



Pine Brook Press

A Quarterly Journal for, about and by
Pine Brook Hills Residents

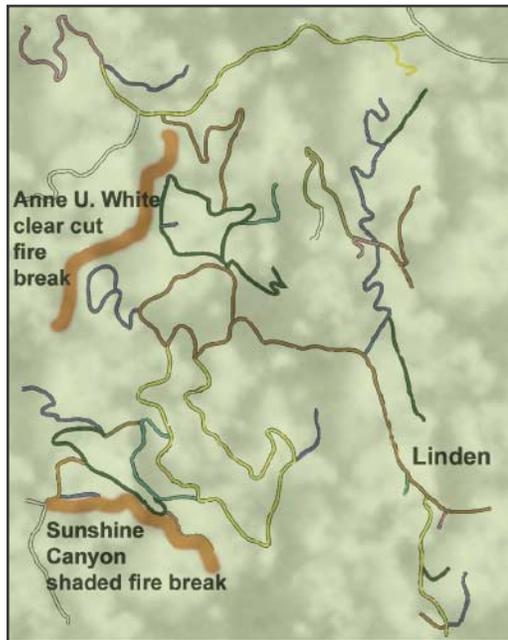
AUTUMN 2003



...AND THE VOICE OF THE CHAINSAW IS HEARD IN OUR LAND...

By Suzanne Adams

If 2002 was The Year of Fires, 2003 was The Year of Doing Something About It. Fire mitigation projects large and small have been underway in Pine Brook Hills throughout the summer and fall. Largest of the projects is the "Sunshine Fuel Break," a one mile long, 150 to 200 foot wide fuel reduction project above Sunshine Canyon and below Alder, Alpine, Bristlecone and Hawk Lane.



Map showing the location of the two fire breaks that will protect our community from wildfires starting outside PBH.

The project is funded by a \$15,000 Colorado Forest Service Grant matched by voluntary HOA dues. This is the second significant grant to be won by the Pine Brook Hills Homeowners Association. The first, in 2002, was used for the fuel break above the Anne U. White Trail on the north side of Pine Brook. This year a different kind of break will decrease the fire danger on the south side of our community. A committee headed by Al Whitfield studied the effectiveness of various kinds of fuel breaks, given the terrain, vegetation, fuel load, etc., which differ on the north and south sides of Pine Brook. After consulting with a number of experts and study-

ing research papers on fire behavior, the committee decided on a "Firewise" plan advocated by the US Forest Service Fire Research Lab. Neighbors whose land would be affected were consulted and all agreed to the plan. Instead of a clear cut with "lop and lay," the Sunshine Fuel Break will follow undulating lines, thinning the forest while taking into account natural openings like rock outcroppings and meadows, with special attention to the gullies, or "chimneys," where a fire is likely to advance swiftly. Trees and slash will be removed.

Allen Owen, our district forester, is delighted with the plan. "What Pine Brook Hills is doing is a great thing," he said. "The placement of the fuel break thinning is strategic, on the ridge top and anchored to the roads. It's a good project because fire probability is greater on a south-facing slope, especially with the heavy use of the Mt. Sanitas Trail. We'll really affect fire behavior



The BMFA mitigation crew: Melissa Friess, Devin Yedo, David Frey, Mike Bowen and Coordinator John Pellouchoud.

here.”

Owen was impressed by what Pine Brookers in the area have already done to reduce fire danger. “The job couldn’t be done for the money without the mitigation already done by individual homeowners,” Owen said.



Anyone want some wood? Organic, cheap, locally grown, inexhaustible supply. Miles Chow is King of the Woodpile.

The aim of this project is not to provide “defensible space,” the 15 to 30 foot area around homes that allows firefighters space to defend the house from fire. That area is left to individual homeowners to mitigate. Rather, the Sunshine Fuel Break is designed to protect the community. Firefighters can easily reach the break with hoses attached to hydrants.

SMALLER PROJECTS ALSO HELP THE COMMUNITY

Individual families have been actively implementing fire mitigation around their homes. So far this year 73 Pine Brook families have called on BMFA Mitigation Coordinator John Pellouchoud to provide mitigation advice, tree felling and/or slash chipping. Pellouchoud is very proud of his crew. “Tell these guys thanks,” he said recently, “Their job is hard and dangerous. If they drop a tree the wrong way, they’re dead. And the work is relentless. These guys haul 30 pound chainsaws up and down incredibly steep slopes, all day every day. These guys are my heroes.”

In addition to being experienced sawyers, the BMFA crew members are all also certified firefighters. This summer the crew provided fast, professional response to a car fire, a truck fire, a hazardous materials alarm and other emergencies, in addition to their mitigation work.

The mitigation projects often provide enough firewood for many winters. Too many winters, for some. Sheri Valentiner hired the BMFA mitigation crew to remove trees from a house on Alpine Way. Initially she thought that stacking the wood around the property would be OK, but, “Golly, there was enough for 80 people for three years!” After offering the wood to a man selling firewood (who didn’t want it), she hired teenagers with an old pickup to haul the wood away. The house now has a more open aspect and is far more defensible for the Fire Department. Aesthetics aside, she didn’t want to leave all the wood because, “After all, it is still fuel. You haven’t eliminated the problem.” Satisfied with the final effect, she said, “I hope everyone will do this. Pine Brook was a fire waiting to happen.”

Because the BMFA Mitigation Crew was heavily booked with work in Pine Brook, Boulder Heights and Carriage Hills, some families took mitigation into their own hands. Tim and Penny Triggs hired their son Jake and his friends to do extensive work on their six acres. Although members of the “motley crew” were not initially experienced lumberjacks, they learned fast and subsequently have mitigated the properties of several other neighbors. Read Penny Trigg’s account of what she did on her summer vacation (“One Family’s Sticky Tree Sap Tale”) on pp.18-19.

Coupled with the large scale fuel reduction projects on the north and south sides of PBH, the extensive work done by individual homeowners is beginning to create a noteworthy community protection zone in Pine Brook Hills. “If we could get more communities to do this,” said Cory Secher, Colorado State Forester, “it’d be a much safer world.”



Jake gets rid of slash any way he can.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Meetings are at the Community Center/Firehouse unless otherwise noted.

BOULDER COUNTY COMMISSIONERS VISIT!

Don't miss the HOA meeting on October 29, 7 P.M. (no potluck this time). New HOA Board will be elected.

BMFA Consolidation Information Meeting: November 5, 7 P.M.

HOA Board Meeting, November 18, 7 P.M.

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE - Meets the 2nd Tuesday of every month at 7:00 P.M.

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

FIRE BOARD - Meets the 2nd Monday of every other month at 7:00 P.M. at either the Community Center or Boulder Heights Firehouse. Call 440-0235 for specifics.

FIRE AUXILIARY - Generally meets the first Sunday of every month at 7 P.M. Call 449-6656 for confirmation.

FITBALL - Come join the Bouncers on Tuesday mornings, 9 - 10 A.M. Free, but you need your own ball. Please call 449-0997 for encouragement and further details.

WATER BOARD - Meets first or second Thursday of every month at 7:00 P.M. Call Water Office at 443-5394 for dates.

Any Questions?

By Jim Eyster

We all have a great opportunity on October 29 to get those burning questions answered. The County Commissioners and their staff will be the featured guests at our next HOA Meeting on October 29. It will be a "town meeting" format where you will have the opportunity to ask questions and/or get updates on County activities. The meeting will start at 7 P.M. but there will not be a potluck prior. Please come, meet the Commissioners and get your questions answered.



Prior to the "Commissioners' Town Meeting," we will have a short business meeting including the election of next year's officers. We have an excellent slate of officers for next year and I hope that you will give them your support. Please refer to the candidate article on p. 5.

There is a housekeeping matter that I need to bring to everyone's attention. As we all bask in this beautiful fall weather, we need to also be thinking about fall clean-up and winter. The Boulder Mountain Fire Authority (BMFA) started last year taking on the responsibility for

PINE BROOK HILLS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

PRESIDENT

Jim Eyster, 786-7586

VICE PRESIDENT

Pam Creswell, 720-406-9783

SECRETARY

Joyce Colson, 447-3192

TREASURER

Jim Woodruff, 442-6391

MEMBER-AT-LARGE

Al Whitfield, 546-6318

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

Ken Larkin, 440-8280

SOCIAL CHAIR

Karen Peperzak, 440-0691

ROAD SAFETY

John Landwehr, 443-2482

WILDLIFE OFFICER

Patrica Belanger, 786-8569

NEWCOMER WELCOME

Mary Barakat, 442-4526
Dianne Whitfield, 546-6318

FIRE CHIEF

John Benson, 440-0235

FIRE BOARD PRESIDENT

Allen Saville, 415-1221

FIRE/MEDICAL AUXILIARY

Vicki Schilling, 449-6656

WATER BOARD

Kirk Hendricks, Pres., 442-1308

WATER DISTRICT

Robert de Haas, Mgr., 443-5394

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chipping slash placed near the roadway. Fortunately, they had received grants to apply toward the chipping costs but this year BMFA was not as fortunate. Consequently, each individual homeowner is responsible for the removal of their slash. BMFA will chip the slash for a fee if you call them at 303-440-0235 or you can call a private company to remove the slash. The important thing is that we need to clear the road right-of-way before winter and the piles create a danger. Please do your part to keep all of us safe this winter and maintain our community pride.

This is my last President's Column in the Pine Brook Press since my tenure in office is expiring. Term limits restrict me to two years and that's a good thing. I've enjoyed serving as your HOA President and feel that as a community we have accomplished much. We made significant progress on mitigation and perimeter defense, we survived the Wonderland Fire, we welcomed many new families into our community and we had the opportunity to get to know one another better. Next year will bring new opportunities and challenges with a new HOA board that will need your support just as much or more. I want to personally thank you for your support these past two years.



FIRESIDE CHAT

By John Benson, Fire Chief

Well, hello once again! I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to those individuals who contacted the BMFA mitigation division for mitigation services. Whether for mitigation advice, cutting, site surveys or chipping, it shows that all of you are committed to helping BMFA and Pine Brook Hills become a safer place in which to reside.

As I drive around Pine Brook Hills I still see a number of slash piles sitting beside the road; this in itself is still a fire hazard. I strongly recommend that anyone with a slash pile beside the driveway call BMFA at 303-440-0235 and schedule our chipping services. I would like to see these piles removed before the snow flies. Not only will removing these piles reduce the fire hazard but will also eliminate blocked or plugged



culverts in the event of heavy rains or runoff. As another safety issue please have your grasses mowed down around your homes, as well as around any fire hydrants located on your property. This will eliminate the possibility of ladder fuels in the event of a wildfire and help make the hydrants more visible.

As I drive around the district I have noticed that some residences are without visible address identification. This is crucial in the event of a medical emergency. TIME IS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE! BMFA is committed to delivering high quality care in a timely manner. If you cannot see your address numbers then chances are we may also have trouble finding your location. When looking at your address, think about the following items:

- Make sure you have no obstructions around the numbers.
- Place the numbers in a location easily seen from the road.
- Place the numbers high enough to prevent coverage by snow removal from the street.
- Make sure the numbers are of county standards and have contrasting colors for quick recognition.

As all of you know cooler weather is coming on whether we like it or not. It's time to stoke up the furnaces and fireplaces. Below are just a few tips to help you avoid winter season problems:

- Have your fireplace cleaned to reduce possible chimney fires.
- Make sure the flue is clear of any nesting birds or obstructions.
- Change furnace filters and remove flammables from around the furnace and hot water heater area.
- Make sure the furnace is properly ventilated.
- If in doubt, contact a professional service contractor to help you out with this.
- If you do not have a carbon monoxide detector, now is the time to purchase one. Carbon monoxide can be a silent killer. You cannot smell it, taste it, or hear it.

CHECK YOUR SMOKE DETECTORS REGULARLY.

If you have any questions concerning the above information please feel free to contact any BMFA personnel. They will be happy to talk with you. Please help BMFA help you. Until next time, thanks for the continued community support and enjoy the fall season.

ON THE WATERFRONT

By Bob DeHaas

Here's the news from the Water District:

RESERVOIR VOTE POSTPONED: The Pine Brook Water Board has decided to delay the vote on the reservoir until May, 2004. The purpose of the delay is to allow completion of all of the studies that are currently in progress, and to allow the community to have an opportunity to examine the studies before the vote. From the Water District's perspective, the primary reason for the reservoir is to use the full scope of our water rights when they are available to provide a safe, reliable source of water for normal domestic use and fire fighting during the entire year. Building the reservoir will not mean unlimited water supply, and during drought reasonable restrictions may still be necessary.

STUDIES IN PROGRESS: Some of these reports are completed and we have received preliminary findings on the others that we are glad to share:

1. Geological Study. The final report shows that the bedrock below the proposed reservoir is more than sufficient to support the reservoir and that there will be little to no seepage losses.
2. Hydrological Study. This study is complete and, with legal opinion on our water rights, will aid the Board in determining the correct sizing of the proposed reservoir.
3. Endangered Species Study. There are no Prebles Jumping Meadow Mice (an endangered species) in the area. Further studies are underway.
4. General Environmental Study including an updated review of potential alternative solutions.
5. Mosquito & West Nile Virus Study.
6. Study of our Well Production. A review of our wells has been completed. That study found that the wells are very subject to drought and that during drought their production will be greatly diminished, which is exactly what happened during the drought of 2002 and also during earlier droughts. To quote ERO Resources Corporation, "They (the wells) are not a reliable source of water for a community during periods of decreased precipitation." Another part of the report states, "If the drought of 2002 had continued through the spring and summer of 2003, the decreasing ground water production from the bedrock aquifers would have been insufficient to meet the District's needs, even at restricted rates of consumption per

household and partial build-out." At the time of this report 86.6% of the building lots were already built.

The studies should be completed before the end of the year. Once completed, the water district will send out a summary statement. The complete studies will be available for anyone's review in the District Office.

HOA ELECTIONS ON OCTOBER 29

At the upcoming HOA meeting members will elect a Board of Directors for the next year. A nominating committee headed by Ken Larkin offers the following slate of candidates:

President: Pam Creswell

PBH resident: four years
 PBH activities: Vice President, PBH HOA, one year



Vice President: Tim Triggs

PBH resident: 28 years
 PBH activities: active in Great Pine Beetle Battle of the 70's and 80's. Member, Architectural Review Committee, three years



Treasurer: Jim Woodruff

PBH resident: since 1989
 PBH activities: currently PBH HOA treasurer, served one year Member, Sunshine Fuel Break Committee



Secretary: Eleanor Patten

PBH resident: 13 years
 PBH activities: hostess for PBH Dine-Around



Member-At-Large: Al Gerrish

PBH resident: 15 years
 PBH activities: President, PBH HOA 2 years
 Member-at-large, one year



The Granite Garden

By Barbara Hosmer

I'm getting my favorite plants ready for the winter. It's nice to think that I still have favorite plants. Drought didn't kill them last year, and deer didn't browse them to death this year; however, I'm going to wage war on grasshoppers beginning this fall. There were just too many big hungry grasshoppers around my house this year that tried valiantly to consume some of my landscape plants. In addition, the slower grasshoppers were caught by the dog and brought inside the house (when I wasn't watching). It's not fun to step on a big dead grasshopper with your bare feet! I also dealt with grasshopper-guts smeared on the carpeting which required use of the carpet shampoo machine. Yep, grasshoppers are going to get the "treatment."

Beginning this fall, as I'm paying attention to the landscaping near the house, I have several things in mind: first, I'm going to make sure the mulch around the plants is not too packed down so that winter moisture can get down to the soil. While I'm doing that, I'm going to disturb the top couple of inches of soil while on the lookout for grasshopper egg pods or clusters, which contain up to 100 small cream-colored rice-shaped eggs. I'm also going to put up a few sun and wind protection barriers for my newest shrubs.

In the spring, young grasshopper populations can be reduced with any of several chemicals or chemical baits. Once they're fully developed with wings, they are much harder to control. Some of the natural treatments are based upon an organism, *Nosema locustae*, which disturbs their reproduction if they live that long. Some of these treatments are safe to use around pets, which is an important consideration for my grasshopper-catching dog. If anyone has had success with a non-toxic treatment for grasshoppers, please share your story! In the meantime, my winter research will be finding and buying my supplies for grasshopper control next spring.

My more immediate fall task is to prepare some of my plants to come indoors. This includes washing them with insecticidal soap and in some cases repotting with good quality potting soil. All plants coming inside get the soil treatment for fungus gnats, after my battle with them last winter! I'm also going to try a thin layer of sand on the top of the soil. Apparently,



the sand acts as a barrier for the gnat larvae. As the fungus gnats love moisture, all plants coming inside will be watered less frequently to allow the top inch or so of soil to be completely dry. The bugs hate it when I do this...or so they say.

Ideally, plants need to come inside the house to get used to lower light and humidity before you have the furnace on. And if you tend to allow doors and windows to be open without always using screens, it's probably a good idea to check the indoor plants for bugs too, and give them a preventative treatment. Perhaps with good plant "winterizing," we'll have healthier plants next year and no blasted bug infestations in the house this winter.



TIME FOR A NEW PBH PHONE DIRECTORY

If your Pine Brook Hills Phone Directory looks like ours, it's a shaggy thing indeed. And although we've told everyone **no more** of this moving away, it's happened. So now we need a new phone book to call our new neighbors, and we need EVERYONE to provide the critical information. You probably have already received a red form asking for names, phone numbers and (if you wish) email addresses.

PLEASE WRITE CLEARLY. And forgive us our errors. An uncomplaining neighbor named Claudius was mistakenly listed as Claudia for years. An entry which should have read "and Marcie" looked to your myopic editor like "Annemarie," leaving Marcie Goodwin to wonder, "Who is this Annemarie living at our address?" Be sure to be included, hopefully with your correct name, in the new Directory by returning your form by NOVEMBER 15:

1. By mail to Suzanne Adams at 25 Alpine Way, Boulder, 80304, or
2. By email to Editor via our website at pinebrookhills.org, or
3. By depositing your red form in the HOA drop box near the entrance of the Community Center/ Firehouse parking lot (NOT the mailbox on Linden).

RANCH FOR RENT

65 acre ranch down on the flatlands on the highway between Boulder and Lyons, for rent for the next 8 to 12 months or possibly longer. Lovely house with 4 BR and awesome views. Horses and dog and cat with caretaker. \$2,200/month. Call 303-442-7391 or 206-842-6767.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

MEGAN'S BICYCLE ACCIDENT

On January 20, 2003, our daughter Megan had a bicycle accident while on a casual bike ride with her brother. Witnesses say that she was startled by a truck that was cutting across the yellow lines at a corner on Linden. Because Megan was not wearing a helmet, she suffered a severe traumatic brain injury. Megan was rushed to Boulder Community Hospital and endured many surgeries, but because of the incredible care she was given, her recovery has been nothing short of a miracle. We would like to thank the first witness on the scene, who covered Megan and came to speak with us at the hospital that night (we have lost your name and number and would like to contact you). Our sincere thanks to the Pine Brook Hills Volunteer Fire Department and also to the person who drove to the bottom of the hill to call 911. Special thanks to our neighbor Dr. Pete Lillydahl, who kept us sane during Megan's first two surgeries, to Jane Lillydahl for her assistance at CU, to Meg Hendricks for her laughter, hospital visits and helmet fashion sense, to Marion Olson for her visits, to the neighbors who delivered food to our door, to the Traveses who provided transportation, and a very special thank you to our Pine Brook Hills neighbor, friend, and remarkable neurosurgeon who saved Megan's life: Dr. Allen Villavicencio.

Marilyn and Peter Henthorn



LINDY 500

Dear Neighbors,

There has been an increase in traffic in our neighborhood, and the speed and noise of the cars and motorcycles has increased significantly as well. There are certain streets where the traffic is like the Indy 500 (Linden, specifically). We have begun to call it the 'Lindy 500.' The issue of speeding and safety must be addressed in our community. We would like to suggest installing speed bumps on our main community roads to reduce the speed and noise of the motorists. They would also increase the safety for those who walk, run or bike on our roads. Speed bumps are effective and are working well in many Boulder communities. Would this be of interest to our community?

Thank you,

Eve and Walt Berg

RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE RESERVOIR

Concerns have been expressed about the maintenance and lifetime of such a dam because of siltation, seepage (especially at the bottom where the granite intrusion lifts the sandstone), and evaporation which in our climate is pretty strong all year round. In addition, the dam will be a perfect breeding place for mosquitoes.

Regards,
Harry VanLoon



MAIL THEFT

Someone stole my incoming bank statement from my mail box, "washed" the checks and has been passing them fraudulently. My bank called and told me to come in immediately and close my account, which I did, and I had to open a new account. With the closing of the account all outstanding checks, the fake checks and the legitimate ones I wrote were returned unpaid. The merchants who received the fake checks in payment for goods lost their payments, and the people to whom I owed money found that my payments were no good. With the bank's help, I have just completed determining which checks were returned (my on-line access to the account was terminated and seeing the account activity on line is now gone) and written replacement checks, now that my new account is open and the checks for it have arrived.

On another occasion my outgoing mail was stolen including checks I had written to pay bills. I received a call from a sheriff in a Denver suburb because a woman was arrested and my check was in her wallet. I had to close that account also.

What would need to be done to get locking mail boxes that would keep the size of my box as large as it currently is and would satisfy postal regulations? How about those of us who get mail at a bank of mailboxes going ahead and having locking boxes installed for ourselves and sharing the cost? Someone would have to take the lead to find out about postal regulations covering locking mail boxes, research the boxes to buy from a vendor, and contract to get them installed properly.

Please let me know what you think. We are currently at risk.

John Powers

PBH FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT ON RESERVOIR.....

The Pine Brook Hills Fire Protection District Board of Directors has been asked to express an opinion about the dam and reservoir in Pine Brook Hills from the perspective of fire protection and prevention. The Board offers no opinions on any other aspect of the reservoir project.

In regard to fire fighting, there are a number of advantages to building a dam and creating a reservoir:

1. The best way to fight fire is with water. The most important advantage of having a reservoir is that our water tanks will always be full. Full tanks mean that water will be immediately available to all of the hydrants throughout Pine Brook Hills. The Wonderland Lake Fire last summer was primarily fought with hoses connected to hydrants. A second fire might have exhausted our water resources, as the tanks were no longer full.
2. The plans for the reservoir include a pipeline from the bottom of the reservoir to a hydrant in the parking lot of the Fire Station, allowing firefighters to fill large tanker trucks quickly. Thus abundant water can be speedily delivered to supplement the hydrants and to serve areas lacking hydrants.
3. The reservoir would be available to helicopters, which can mount an aerial attack on areas inaccessible to vehicles and to neighboring districts without hydrants. A fire outside our district that is not stopped could end up here at home.
4. The dam and reservoir will create an effective fire-break. Because the proposed dam would cross a "chimney," a gully where fire is prone to advance, the placement of the reservoir would make it particularly useful in protecting the homes above it.
5. In the process of creating the dam and reservoir a number of trees will be removed, thus reducing the fuel load in Pine Brook Hills' overgrown forest.

Having a large supply of easily accessible water is clearly advantageous in fighting fire. 200,000 gallons of water were used in fighting the Wonderland Lake Fire. Had the fire occurred later in the season during the drought, or had it been a structure fire that spread to trees and threatened other homes, we might not have had adequate water to be effective. Strictly in terms of fire protection and prevention, building a reservoir would be a significantly positive development for the community. There seem to be no disadvantages from the perspective of fire protection

in Pine Brook Hills and the surrounding area.

Very truly yours,

The Pine Brook Hills Fire Protection District Board of Directors

Allen Saville, Chairman

Suzanne Adams

Greg Anderson

Eric Erickson

Kent Hansen



ABOUT LETTERS

Some distress has been voiced that letters sent to the Water District have not appeared in the Pine Brook Press. Hey, we're separate entities! We don't read their mail and they don't read ours! Anyone wanting to have a letter appear in the Pine Brook Press should write to the **Pine Brook Press**, by email to pinebrookpress@aol.com, on line at www.pinebrookhills.org, or by regular mail to Suzanne Adams at 25 Alpine Way or Anne Singh at 63 Alpine Way. The Press comes out four times a year: the deadlines for submissions are the 15th of December, March, June and September. We are delighted to print letters from readers, as it suggests that we have some.

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MOUNTAIN EXPRESSIONS

2003

An Exhibit and Sale of
Fine Art, Crafts & Home-baked Goodies
 Saturday, November 8, 10 am – 5 pm
 Sunday, November 9, noon – 4 pm
 PBH Community Center/ BMFA Fire Station 1

Come join in the 30th anniversary celebration of Mountain Expressions. Since 1974, your artist and crafter and baker neighbors have been preparing a special annual tradition – exhibiting and selling their unique and beautiful creations to raise funds in support of your dedicated volunteer firefighters. So, please mark the dates on your calendar, and don't miss it.

There will be handmade gifts, cards and decorations in all price ranges for all the late-in-the-year holidays. Or how about the perfect painting for your wall, stained glass for your window, weaving for your table or pottery for your shelf? Last, but not least, you could pick up a delicious baked goodie for dinner, freezing, or instant consumption.

Stop by to shop or just to celebrate 30 years. We'll offer you a complimentary cup of punch or hot cider. We are open rain, shine or snow and we welcome cash, checks or credit cards (Visa and MC).

Any questions? Are you a new PBH or BH artist we should know about? Contact Susan Maxwell
 (303)444-9851 SCMBonniesStudio@comcast.net

FIRE DISTRICT CONSOLIDATION

By Allen Saville, Chair,

Pine Brook Hills Fire Protection District

I know it is a long way off, but make a mental note that voting in the election in May 2004 is important. The Pine Brook Hills Fire Protection District will have an issue on that ballot that we believe to be of vital importance to our community. The Boards of Directors of both the Pine Brook Hills Fire Protection District and the Boulder Heights Fire Protection District unanimously and enthusiastically recommend that we consolidate the two fire protection districts into a single district named the **Boulder Mountain Fire Protection District (BMFPD)** and we need your vote to make that happen.

Since 1999 the two fire protection districts have been working together to provide fire protection, fire mitigation, and emergency response services as a single organization called the Boulder Mountain Fire Authority (BMFA). BMFA is not the same as a consolidated district, but has some of the same advantages and has proved to us the value of operating jointly as a single operation.

The basic idea behind BMFA is that through combining the staff, equipment, and financial resources of the two adjoining fire protection districts we could better address a number of immediate and potentially catastrophic problems and improve the quality of fire and emergency services on a continuing basis. With the cooperation and critical mass possible through BMFA we have proven that we can provide services superior to those that either one of the fire protection districts could alone. Through greater economies of scale BMFA has also been able to accomplish this with much greater efficiency – that is, accomplish much more with the same amount money.

Consolidation has even more advantages over and above the cooperation we have achieved through BMFA. It makes the cooperative venture between Boulder Heights and Pine Brook Hills more permanent, and it improves the level of cooperation. In addition, a lot of organizational and administrative duplication is eliminated. There are now three boards of directors, three sets of financial records, three sets of books, three budgets, three audits and all three boards have regularly scheduled meetings. Consolidation would mean that all of these would be combined into a single organization with one board, one set of financial records, one budget, one audit, etc. This would result

in a cost savings and a saving in terms of the time required of those who volunteer their time to serve on the board. There are many other advantages as well. Under the plan for the new consolidated organization, members of the board would still represent specific geographic areas. The interests of residents from Pine Brook Hills would continue to be specifically represented as well as those who live in Boulder Heights. We think that the interests of those live in the Carriage Hills, Bow Mountain and Wagon Wheel Gap areas will obtain better representation under the plan proposed for consolidation.

There are many more details that may interest you. **There will be additional opportunities to learn about these issues, ask questions, and to provide your input – the next being a public information meeting on November 5, at 7:00 PM at the Community Center.**

We urge you to take advantage of these opportunities. For now, here are a few important facts to keep in mind:

- **All** members of your Pine Brook Hills Fire Protection District board firmly believe that this is the best thing for Pine Brook Hills and we **all** enthusiastically support the proposed consolidation.
- **There is no tax increase.** Under the proposed consolidation plan, residents of Pine Brook Hills will pay the same mill levy for fire-related services that we pay now.
- Consolidating the two fire districts is future oriented. It puts us in a much more stable and strong position to continue to build on the successes we have achieved through BMFA, and improves our stature within our firefighting community.
- Additional information is available on both the Pine Brook Hills and BMFA websites.

If you have questions call any of your fire protection district board members – we will be glad to discuss the issues with you.

BUS DRIVER RETIRING

Gene Henderson, the middle and high school bus driver, is retiring in December. He has driven the route in PBH for 16 years. If anyone would like to write a note of thanks for his many years of service, there will be a card at the Community Center. It will be located at the table at the top of the stairs from November 15 to 22. The card will be given to him by the kids on the bus the last week of school in December. Info - Lynn Montgomery at (303) 443-6844

THREE BEAR STORIES

A SOBER BEAR STORY

Don't Attract Bears to your Neighborhood!

By Claire Solohub, District Wildlife Manager,
Boulder North

Bears have an incredible sense of smell, and they follow their noses – straight to areas with bird-feeders (including hummingbird feeders – a favorite!), pet food, trash left out overnight, trash that is improperly stored in garages, sheds or trailers, and greasy barbecue grills.

Bears soon learn to skip the hard work of finding berries, grubs and grasses and head straight to the nearest trash can to fill up on family leftovers. Needing to consume up to 20,000 calories per day during the fall when they are preparing for hibernation, the need to eat often overpowers their natural fear of humans. Bears have broken into vehicles, sheds, garages and even houses in their search for food. Most of this property damage can be prevented, however, by taking some simple precautions:

- Don't put up bear-accessible birdfeeders between the months of April and October;
- Don't keep trash inside a shed or cabin;
- Put trash out the morning of pick-up instead of the night before;
- Keep your yard and grill clean; keep pet food indoors;
- Use bear-resistant trash containers whenever possible;
- Don't feed ANY wildlife other than songbirds. Not only is feeding big game illegal, but it will also attract bears and mountain lions to your yard. Once you are notified by the Division of Wildlife that bears are in the area, you must take action to avoid conflict with bears, including the securing or removal of outdoor trash, grills, food, birdfeeders or any similar food source or attractant. After one official warning, failure to comply will result in a fine of \$100 for a first offense, \$500 for a second offense and \$1,000 for a third or subsequent offense.

Help keep bears wild and humans safe!

A FUNNY BEAR STORY

By Patrica Belanger

I had two bear encounters the first week of September.

On Wednesday morning, we put our trash out and both went off to work and when I came home late Wednesday, I noticed they hadn't picked it up because of the holiday and sooooo, I was very tired and didn't feel like dragging the trash back in the garage. So I get my locking, bear proof lids, put them on the garbage and go inside.

Around 9 PM, Judy Smith calls to tell me that she has just driven by my house and seen a bear cub's head sticking out of my garbage can.

I run down to the road and sure enough, my garbage is now all over the road and of course it was disgusting and I spent 20 minutes cleaning up the mess, knowing full well that somewhere in the bushes there was a bear cub, lying on his back, probably situated outside of the window of whoever had the game on TV that night, eating leftovers and feeling very proud of himself for outsmarting my bear proof lids.

On Thursday night, I'm on my way down Linden about 9:00 p.m. and I see these black shadows on the left-hand side of the road. So I stop and without even slowing down, this very big mamma bear and her two baby bears cross right in front of me. I'm not sure but I think that one of the baby bears was carrying a bag of groceries that looked very much like the ones that were in my garbage can, as well as an old copy of the Daily Camera which I had thrown out the night before. And, of course, they were headed in the direction of my house.

I've also noticed that my pond is losing a considerable amount of water every day and now I know why. After these bears fill themselves up with garbage from anyone stupid enough to put it out the night before (like me, with or without bear proof lids), I think they send out a flyer to all the other bears that says "BEAR BATH AT PATRICA'S POND----BYOG" (bring your own garbage), and naturally what they don't bathe with, they guzzle, along with the berries that are growing on the bushes beside the pond.

Read the preceding story about what Claire Solohub, District Wildlife Officer, Boulder North, has to say about living with bears. I'm sure a copy of this Pine Brook Press will end up in someone's garbage and maybe the bears will read it and think we're getting bear savvy in Pine Brook Hills and they will move up to Boulder Heights!!

A SAD BEAR STORY

From Cecile Duray-Bito

Cecile and Joe Duray-Bito live in a bit of Pine Brook paradise above Timber Lane. The area is visited frequently by all kinds of wildlife, including the bears that stop by to check out the bird feeders. One night recently the garage door was inadvertently left open with a new sack of birdseed inside.

It was the habit of their dog Leda to go outdoors for a few minutes at about ten at night. On the night in question she went out, stayed a bit longer than usual and barked to be let back in. She was collapsed at the foot of the stairs. But Leda was an old dog whose arthritis made her reluctant to climb stairs. "You're a lazy dog," Cecile thought as she went down the stairs to help. Then she saw the wound on a hind leg. She called a neighbor, who volunteered to help her get the heavy dog into the car for a trip to the vet. But a few minutes later he called back to say, "You know what? I'm not coming over. There's a bear in your garage, and she has a cub with her!"

The trip to the vet was postponed until the next morning. As it was a Sunday, the Duray-Bitos visited the emergency animal clinic at King Sooper on 30th Street, where they learned that the wounds were far more extensive than they had thought, and nothing but a gentle exit could be arranged for Leda.

Cecile is grateful for the sensitivity of the veterinarian on call. She doesn't blame the bear. "If I blame anyone, I blame myself." She sends this message: don't leave any food outside, keep garbage in, don't leave garage doors open. "It's not the bears' fault. That's their life. They have to eat now."



TRASH TROUBLES

The Press recently became aware of an aggravating case of harassment a PBH resident has been experiencing over the past year. The perpetrator has been depositing various kinds of trash and/or garbage into this resident's newspaper box. It tends to happen a couple of times a week and trash consists of such items as empty pop bottles, used cans of dog food, etc. The resident has even been injured, occasionally suffering cut fingers and once a bee sting.

We hope that the person doing this will desist from such antisocial actions.

THE MOSQUITOES OF PINE BROOK

By Peter D. Goldfinch

Your correspondent generally visits the Canary Islands for a summer paradisiac, temperatures 78 there, comfortably cooler than Pine Brook.

Upon my return on a dark and stormy night, my e-mail disclosed a letter being circulated to selected Pine Brookers on the subject of a reservoir, a reservoir proposed by the PBH Water Board and opposed by the letter's author. Some words jumped out at me: "to build a 7.5 acre mosquito breeding ground," "their annoying bites are capable of transmitting diseases such as malaria and encephalitis" (western and St. Louis viruses), "the spread of the potentially fatal West Nile Virus," "the eggs of these species [of mosquito] remain viable for several years in the soil." And, "Why has the PBH Water Board not addressed this issue?"

A loud squawk, hyperventilation, fear and trembling. I nearly fell off my twig, envisaging dark clouds of West Nile Virus-bearing mosquitoes, a potentially genocidal threat to the birds of Pine Brook, since these insects feed mainly upon us. "The Water Board must be crazy," I thought, kicking at a Coca-Cola bottle lying on the ground.

The next thought was "When in doubt, check it out." Thus, a squadron of inquisitive birds of a feather was quickly dispatched on an information quest regarding these terrifying assertions, to separate the wheat from the shaft and report back within 48 hours. Their destinations: 1) the book *Mosquito* by Harvard entomologist and tropical disease authority Andrew Spielman. 2) Boulder County Health Department/Environmental Health Div./Vector Control/Joe Malinowski. 3) Colorado Public Health Department online map showing points where West Nile Virus (WNV) has been detected through August 2003, in horses, humans, dead birds and mosquitoes, including Zip Code and numbers found. Proximity of WNV hotspots to lakes, rivers and reservoirs is shown. 4) Various Google searches on fine points. So, pull up a sofa and hear the fruits of their results.

Malaria: The United States and Canada are indeed home to *Anopheles* mosquitoes that are capable vectors for malaria, but these countries have been free of malaria since the mid-1950s. Such minor outbreaks of a dozen or fewer cases that do occur are invariably traced to visitors from abroad who carried the para-

site, and quickly respond to antimalarial drugs.

Western [Equine] and St. Louis Encephalitis: These viruses cause small epidemics in the Western US from time to time, human cases currently being rare. The encephalitis viruses also include WNV and several others. The main vectors for WNV in this area are *Culex pipiens* and *tarsalis* mosquitoes, which can also transmit other encephalitis viruses. WNV is now epidemic here.

“The eggs of these species remain viable for several years in the soil:” The species referred to here are of a group called floodwater mosquitoes, *Aedes vexans* and *Ochleratatus*, for example. They lay their eggs on moist soil after floods or irrigation. If the soil dries before they can hatch, they can lie dormant throughout a dry period until the next floodwater occurrence. Au contraire, the mosquitoes pertinent to our present WNV encephalitis context are mainly *Culex pipiens* and *Culex tarsalis*, members of the standing water group, which lay their eggs on standing water surface in little rafts of 100 to 400. Their eggs are desiccation intolerant, and die if they dry. The larvae also die easily in moving or wavy water.

The *Culex* female lays her eggs in stagnant, often stinking, water containing rotting vegetative matter and microorganisms, which provides a natural, vegetarian and organically healthy diet for the larvae. Swamps, wetlands and puddles beckon softly. Conversely, a properly constructed clean water reservoir as proposed for PBH, with all shrubs, trees and vegetative matter removed, even the topsoil bladed off the bottom of the basin before filling, and with a clean shoreline maintained completely free of plant growth, is not an environment for successful *Culex* breeding. The PBH Water Board has addressed the mosquito issue.

The most impressive *Culex* infestation ever seen by Andrew Spielman, the author of *Mosquito*, was at the graveyard of Confucius in China. “The stone-lined graves in the cemetery are cracked and filled with water. They are perfect breeding places for *Culex*, which become so numerous at times they look like smoke in the air. Visitors have to cover their mouths to avoid inhaling them with each breath.” The trouble is in the puddle, not clean lakes, reservoirs or streams.

Mosquito: The breeding cycle of the WNV-infected *Culex* female begins with her impregnation shortly after hatching. She winters over, even in sub-zero conditions by finding shelter in culverts, storm sewers, ammuni-

tion bunkers and the like. In April or when warm enough in Colorado, her ovaries develop, the virus multiplies and she flies out and bites a bird, infecting it with WNV. Another mosquito now bites that bird, acquiring the virus, and then passes it on to another bird, and the transmission cycle has been established: mosquito-bird-mosquito-bird, the bird population now being the carriers. Finally, a mosquito infected by a bird’s blood may leave the cycle and bite a human or a horse, infecting them with WNV. They kill horses, don’t they? About one third of WNV-symptomatic horses die. Our condolences to the equine and human communities. And to the birds, who disappear out of a clear blue sky, dying like hotcakes.

Colorado Public Health Dept map:

See it for yourself at www.emaps.dphe.state.co.us/wnv3/viewer. Most striking is the intensity of hotspots along the Front Range, a migratory bird flyway, showing locations of infected horses, humans, dead birds and trapped mosquitoes. Noteworthy is the **lack** of association between WNV hotspots and lakes, reservoirs or streams, with exception of the NE corner of Boulder Reservoir, Zip Code 80301, which is marshy and vegetative. Local hotspots are also intense in North Boulder, Zip Code 80304. A mosquito can fly up to 3 miles per hour, at wing beats of 250 to 500 per second, faster and farther with a tailwind. PBH is within easy striking range from Boulder, reservoir or no.

Joe Malinowski: I was able to pick his head for a minute. He agreed that the marshy area at NE end of Boulder Reservoir probably explains the high number of mosquitoes trapped there, and that the intensity of hotspots along the Front Range reflects the bird flyway, at least in part. He predicts a decreased incidence of WNV next year due to increased immunity in the avian community.

Conclusions drawn from the report:

- 1) There’s a lot of smoke, but where’s the beef?
- 2) A 7.5-acre mosquito-breeding ground? No way, Jay.
- 3) Wear mosquito netting when you visit Confucius’ grave.
- 4) We must keep the doors of our ammunition bunkers closed.
- 5) A sense of impending doom is unwarranted.
- 6) If a scary letter like this comes in the future, I’m going to let it roll off my back like a duck.

WATER USAGE SURVEY RESULTS

By Art Markey

I want to report that we had an absolutely great response from our homeowners to the usage survey sent out this summer. 42% of homes (162 out of 385) responded to the survey. This high response, coupled with a comparison of water use between those who responded and those who did not indicates that the results of this survey are statistically valid and can be appropriately applied to the entire community.

The responses are presented in the same order as the questions that were in the survey and are grouped accordingly. I have used percentages or actual reporting numbers, whichever I thought would be more relevant for particular types of information. I hope you find the results interesting and I invite you to make your own conclusions.

This article gives a straight overview on what the survey shows are our current use patterns but does not make any projections or conclusions about those patterns. Over the next few months, the water district may make projections of water savings based on theoretical changes in types of fixtures and equipment in homes and modification of usage behavior. Those conclusions will be included in future information releases by the district and perhaps in another article in the winter issue of the Pine Brook Press.

The one area where I will make an observation is our perceived vs. actual water use. In the survey we indicated that 5000 gallons is appropriate during non-drought periods and 3,300 gallons is appropriate during drought periods.

I made a comparison of actual use for this July and August and found that July actual average use was approximately 7,200 gallons and August was 6,100. This means our actual average use for August was about 122% of what we think appropriate use should be and July was 144% of appropriate use. I then made a comparison of use during last year's drought and found actual use was 3,700 gallons vs. 3,300. Our actual was 112% of stated appropriate use. Basically we use more water than we think we do. However, our actual water use per capita is considerably less than the national average.

Now to the actual survey results:

We average 2.2 adults and .5 children per home.

We average 2 low flow (1.6 gal.) toilets and 1.3 high flow (5 gal) toilets per home. 32% of respondents use "tricks," like a brick in the toilet tank, to reduce

consumption. We average 1.9 tubs, 1.9 low flow showers and .9 regular showers and 60% of sinks do not have low flow or restrictors installed.

90% of clothes washers have adjustable water levels and we do an average of 12.4 loads of wash per month. 95% of respondents have dishwashers, 49% of dishwashers have a water saver feature, we do an average of 3.4 dishloads a week and 94% only do full loads.

26 homes have instant hot water systems, 41 homes have a water softener system, 68 homes have hot tubs, 34 homes have swamp coolers and 6 homes have a grey water separation system.

75% of homes do some outside watering, 68% have landscaping, 78% water manually, 72% have pots on their decks, 32% have irrigation systems and they are used an average of 2.7 times a week. 26 homes have a cistern or pond.

33% save pre shower heat-up water, our average shower length is 5.7 minutes and we flush an average of 7.1 times a day. 70% take fewer showers during drought.

64% have postponed landscaping because of the drought, 86% regularly check for leaks in the home and of those responding, none have reported mosquito problems.

I have a copy of the survey results, with addresses removed, stored in Excel that I would be happy to share with anyone interested. Just e-mail me at abmarkey@comcast.net. Thanks again for your participation.

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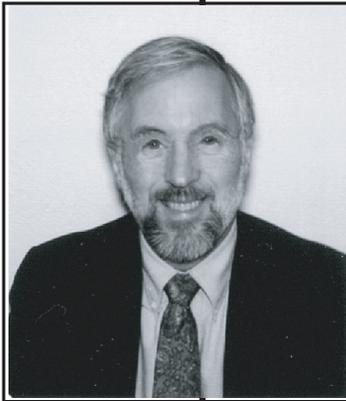
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MITIGATION:**ONE PBH FAMILY'S STICKY TREE SAP TALE**

By Penny Triggs

“Don't come in my clean house!” was a repeated plea to the crew approaching the door looking for gallon water jug refills. With temperatures soaring, the guys were daily looking like they'd just surfaced from a shift in the mines...blackened faces, filthy clothing, a certain intense look about the eyes.

We had company arriving, I was scrambling to get the house shipshape, and launching into our own mitigation operation wasn't exactly what we had originally intended.

Tim and I had recently retired from demanding jobs. For all the years we worked we had been unable to take on this massive project. Now fire mitigation was our number one priority. We live along the ridge overlooking Sunshine Canyon and knew we were in the “red zone” on the wildfire risk map.

This past spring we consulted with Bruce Benninghoff [a wildfire mitigation and forest health consultant], who walked our property with us to select trees. Each tree that we marked was chosen in relationship to its crown's proximity to surrounding trees, as so many forest fires travel via the tree crowns. He also presented us with a comprehensive understanding of 'zones' and 'defensible space'. The two-hour session gave us the direction we needed and we put our names on the list to have the BMFA crew thin our trees. This would include cutting the trees, stacking the logs, and dragging the slash to the road for chipping. We were conflicted about how much of the actual work we wanted to take on ourselves. But we were trying to offset expenses by tackling those tasks we felt capable of handling: limbing trees, dragging the slash ourselves, and raking a generous perimeter around the house. John Pellouchoud, BMFA Mitigation Coordinator, warned us of the risks in handling chainsaws or taking on work we essentially had no expertise in doing.

Meanwhile we placed an ad in the Pine Brook Press looking for help with dragging slash and raking, and from the responses our own 'crew' was formed. Thank heavens we found them! Given that we ended up completing 100% of the mitigation ourselves, we couldn't have done it without them.

We took on one guy at a time for a few hours a day, our

plan being to limb up 10-12 feet on all the trees we were keeping and drag the limbs [slash] to the roadside. We also cleaned out the gutters and 'weed whacked' a good portion of our six acres.

At the same time, I started the raking, a labor intensive process. The challenge was what to do with the raked 'goods.' A small area could take fifteen minutes and yield gigantic piles. We devised a system to gather the piles onto large tarps which we would drag quite a distance downhill to scatter far below our house. Our cats loved it, as well as the dog. Down the hill we all went together, the cats romping about. Then back up we all came. However, after fourteen loads I began to rethink our strategy! Why do this? Well, Bruce had made it clear that in the immediate perimeter surrounding the house anything that could ignite, either by a grass fire or from the embers (firebrands) that precede an approaching fire, needed to go. The firebrands fly ahead on the winds generated by a fire and settle into all the nooks and crannies under places like the decks where even 24 hours later they might finally ignite a deck, and from there the house.

It also made sense to me to clear and re-seed the land itself. We have ordered a high grade, hardy, low growing, drought tolerant seed mix, appropriate for seven thousand feet, and will put it down this fall.

Meanwhile, the guys had begun to take out the 'whips' [the little tree starters], and the smaller of our identified trees. We were watching the calendar, calculating that the BMFA crew would be there as we finished up this initial work. At that time we decided that with all of the upcoming cutting, too much wood would accumulate on our property. Ken Larkin [Rocky Ridge Construction] came to the rescue and had a thirty yard industrial dumpster delivered to our narrow driveway. The dumpsters we used were a huge factor in the success of our mitigation. They also solved my raking problems. [We filled one entirely with logs, another with rakings, and the third with chips, when we later chipped all the slash.]

Because the BMFA crew stayed busy with properties on the waiting list before us, we moved on to the medium-sized trees. Tim and our son, Jake, already had some experience with using a chainsaw, as did two of our new crew members. One guy followed each tree felling by returning to take out the remaining tree stump, as low to the ground as we could cut it.

At this juncture we collectively assumed responsibility for the whole effort. Through the relentless heat, as a group we had developed systems and teamwork, some confidence and capability. We repeatedly emphasized safety and proceeding with caution. Trees were taken out in logical order, to allow for clear falling. Any tree that looked “tricky” was roped to guide the fall in a planned direction. My own role shifted to full-on house support. Gallons of iced coffee, sun tea and cold water went out the



The Motley Crew (Motley Crue? Naaa.....): Jake, Sera, Tim, Jeremy, Nick, Brian and Warren.

front door, as did plates of toast with peanut butter and bananas, homemade cookies and large lunches. The whine of chain saws and weed whackers now dominated a usually tranquil environment and the whole place was running amuck with what I referred to as “those filthy boys doing their crazy lumberjack thing.” Even our transcontinental visitors were involved in the project. I snapped a photo of my niece Pally standing atop a mountain of logs in the dumpster, engrossed in making room for another load of wood. I have fond memories of my other niece Sera adorned with hard-hat and work gloves, feeding the chipper like a pro. Having successfully taken out the last of the eighty-five identified trees, we turned our attention to chipping the slash, which by now was running the entire length of our lane on the lower end. We rented a six-inch chipper and chipped from dawn to dusk for two days straight.

The project went out with a whimper, the last day spent on a hot Saturday doing the last of the raking, which by now was the most hated job. The guys had a weary wild-eyed look about them and even paying time and a half did little to change their mood. Enough was enough!

Now it is a week later, and Tim and I are still mentally processing the endeavor. Hearing trees crack and fall was upsetting. I found myself talking to the trees.

Clearing the land feels ‘right’ but still raw to me. It’s going to take awhile. Opening up the driveway has made an approach by a fire truck much easier, but I feel exposed. I miss our little house being more hidden in the ponderosa pines. As I write this in August it’s once more 101 degrees outside and there’s a fire burning on Sugarloaf. We can see it from our windows. It feels worth the effort, to have reduced our own vulnerability in the event of a fire in this area. It wasn’t easy, it wasn’t

cheap, and it was plagued by tree sap...tough to remove!

Here is a list of our [approximate] expenses:

- Labor \$3070
- Chipper \$426
- Dumpsters \$725
- Equipment \$247
- Seed \$300
- Misc \$211
- TOTAL \$4979

Footnote: A bonus that ensued for this motley band of lumberjacks is that they have drummed up business in the neighborhood, using their experience from this project to help expand the mitigation effort in our community.



Sign in Texas Roadhouse. Test your deciphering abilities. The editors can provide a translation by phone!



WHEE...round and round we go! The HOA sponsored an old fashioned square dance and potluck on July 26. It was a fun event for both young and old. Thanks to Jim Woodruff for organizing a great evening.

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