping to be nearly as beautiful as waking

up to the sound of music.

Due to the tremendous response from over 100 homeowners, there were many large and small stacks of neatly piled slash along our Pine Brook roads. In a few cases, where the diameter or hardness of the wood was too difficult to chip, the material was set aside for you to dispose of in another manner. The chipping process takes several weeks as the contractor works his way down the hill and we appreciate your patience in this endeavor. We commend you all for your commitment to fire mitigation in our community.



PINE BROOK HILLS HOME TOUR 2000

By Deborah Springer and Suzanne Adams

We scouted the hills for interesting houses, wrote letters and made phone call requests and were thrilled when the gracious homeowners cheerfully agreed to allow their homes to be open for the Pine Brook Hills Home Tour 2000.

Then on the phone again to find just the right persons to be team leaders for each of the five houses. It wasn't hard when we explained that the proceeds would benefit our Firehouse. Each team leader found volunteers to be hosts and hostesses. All these folks plus the cochairmen and Bob Olliver, our wonderful computer wizard who did layout for the brochure and the tickets, totaled 89 workers to make the event happen.

Next, a brochure needed to be created and mailed, newspapers to be notified, signs to be painted, and then fingers crossed for favorable weather.

Yippee! September 9 and 10 couldn't have been more beautiful! The homes were fascinating to see and the whole tour was a great success in every way. We were able to reduce the HOA firehouse debt by \$5000!

A sincere and joyful thanks to all who participated by doing the various tasks and by attending. Special heartfelt thanks to the kind homeowners* who made it all possible. An occasion such as this helps bring our mountain community closer together.

*Kind Homeowners 2000: **Dush and Kay Ramachandran, Robert and Giesela Eitzinger, Fred Osmon and Marilyn Raye-Osmon, Ken Goldman and Jodie Nagel, and Robert Quinn and Joyce Colson.**

CHIEF'S REPORT

By Don Whittemore, Chief,
Boulder Mountain Fire Authority

The volunteer firefighters, medics, board members and support staff save you every day. We may not have been to your house recently, or perhaps not ever, and yet each day we are saving you. The "saving" I am talking about, however, is not what you might think. By being a volunteer department, we are saving you money. Please consider the following year-to-date statistics:

Volunteer training: Over 2,500 hours

Number of Incidents: 94

Total volunteer time on incidents: Over 2, 200 hours

Volunteer time at meetings: Over 750 hours

If these volunteers were paid \$20 per hour (an average rate for firefighters—including benefits) that would equate to \$109,000 per year. In addition to simply volunteering hours, the members of the Boulder Mountain Fire Authority do not receive reimbursement for their mileage to and from calls and trainings; have to buy some of their own personal protective equipment; often pay for additional training and special programs; and use their own computers, copiers and supplies for department-related work. Many have to work nights, weekends and overtime at their regular jobs to compensate for the workday time they take off to respond to emergencies.

The impact of volunteerism, however, is much greater. If a full-time paid department supported our community rather than volunteers, it would require three people, 24 hours per day, 365 days a week at two stations. The cost of such coverage would be approximately \$1.2 million, which translates to an annual increase of 60 mills on your property taxes. That would mean a tax increase of \$1,500 for the average household. Naturally, there would be numerous additional indirect costs of having a full-time paid department, including additional station space for the firefighters and medics to sleep, training costs, clothing and personal equipment. The list could go on.

We also just completed our audit by the Insurance Services Organization (ISO) that will influence your insurance rates in the coming years. Although it will be several months to a year before we hear how we fared, I can say that everyone in the department worked

extremely hard to help maintain and/or lower your insurance rating. Again, it could mean considerable savings especially to those who live in the portions of the district without fire hydrants.

So, perhaps we haven't been to your house or helped you along the roadside, but we have been working hard to save you. We are constantly striving to improve our skills, equipment and abilities to ensure that when we do need to come to your house we have what is necessary to get the job done.

**WELCOME TO NEWCOMERS!**

APRIL GATESMAN and JASON HAISLMAIER, both attorneys, live at 203 Pine Tree Lane. "We recently moved to Pine Brook Hills from Pittsburgh, PA, with our chocolate lab Steinbeck. We are enjoying the process of becoming part of the PBH and Boulder communities."

SHAWN F. ROBERTS, 18 Beaver Way, is that rare breed, a third generation Boulder native. After stints in La Jolla and NYC, he is "back to stay." He's an internet software consultant and CU grad (twice, in fact, with two different degrees). His family includes Keegan, 9 (a golden retriever), and Tigger, 2 (a Maine Coone Cat). He is a birdwatcher, pilot, tinkerer, runner/biker and outdoorsman.

ELIZABETH and DAVID KOREVAAR, 415 S. Cedar Brook Rd., with children Alice (9) and Willem (3), arrived here from Norwalk, Connecticut. David, a concert pianist, is an assistant professor of music at C.U. After 9 years on Wall Street, Elizabeth is in the process of setting up her own hedge fund. She says, "We're just thrilled to be here. We love how beautiful it is. People should stop by! We're home a lot."

Newcomers are encouraged to call Sally Powell-Ashby (440-0507) or Shoni Kahn (786-8919) for answers to questions about life in Pine Brook Hills. Be sure to get a Pine Brook Hills phone book, with its many tips on mountain living.



A HAIKU-TYPE POEM BY A PINE BROOK POET
Pine Brook Hills.

Dawn.

The dogs begin to bark.

REMEMBERING FRANK SCHULLER

By Mel Beauprez

Frank Schuller, a resident of Pine Brook Hills since the mid 80's and a member of the Pine Brook Hills Water Board for the past seven years, died in late July of this year. Frank's contributions to the Board were numerous. His background as a warehouse manager/engineer for Nobel-Sysco provided us with a member rich with experience in managing people and an expertise with equipment.

Neighbors remember Frank as the person with the mule named "Raggs" and the teepee on his lot. Hunting was a favorite pastime for Frank. He loved the preparation and camaraderie, as well as participation and being out of doors. If he did have a successful hunt, he was always willing to trade an elk steak for a home made apple pie.

Family members remember him as a caring father who was always tinkering with mechanical projects including overhauling a motorcycle engine on the dining room table. In addition to being caring, Frank could also be a stubborn individualist who wanted to take care of himself while battling complications associated with diabetes and liver disease right up to the day of his untimely death.

Our community will miss this neighbor and volunteer.



WHAT ARE YOU READING?

Compiled by Deborah Springer

EYEWITNESS TO POWER, by David Gergen
Reviewed by Anne Stanaway

David Gergen's new book, *Eyewitness to Power*, gives a behind-the-scene view of four presidents for whom he

worked: Nixon, Ford, Reagan and Clinton. As a thirty year old, Gergen became chief of Nixon's speechwriting team and was witness to Nixon's triumphs as a global strategist as well as the self-destruction of his presidency during Watergate. Ford, Gergen says, was the country's most underrated president and stumbled badly not because he pardoned Nixon but because of his timing and method of doing so. Even though he worked against Reagan in two campaigns, Gergen was hired as Reagan's first director of communications and came to believe that Reagan taught him more about leadership than anyone, not because of his intelligence but because of his temperament and ability to communicate his broad views. Gergen, a Republican for twenty years, was surprised when Clinton asked him to serve as a counselor after his chaotic first term transition. Gergen calls Clinton "one of the smartest men ever elected president" but a mass of contradictions. Clinton's policies, he said, helped to fuel the longest boom in the history of the country. Clinton, Gergen said, will forever remain a paradox. He was self-destructive but "left the country better than he found it." His book, concluding with "Seven Lessons of Leadership," could be helpful in a number of situations but especially for those trying to decide which candidate to support in this election year.



PINE BROOK HILLS WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB

By Eileen McKenna

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 28 (that's the 1st Tuesday after Thanksgiving). We will be discussing "Angle of Repose" by Wallace Stegner.

Book club meetings are scheduled for the 4th Tuesday every other month at the Community Center. However, many members have conflicting commitments, so bring your calendars to the November meeting. We will try to arrange our January meeting around your previous commitments.

The book selected for January is "Stella in Heaven" by Art Buchwald (\$23.95). I called a couple of bookstores to see if we could get a book club discount. Barnes & Noble told me I would have to order 30 copies. When I asked the Boulder Book Store how many copies we needed to order to get a book club

discount of 10%, they said, "More than one." I am moved therefore to designate the Boulder Book Store on the Pearl Street Mall as our official supplier. You will find the book in the book club section downstairs. In addition, the Boulder Public Library has two copies of "Angle of Repose" on the shelves, and one copy of "Stella in Heaven" in each of the 3 branches. You may want to get on the list to reserve "Stella in Heaven" as they are in demand.



A MESSAGE FROM THE ARC

By Rosie Hauge

The purpose of the Pine Brook Hills Architectural Review Committee is to review and approve plans for any changes that might affect the visual impact of a property in Pine Brook Hills and to ensure that plans submitted conform to all covenants. This is not an easy charge. As members, we often have to walk a very thin line. On one hand we need to respect the rights and desires of individual property owners; on the other, we have the responsibility of protecting the character of Pine Brook as a rural mountain community that is in harmony with our natural surroundings. We are concerned with neighbors' feelings about adjacent remodeling or new building. At the same time, we are aware that any change to the topography we are used to can be jarring. A new home going up in a meadow where the deer used to graze can feel like a real loss. Yet property owners have the right to build, as long as their plans conform to county regulations and the PBH covenants.

Pine Brook is beautiful, peaceful, blessed with abundant wildlife, gorgeous vistas, woods and massive rock outcroppings. Yet PBH is not immune to the intense and sometimes rampant growth that is going on in Boulder County. The ARC works hard to protect our little community from becoming just another fancy bedroom suburb perched on a few hills. Some critics ask why we've allowed "those houses that look like they belong in L.A." to go up. Others claim we're too strict, that people ought to be able to build whatever they desire.

Our covenants (which are included in your PBH phone book) state that buildings should be stained or colored in neutral or earth tones in harmony with other structures in the subdivision (3.1d). Structures should be located in such a manner as to be in har-

mony with the natural terrain and character of the neighborhood (3.1.f). The key word here is harmony, and that of course is subject to interpretation.

We carefully evaluate and make each decision in accordance with our covenants, whether it be a simple fence, a new paint color or a totally new structure. Our meetings, on the second Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Community Center, are open to the public, and we cordially invite you to attend.



PHILOSOPHY CLUB

By Eileen McKenna

"There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in your philosophy." Shakespeare

Who out there wants to talk about the thoughts and ideas lying dormant in the shadows of our consciousness? Or things not yet imagined?

Who wants to consider how various peoples, about whom we may know little or nothing, deal with things differently than we do as modern Americans?

Does anybody want to join Quentin and Eileen McKenna at 7:00 p.m. on the first Tuesday every other month at the Community Center to engage in these philosophic endeavors? We would like to get together to watch a video chosen by one of our group having to do with the great questions we face today. For example, we have taped Bill Moyers' recent PBS presentation, "On Our Own Terms," which deals with end-of-life issues. After viewing the tape as a group, and while sipping a glass of wine, we would like to be able to have a free-form conversation dealing with the topic. Please call Eileen or Quentin at (303) 415-1111 if you are interested. This group could begin as early as December 5, 2000.



*My Spirit
Like a solitary leaf
Adrift on a stream
Seeks a place of joy*

*Breathing with life
I hear my heart's voice
Longing
Burning*

Eve Berg, "Reflections of the Heart"

EDITORIAL

Being a modest neighborhood quarterly, The Pine Brook Press has not often (in fact, has not ever) presumed to instruct its readers (if any) on how to vote. However, this November we will be asked to decide on an issue that if passed may have profound effects on Pine Brook Hills. It is the proposed Amendment 21 to the Colorado State Constitution. This amendment, also known as Tax Cut 2000, requires a \$25 cut from each 2001 and later tax on vehicles, utilities, income and property. The cuts would increase by an additional \$25 each year (to \$50, to \$75...) until the tax in question is eliminated.

Special districts, such as our PBH fire district, draw their funding from these taxes. Being a small district with a limited tax base, a loss in funding would lead to an inability to operate effectively, if indeed at all. An analysis of the issue by the University of Colorado at Denver Graduate School of Public Affairs predicts that in the first year of operation the cuts would eliminate 116 special districts, and within a decade eliminate most of the remainder.

For us, with fire the major hazard we face daily, underfunding our fire protection district could lead to fire insurance that would either cost much more or even become unavailable. Insurance companies are not legally required to insure properties where the chance of loss is too great.

True, the amendment calls for "state replacement of local revenue," but there is no provision for a means by which the local tax losses would be made up. In fact, the state is precluded by the 1992 TABOR amendment from using surpluses to replace revenue lost by Tax Cut 2000. The proposed amendment also would prohibit a district like Pine Brook Hills from acting to save its local fire district. If passed, this amendment to the Colorado State Constitution would be statewide and difficult to change.

Our Fire Protection District needs more funding, not less. Vote NO on Amendment 21.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

SOCIAL CHAIR- Arranges for potluck-socials before the quarterly HOA meetings.

ROAD SAFETY CHAIR- Serves as liaison between PBH and the County in regard to road safety issues. For further information and to volunteer, please call Al Gerrish as (303) 443-7361.

SHOULD WE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE PROPOSED MILL LEVY INCREASE?

By Anne Singh

SHALL THE PINE BROOK HILLS FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT TAXES BE INCREASED BY 1.5 MILLS ANNUALLY AS A GENERAL OPERATING MILL LEVY INCREASE FOR THE PURPOSE OF GENERAL OPERATING EXPENSES AND THAT SUCH TAX BE IMPOSED IN ADDITION TO THE DISTRICT'S CURRENT GENERAL OPERATING MILL LEVY OF 3.689 MILLS AND SHALL THE REVENUE FROM SUCH TAXES AND INVESTMENT INCOME THEREON, CONSTITUTE VOTER APPROVED REVENUE CHANGES AND BE COLLECTED AND SPENT BY THE DISTRICT WITHOUT REGARD TO ANY SPENDING REVENUE RESTRICTIONS OR OTHER LIMITATION CONTAINED WITHIN ARTICLE X, SECTION 29-1-301 OR ANY OTHER LAW?

The statement above is the mill levy question as it will appear on the November 7th ballot. Its purpose is to benefit the Boulder Mountain Fire Authority (BMFA), which is comprised of the fire departments of Pine Brook Hills (PBH) and Boulder Heights (BH). Because the BMFA has no taxing authority, each community will be voting separately for or against a mill levy increase. The two entities joined forces in 1999 in order to provide greater and more effective fire, medical and emergency response in each community. The now larger base of volunteers and equipment has effected a reduced response time and increased the chances of a good outcome. An additional benefit has been the increased number of non-emergency volunteers, who provide support for the firefighters.

The larger combined fire authority has already answered more calls than in previous years and now has a need for more money just to maintain operating services as they are today. This year, in both districts, actual fire-related operating expenditures will exceed the annual tax revenues (\$211,000 for 2000). Currently the BMFA is spending money out of the capital fund. The mill levies, if passed, will raise an additional \$71,000 annually from the two districts. Each household in Pine Brook Hills would pay an additional \$15.00 per \$100,000 of the assessed value of the home. The increase in Boulder Heights would be \$20.00 per \$100,000 of assessed home value.

I spoke with Bob deHaas, the President of the PBH Fire Protection District Board of Directors, who, with all the PBH board members and their BH counterparts, serve as directors of the BMFA. He stated that the last time he knew of any increase in PBH revenues was in 1980 or 82 in a bond election which was held primarily for the purchase of trucks and equipment. In 1997 a mill levy election for capital projects was held to replace the 1980(82) mill levy.

It passed but did not increase the real estate tax levels for PBH residents. Since the inception of the combined fire district there have been no further increases.

The primary source of revenues for fire and medical services in both communities comes from that part of our property tax bill funded by the fire districts' mill levies. This money provides both for the operating budget and the capital fund. The capital fund is used for major purchases; this past summer it paid for a rescue truck stationed in PBH. New funds would be used to pay for a tanker truck to be based in BH.

So why should PBH residents vote in favor of this levy? BH does need a new tanker truck (they have no fire hydrants; most of PBH does). However, major equipment periodically must be replaced in both fire districts, and the BMFA is a joint enterprise in every way. Funds raised by the levy will have many additional uses, such as to combat increasing expenses and to pay the salary of our first full-time fire chief. We also need to keep our fire protection ISO rating low, to keep home insurance costs reasonable. The BMFA would like to begin an active fire mitigation program. As Bob deHaas said, "It is less damaging and less expensive not to have a fire in the first place." Money is also needed for improving 911 call response times, for recruiting, training and equipment (all fire-fighting clothing is supplied for each volunteer), for contingency planning and maintenance and deployment of equipment. If we vote No, it will become increasingly difficult to maintain even the status quo. Fire protection is vital to all of us; if we didn't have a volunteer fire department it would cost us far more – hundreds of thousands more.

At the present time we have a fine joint fire authority. We need to keep it that way. Therefore, surely it would behoove us here in PBH to support the upcoming mill levy on November 7th. We should think jointly, not divisively, about our combined fire authority whose volunteers come to our aid in times of greatest need.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor:

It has taken me many years to begin to "see" the Ponderosa Pine ecosystem in terms of what "healthy" might be. I have had many cruises with foresters, and they have taught me patiently. Also, looking at

pictures of the foothills at the turn of the century helped – when we lived primarily in grasslands, rather than in a gallery of trees.

But recently a conversation with Craig Jones, State Forester, took me by surprise. I had said to him, "Looking at the wooded forests of Pine Brook Hills as I drive through, I imagine that its health might require the taking out of one of every four trees." He responded, "More like three out of every four." That amazed me. It also alerted me to the complacency that we can have when these trees just grow up around us, and we awaken in a pyrophyte ("fire-plant," the name for highly flammable plants) jungle.

At the very least I hope you encourage people to take advantage of the chipping program for slash, and encourage them to go further, to cut a portion of their trees, so that the crowns between trees (or small clumps of trees) are separated by at least ten feet...or more. I have felled over 2000 trees at this point, and in most places you can't tell the difference, except for the improved health of those that remain.
David Tresemer

Dear Editor:

From an 11 year old's point of view, I think it would be a super idea to have a column by kids and about kids in Pine Brook Hills. I would LOVE to be one of them!!!! Do you have any ideas for me???

WOW!! I just thought of a perfect experience that I went through not long ago. See, my family is moving, and while we were up at the new house, a huge male deer with big horns was about 1 foot away from me and it was really scary!! So, me and my friend got our water guns and sprayed him to make him go away. And to our surprise, he loved it and just stood there for a moment and then left. THEN, he came back for another squirt!!!!

Brooke Kimball

Dear Editor:

Recently we have used the services of a computer consultant. He is a student at CU studying computer science. We were very pleased with his service. We think that he would be useful for those of us who are beginner voyagers in cyberspace. Contact Alexander Vogenthaler. Phone (303) 444-0114. Fax (303) 444-1966. e-mail: vogentha@colorado.edu
Cecile Duray Bito

Dear Editor:

Give Firefighters a brake!

We recently had a call on South Cedar Brook for a cut natural gas line. The Fire Department had to halt traffic until the flow of gas had been stopped. One motorist was quite irate at having to wait until all was clear before being allowed to proceed into town. The individual flippantly remarked, "What could happen? All of us blow up?" Well, the answer is, "Yes."

The repairmen from Public Service relayed a story that happened earlier this year in the Denver area when a driver of a vehicle drove through a cloud of natural gas. The car quickly became fully engulfed by fire and the driver was killed. The details, as you might imagine, are much too graphic to print.

The Fire Department does not stop traffic for fun or to simply inconvenience you. We do so for your safety or for the safety of the firefighters and medics working a scene. We are indeed aware that it may be inconveniencing folks and do whatever we can to open the road to traffic as soon as possible. In the meantime, please try to be patient while we do our work. If there is someone we can call for you to let them know you might be late, please ask; we'd be happy to accommodate you in any way we can.

Thanks for your understanding.

Don Whittemore

Chief, Boulder Mountain Fire Authority

Dear Editor,

From my desk near the top of Pine Brook Hills, I can clearly see the scars from three major wildfires: Left Hand, Old Stage and Black Tiger, each over 1,000 acres burned with houses lost. I can also point out the scenes of a dozen other fires in the area which aren't quite so obvious to those who weren't there. 2000 will likely be recorded as the worst fire season in history in the western U.S., and it has paid those of us in Pine Brook several very close visits this year: Fountain Tree, Brook Road, Mountain Ridge, Left Hand and Walker Ranch. Crews and engines from the Boulder Mountain Fire Authority (BMFA, your local volunteer fire department) worked hundreds of hours on each one of these fires. We have been lucky this year: no serious injuries and only one home lost.

Training and preparedness certainly helped us avoid catastrophe this year, and the formation of BMFA two years ago has made dramatic improvements in our readiness to deal quickly and effectively

with wildfire. But that's not enough! In wildland fire training, we talk about Fuels, Weather and Topography as the major factors affecting fire behavior. While there's not much we can do about the latter two (other than move), Fuels are solidly within our control. Decades of rapid and successful fire suppression have left the forests in and around Pine Brook with never-before-seen levels of fuel. Fires burn so hot and fast that firefighters can no longer directly attack the fire; all we can do is wait till the fire reaches an area of lower fuel density.

Up until now, the Fire Department has played a relatively passive role in fire mitigation, providing homeowner education and urging residents to mitigate their own properties. While some progress has been made, it is very uneven and not nearly enough. This November, Pine Brook voters will be asked to vote on a fire district tax increase of 1.5 mills (less than \$80 for the average household). The increased funding is vital to expand the Fire Department's mission to include fire mitigation, and will allow us to create strategically placed areas of lower fuel density where we can stop fires before they endanger people and homes. Help us help YOU – Vote in favor of Ballot Issue 5A!

Greg Anderson

BMFA Special Projects Officer, PBH Fire Chief 1997-99



NEIGHBORHOOD BENCH AND SON OF BENCH

Tim and Penny Triggs donated the original bench, and neighbors on Alder Lane and Alpine Way constructed the second (on right). The benches sit at the juncture of Alder Lane and Alpine Way and invite all passersby to stop and rest, read their mail, chat with friends, or simply contemplate the joys of living in Pine Brook Hills.

Son of Bench was built with weathered wood from the horse barn seen in background, soon to be torn down. Silvered, rough-sawn planks are free for the carrying away. Call 449-0997 first.

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RIDE 'EM, JANA!

By Suzanne Adams

The cows come running and hopping into the arena. Quietly, so as not to excite the herd further, Jana Greenfield rides in on her seven year old Arabian, AM Dream Town. As many as 45 cows stare balefully at her. She sizes up the herd, looking for cows that are fast and energetic. She'd also like one with two good eyes; a cow blind in one eye can run right into her. It's happened. She picks a cow, communicates the choice to the horse (nonverbally, as no speaking is allowed in the cutting ring), and drops the reins, surrendering control to the horse. The horse gets the message and begins the work. Racing back and forth, pivoting on hind legs, he separates the chosen cow from the herd. They have only 2 ½ minutes to "work" two cows. The first cow stops and turns away, and Jana plunges back into the herd to separate another one. Her skill and the horse's performance brought her two first place ribbons last month in Houston. Pretty impressive! But then, she probably grew up doing that sort of thing, right?

Wrong.

As a child growing up in Houston, Jana attended rodeos and livestock shows with her family, none of whom rode horses. But although the shows were exciting, she had a secret fear. A profound fear of horses.

Oh, great.

Not exactly what you would expect from a person who has captured she-doesn't-know-how-many-ribbons in competitions with longtime riders, professionals as well as serious amateurs.

Two years ago, at age 45, Jana decided to confront her fear of horses head on. She arranged for a lesson with Gary Martinez in Longmont. Panic! "I was terribly afraid. I was afraid the horse would attack me. It never occurred to me that I'd be close enough to get on one." Gary persuaded her to come back and try again. And again. Until she felt, "I don't just want to watch this, I want to do it!" Before long she had acquired her first horse, Reno, a former breeding stallion, gelded now, calm and quiet. "It was like having a huge doll to groom and play with."

How does one decide when and whether to geld a horse, I wondered? "It's kind of like husbands," she laughed. "Geld them all! They're so much better behaved!"

I mused on that while she told me about wanting to move beyond pleasure riding, wanting to do something WITH it. And that something was Cutting, an equine sport that developed from ranch work, sorting cattle in the open, "cutting" them from the herd for various reasons. The job became a skill, and the skill became a competitive event that some have likened to an art form. In 1945 the National Cutting Horse Association was formed. Now there are multiple competitions in ten months of the year, attracting international attention and offering combined prizes of over \$20,000,000.

Riding into a pack of 500-pound animals on the back of a 900-pound animal who is calling his own shots sounds rather daunting. How do you train for an event like that? The first problem, after acquiring a horse, is to get some cows to practice with. But not just any old cows. These are special cows. Jana started with four baby Holsteins who had been bottled by her trainer's mother. They were very calm cows. In fact, "They just stood there." Gaining confidence, she bought more cows and now has about three dozen. Each year a cow is slaughtered and the meat given to whomever needs it; last year it was Boulder Rural Fire Department. Jana showed me the cows currently used for practice. But they weren't cows. They were buffalo. It seems that cows "sour" on the dubious pleasures of being chased back and forth all the time and eventually won't play. Buffalo don't give up so easily.

The training for Cutting is extremely gentle, at least for the horse. Because the emphasis is on the horse and the "cutter" can give no audible or visual cues, the horse must become a willing, thinking athlete, a partner for the horseman, who is basically along for the ride. The horses are never struck, never even spoken to roughly. They are simply corrected quietly until they understand what is expected of them. No training session can end until the horse does something RIGHT, something worthy of praise. Children should be taught so lovingly.

If you are considering what to be in another incarnation, coming back as one of Jana's horses wouldn't be a bad choice. These horses have their own swimming pool for exercise and new shoes every six weeks. Two of their vets are equine chiropractors, in case

they need a little adjustment here or there. Their manes and tails are sprayed with Johnson's NO MORE TEARS to get out those pesky tangles painlessly. Personal hygiene is important. Grooming can take up to one hour, and bathing, two hours. Of course, these are pretty special horses. How many of us have "pedigrees" as extensive as they do? They can trace their ancestry back 17 generations, to the very beginning of the Arabian breed. Suffer, you DAR ladies. The horses train for one hour a day, are ridden six days a week and are given a chance to do "fun" things that vary from what they do in competitions. Clearly they like the life. When Jana appears, they run over to her for a nuzzle and a pat.

Cutting horses are not bred for their looks. They are bred for shorter legs, shorter body, and the ability to pivot on their back legs. 98% of cutting horses are quarter horses, a solid bodied breed that can be trained young, at about 18 months. Somewhat like Chinese gymnasts. But because they are so young for the rapid movements of cutting, there are many injuries. Jana's four horses are all Arabians. Noted for their intelligence, these horses do not begin their training until their legs are strong, at 3 1/2, and are not shown until age 5. Arabians last longer.

Before a show, Jana is packed a week early: shampoo and conditioners, cleansers, brushes and combs, antibiotics, boots—and that's just for the horse. "This horse has more stuff than I do!" Saddles, head stalls, bits, reins, breast collar, hoof picks, and seconds of all equipment in case something goes wrong. It's akin, Jana says, to a baby's diaper bag, but with 20 extra changes of clothes.

Jana is no horse show prima donna. She grooms the horses, she cleans the stalls, and she drives the trailer. She even does bovine impersonations. In the warm-ups at competition, it sometimes happens that a horse needs extra practice. "Horses will cut anything that moves; they'll cut people. Sometimes in a warm-up I have to play cow."

Her first show was in Scottsdale in 1999. It was a large show with over 5000 horses. Although she was a complete novice to competition and was riding against longtime competitors, she placed 1st, 2nd and 3rd in the three events she entered. In February 2000 she competed successfully against some of the top riders in the world. And this month, in Louisville, she'll be competing in the Nationals. It's too bad Jana wasn't afraid of airplanes! She'd probably have become a great fighter pilot.

Was Jana's fear of horses irrational? I asked her trainer, Will Speight, if he had ever been hurt by a horse. "Lots. I broke a leg, I broke the rib off the spine, and went riding the next day. I had a fractured pelvis; that one took me 15 minutes to get back on the horse. Only time I didn't get right back to riding was when I broke an ankle. I couldn't get my boot on."

Has Jana ever been hurt? "I whine. I've had legs crushed, but nothing broken. I've been kicked by



cattle." She still has some fear: "Roping. You can lose fingers. You're talking about 500-600 pounds going that way and a 1000 pound horse going this way. So it's not one of my favorite things to do." So why do it? "When we vaccinate, we use roping technique and bulldogging technique (grabbing the steer by the horns and throwing it down). It's dangerous. I always dread vaccinating time because you can get caught up in the rope. Once you rope the calf, if your horse isn't alert the calf can run behind the horse and now you have this rope that's twisting around and it can flip a horse. One of the top ropers in the world got killed that way last year."

Cutting is not the only event Jana competes in. Western Pleasure and Halter are two other events requiring different skills from the horses as well as the riders. But for Jana, Cutting is the most exciting, the most fun, and requires the closest cooperation between horse and rider.

So she's groomed the horses. She's cleaned the stalls. She's put in the hours training herself and her horses. She's overcome a debilitating fear and developed impressive and award-winning skills. Now it's on to Nationals in Louisville. Go Jana! Yippee yi yeay!

AT THE SQUARE DANCE



Photo by Anne Singh

"I'M NOT REALLY A COWBOY,"
HE TOLD HER,
"I'M AN INDIAN."

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