



Pine Brook Press



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

AUTUMN 2004

MOUNTAIN EXPRESSIONS 2004

An Exhibit and Sale of Fine Art, Crafts & Home-baked Goodies
Saturday, November 6, 10 am - 5 pm and Sunday, November 7, noon - 4 pm
PBH Community Center/ BMFA Fire Station 1



Our dedicated firefighters, medical responders and fire chief are on call year-around to protect all of us and our property in PBH & BH. The Auxiliary invites you to a very fun way to support them. You may not have thought yet about all the winter holidays, but your neighboring artists, crafters and bakers are definitely preparing. So please come to see the unique, exquisite and delicious results and enjoy the talk, laughter and general camaraderie engendered by this annual event.

An array of holiday items await you. They include handmade cards and gifts of all sorts, quilts, paintings, photographs, ceramic

or stained glass pieces, jewelry and exquisite hand-woven items. And it goes without saying that you will not be able to resist the bake table! It's all at Mountain Expressions.

Some 20% to 100% of each purchase you make goes to the Auxiliary which will use it to buy firefighting and medical equipment. So do stop by to shop or just to admire and chat. Have a complimentary cup of punch or hot cider. We are open rain, shine or snow and we welcome cash, checks or credit cards.

Because there is a possibility that the reservoir construction might affect the Auxiliary's May garage sale, Mountain Expressions is especially important this year as a fund raiser for our fire department. That's another reason to come join the fun.

Any questions? Contact Susan Maxwell (303) 444-9851
SCMBonniesStudio@comcast.net

RESERVOIR UPDATE

From Bob de Haas

After the Commissioners gave their approval to the reservoir, the next step was to sell the bonds to provide financing for the project. Not a problem. The bonds sold out within four hours, with an average interest rate of 4.5%. The 25 year bonds carry a repayment cost to the district of about \$8.9 million, which is \$2.5 million less than was authorized in the election last spring. That means that the annual payment on the

bonds will be on average \$355,000, which is approximately \$65,000 less than was authorized. So we think we cut a pretty good deal.



A pleased de Haas Frames Camera's Reservoir Headline.

The Commissioners' approval carried some conditions with it. None of these conditions are a problem; they do not affect our water rights or our ability to supply water to the community. Our next steps are to finalize the design, complete some paperwork, and put the project out to bid.

The Water Board and the Water District employees want to thank the community for their support of this important project.

2004 SUMMER DINEAROUNDS IN PBH

By Anne Singh

Socially we, the residents of PBH, had a very busy and successful season of DineArounds this summer. The Peperzaks started it off on June 9th with a cocktail party at their home. Twenty people attended, five of them new DineAround attendees. Karen reported that everyone sat around outside enjoying interesting conversations and telling personal stories and that it was a heartwarming and humorous evening.

Other DineAround parties were held at the homes of Kim and Dale Hartzell, Art and Sue Rancis, Jo and Herb Weidemann and in Kathy Moritz's garden.



On July 31 a 50's Sock Hop was held at the Community Center (see above), hosted by the PBH Home Owner's Association. Great fun was had by all at this "hopping" event.

Elizabeth and David Korevaar held an elegant gala party-concert DineAround on July 9 for close to 50 people. The theme was French and included French wine and hors d'oeuvres and a 45 minute piano concert of French music performed by David. He reported that it was really fun.

Many, many thanks go to all the hosts and hostesses and to Karen Peperzak, our own PBH social chair, for arranging the now famous DineArounds which are open to everyone in the community.



MORE PINE BROOK WILD LIFE

By Suzanne Adams

For those of us who were basking in the belief that bears eat little bitty things like ants and

berries, bad news. A bear (BIG bear) was spotted on North Cedar Brook eating a deer.

Another bear was seen wandering down Arrowleaf recently after feasting on a neighbor's garbage. They're out and about, folks. Keep an eye out (and the garbage in, until pickup day).

Our wildlife officer, Patrica Belanger, reports that a young bear visited Carolyn Clark's deck one morning recently. He obviously understood English because when she yelled, "Go away!" through her sliding door, off he went.



Photo by Allen Saville

A couple on South Cedar Brook were using their hot tub and heard a rustling in the bushes. When they went to check it out, they came face to face with what they described as a "500 pound bear." Oops.

Lions are on the prowl too. Andrew Morris reported that a lion killed a deer only 50 feet from his house. Be especially careful between dusk and dawn.

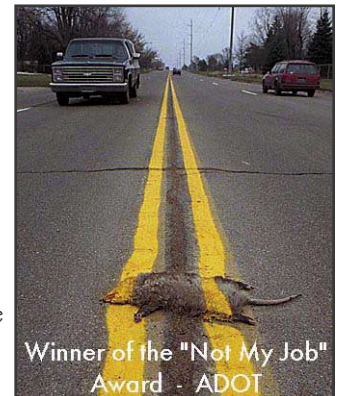
And finally, a six foot bull snake apparently interested in personal cleanliness turned up in a laundry room on Linden Drive. While they recognized that bull snakes are harmless, when the snake retreated behind a wall, the owners retreated to the Boulderado.

Just another day in Paradise, snake included.



NOT MY JOB!

Gail Loveman liked the report, in a prior PB Press issue, by the road supervisor who acknowledged that yes, his crew should have seen the dead deer and yes, they should have removed it - instead of paving over it. She submitted this photo of yet another "Not My Job" winner.



Winner of the "Not My Job" Award - ADOT

**PINE BROOK HILLS
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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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

HOA MEETING OCTOBER 7: FOREST HEALTH. Pot luck at 6 P.M., meeting at 7 P.M.

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

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

FIRE BOARD - Meets the 2nd Monday of every month at 7 P.M. at either the Pine Brook or Boulder Heights Firehouse. Call 440-0235 for specifics.

FIRE AUXILIARY - Generally meets the first Sunday of every month at 7 P.M. Call 786-7586 for confirmation.

MOUNTAIN EXPRESSIONS - NOV 6 - 7. See page 1 for details.

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

FOREST HEALTH: OUR NEXT CHALLENGE

By Pam Creswell, Pine Brook Hills Homeowners Association President

Another spectacular Pine Brook Hills Fall is here. Fall is my favorite season and its beauty always reminds me how lucky we are to live here. Because our trees are such an important part of the natural beauty, I am asking residents to take the time to learn about some important and pressing forest health issues. There has been a recent surge of bark beetles and dwarf mistletoe, particularly in Boulder Heights, which has wrought tremendous damage over the last few years. More and more, we are seeing the beetles moving into our neighborhoods. Three different types of beetles as well as a rapidly increasing amount of dwarf mistletoe are becoming serious problems in our community. **We are looking for volunteers** to help us to keep these problems under control. We will form a group of volunteers who will undergo training in recognizing the beetles and mistletoe and who will be willing to help their neighbors identify and find solutions to the problems. Early intervention is the key, and none of our properties is "safe," as beetles can fly as far as four miles or more. Please call me if you are interested in volunteering for this important and interesting project (720-406-9783).



Everyone is also encouraged to come and learn about forest health from an expert, U.S. Forester Bruce Benninghoff (Ret.), at our HOA meeting in October. Please put it on your calendars!

**HOA MEETING AT FIREHOUSE
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 27TH
6 P.M. POTLUCK
7 P.M. FOREST HEALTH PRESENTATION**

We are hoping to see some new faces at the potluck. If you don't know many people, just find me (I will be wearing a baseball cap). I, or a friend, will welcome the opportunity to introduce you around!

Other Notes:

Does anyone have a bookcase or some books that we could use to start a lending library at the firehouse? It would be nice for residents as well as our firefighters.

As in the previous three years, we have submitted a large grant application for matching funds for fire mitigation in 2005. A big thanks goes to Suzanne Adams, Tim Triggs and Tom Akins for their work on the grant.

If you want to stay in touch with what is going on in Pine Brook (meeting minutes, special committee or meeting announcements, animal alerts and requests for community feedback on important issues) you should add your e-mail address to our list. You can sign up with me or with Tim Triggs.

If you have had mail stolen you might want to consider the following:

1. Call any of the three primary credit agencies (such as TransUnion at 1-800-680-7289) and have a fraud alert put on your "account." Which ever one you call will alert the other two. Stolen mail is often used in identity theft. A fraud alert means that any request for credit (like a new credit card) will only go through after a direct phone call for your approval.
2. Consider either a group or an individual locking mail box.

For more information on these ideas or to report or learn about mail theft in our neighborhood, please feel free to contact me.

Thanks as always for your community support!

Pam Creswell - 720-406-9783

FIRESIDE CHAT

By John Benson

Greetings once again! I hope all of you have enjoyed your summer. I have to admit it was not what I was expecting. Most of the predictions that we were looking at said it was going to be a dry, hot summer. Boy, were they wrong. Please remember that even though we have had a fairly mild summer with lots of moisture, we are by no means out of danger from forest fire. All this moisture brings tall grass and flashy fuels. As these fuels dry out this fall they could contribute to conditions for a catastrophic event. Please continue to be careful and make sure your property is properly mitigated. Let's not forget some very important safety factors that need to be addressed:

- **Outdoors:** Clean pine needles from your roof, gutters and decks. Cut the long grass, especially along the roadways. Slash piles should be eliminated; BMFA can chip them for you for \$35/hour, or you can take them to Western Disposal on 63rd Street.
- **Chimney:** Make sure that your chimney and flue have been cleaned and inspected. A creosote build-up can cause a potential fire. Have your piping inspected to ensure there are no dislodged pipes or cracks. This can send a fire racing throughout the structure in no time.
- **Heat Tape:** If you have heat tape on your roof, have someone who is knowledgeable inspect the wiring and connections. Heat tape fires are quite common. There is a wide variety of heat tape available today. Make sure heat tape you are installing is properly rated for the job.
- **Furnace:** For those do-it-yourselfers, take the time to perform proper furnace maintenance. This includes changing the filter, vacuuming the furnace area, and lubricating the fans and blowers in accordance with manufacturers' standards.
- **Carbon Monoxide:** Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless and very poisonous gas. There are a number of wintertime sources of carbon monoxide including: a cracked block on the water heater or furnace, nests in the flue pipes, or blocked ventilation areas. Make sure these areas are clear of obstructions. It is always a good idea to have a representative from Excel Energy and/or a reputable person from a heating and ventilation company

come in and inspect home heating units. Remember, if you start feeling sick while in the house and suspect carbon monoxide poisoning, DIAL 911 and get people and pets out immediately.

- **Clothes Dryers:** Clean your lint traps associated with dryers. A lint buildup can cause the heating element to start a fire.

It has been brought to my attention that some houses in the district do not have highly visible address signs. Folks, this is our only means of finding your home in the middle of the night when there is an emergency. McGuckins and other home supply stores sell reflective address signs. Please take the time to look at your house numbers from the perspective of a fire fighter who might be unfamiliar with the neighborhood and is looking for your house in the middle of the night with lots of smoke in the air.

When you have an emergency **DIAL 911. DO NOT CALL THE FIRE STATION.** There are many times when no one is at the fire stations to take your call. Leaving a message will not get you the help you need. BMFA is here to help you. Dialing 911 gets us to you sooner.

I hope all of you enjoy a great autumn season. Until next time, have fun and be safe.



MOUNTAIN PINE BEETLE - MASTER OF STEALTH

By Bruce Benninghoff

In Grand County the Mountain Pine Beetle (MPB) continues to run rampant over thousands of acres, killing millions of trees. If you have doubts, take a drive west on I-70 to Silverthorne, North on Hwy 9, Hwy 132 over Ute Pass, down the Williams Fork to Keyser Cr. Rd 139. Take either the Beaver Cr Rd. 133 to Hot Sulpher Springs or stay on 139 to Fraser. Then go north from Granby on Hwy 34 to Grand Lake. You will then be motivated to read this article.

How does a little beetle get away with devastation on such a massive scale? In order to understand why the MPB is such a successful forest pest, you must understand the beetle's life cycle and habitat requirements.

As you read this, the MPB larvae are munching away on the inner bark of Ponderosa Pines and Lodgepole Pines over much of the state. The larvae will carve out

feeding galleries that will girdle the tree by next spring. There are only two external clues to their presence. If the tree was only moderately stressed, when the mature beetle bored through the outer bark, there will usually be pitch tubes. These are popcorn sized globs of pitch that leak out the hole the beetle went in. If the tree is healthy it can flow enough pitch to push the beetle back out and smother it in pitch. If the tree is stressed by drought, or hit by many beetles, it can't produce that much pitch. The other external clue is the borings dust on the bark and at the base of the tree. This is usually blown away or covered up shortly after the attack.

The two clues to the beetle's presence are difficult to spot or may not be there at all. The larvae are hidden away from sight, protected from the winter weather by the bark, free to munch away undetected.

And that is what they do through the fall, slowing down during the winter chill and picking up the pace again the next spring. The big "Red Flag" that announces the beetle's activity doesn't show up until June of the year following attack. By then the tree has been girdled to the point where the foliage turns red. Only after the damage has been done, does the beetle allow easy detection of its presence.

At this point there is only about a month before the larvae pupate and mature into beetles ready to emerge from their hiding place and fly to their next victims. The adult beetles are only visible to us humans for a few days during this flight period.

When the red flag does go up, people usually don't react quickly enough, or they don't react with appropriate actions. Cutting the tree down removes the visual impact but usually won't prevent the pupa from maturing into a beetle capable of flight. Cutting the tree into firewood and giving it away is just moving the problem to someone else. There are no chemicals registered for controlling beetles when they are under the bark. The only feasible control at this time is removing the bark. Most beetles are physically destroyed in the process of bark removal, and those that survive are exposed to the elements and predators.

What Has To Change?

The beetles will always have the upper hand as long as the health of the tree is judged by the color of the foliage. A tree with a green top and dozens of pitch tubes is as good as dead. It is better to cut it down and debark it than to take the chance that it may

somehow survive. Even if it survives the first attack, it will produce the next generation of beetles that will probably re-attack that same tree plus its neighbors. Individual action isn't sufficient. Cutting and debarking your beetle trees won't prevent the beetles in your neighbor's trees from attacking your survivors. It's a community problem that begs for a community solution.

Every community should have an annual detection effort that starts as soon as the beetle flight ends (Sept. 15). Early detection allows time to assess the magnitude of the problem, organize the appropriate resources, and get the job done. Ideally, the cutting and debarking should occur during the winter. Most other treatment methods are not done correctly and are ineffective for that reason.

Stands need to be thinned to increase tree vigor and reduce susceptibility. The larger the area treated the more effective the treatment will be.



WANTED? ACTUALLY, REALLY NEEDED!

By Pat Palmer

Our county elections office needs citizens willing to serve as polling place judges for the national election in November. To meet legal requirements there must be an equal number of judges from both Democratic and Republican parties. The elections office was really scrambling to cover all the polling places for the primary. As they were short of people to start with, the situation worsened when a number of prospective judges called in sick that morning.

The time commitment consists of one pre-election training session of about one to one and a half hours (at which time a complete manual is provided to each judge-in-training), and one admittedly long, but interesting, day which enables all registered citizens to cast their votes.

In addition to the much needed service to the community, you will also receive a modest check for your time. The County Commissioners recently increased the judges' compensation to \$150 for the upcoming election.

If you have any questions, the elections office is more than willing to answer them. For further information call either 303.413.7754 or 303.413.7740. Please consider this opportunity to serve your community. Thanks.

WELCOME, NEWCOMERS!

From Dianne Whitfield and Mary Barakat

A very warm welcome to the following new Pine Brookers!

Cynthia Baker and Dominick Maita, 404 Timber Lane, rented Marshall Coon's house for a few months but now are Official Pine Brookers in their own home, still on Timber Lane. They are from New York City. Cynthia is the managing editor of a business strategy publication, and Dominick is a mastering engineer for Airshow Mastering, a music production facility. They have a dog named Zelda. All three love living in PBH!

Tae Chang and Deseree Moon, 168 South Cedar Brook, just moved to Pine Brook Hills in September. They had lived in Boulder in 1988 while Tae worked on his PhD in Mechanical Engineering at CU. He works for Sun Microsystems, while Deseree, who has a MS in Computer Science from University of Southern California, is with Level 3 Communications. They are currently undertaking interior remodeling (painting, wood floor, kitchen, bath...), but hope soon to be able to enjoy "this beautiful neighborhood."

Chris Cullen and Kristi Clary-Cullen, 1306 N. Cedar Brook Rd., moved down from Coal Creek Canyon, where they had lived for the last three years. They love it here! Chris is an independent mortgage and real estate broker. Kristi joined the business a year ago and feels that they make a great team in the office as well.

Eric Curl, 1373 Linden Drive, moved here from Colfax, CA, to take an engineering job in Boulder. He enjoys hiking, skiing, flying, biking and dancing. He is actually biking to work! He says that he has met many nice neighbors and looks forward to many years of being a part of this community.

Bill and Susan Harris, 2535 Linden Drive, are both CU Alums from the early 60's. Bill is a former health care administrator and currently works for the CU Athletic Department. He is a former Buff football player. Sue is a teacher in Boulder. They feel very fortunate to have their son, Trevor, and daughter, Lisa, also living in this area.

Gary and Mary Marchand, 873 Timber Lane. Gary and Mary moved here from Crystal Lake, IL, a suburb of Chicago. They are retired and enthusiastic about living here in Pine Brook. Their three Border Collies are having a fine time here too.

Tony and Gina Stack, 395 Pine Brook Road, were married at Chautauqua on June 19 and moved to Pine Brook in July. Gina is an art director with Sterling-Rice Group in Boulder. She has studied Oriental medicine and is a licensed Acupuncturist and Herbologist. Tony owns a Broomfield house cleaning service, The Cleaning Authority. His hobbies include mountain biking and photography.

A hearty welcome to you all!



COMCAST CABLE CONFLICT

By Gail Loveman

The numerous cables strung across my view represent an eyesore, but one I had decided to live with at least for the time being. Some tree limbs, when full of snow, were pressing down on one of the large silver cables, so when Comcast arrived for some other repairs, I talked to them about the issue. They told me that the lowest hanging cables were dead anyway, and wondered why, when the newer cable had been put in, the old ones had not been removed.

I then launched into what can only be described as a campaign with Comcast to get the unused cables removed. No one at the company ever disagreed that the cables should be removed. It seems, however, that this is a political hot potato within the company. I don't know the reason and can only speculate that maybe the contractor who was paid to install the new ones was supposed to remove the old ones...or maybe funds to remove the old ones were never budgeted...or whatever.

In any event, after probably 15 follow-up phone calls and several redundant visits by Comcast individuals to check out the situation, the low hanging, unused cable has been removed.

It appears to my (granted, untrained) eye that the double silver cable arrangements exist in abundance in Pine Brook Hills. And my assumption is that many of those are also dead cables.

If anyone else is interested in trying to lessen the wire blight in our neighborhood, the only way I know to go about it is to call the customer service number on your Comcast bill, tell them you think you might have dead cables strung across your property and that, if that is the case, you want them removed. It would be interesting to see what reaction Comcast has, especially if they realize this is becoming a

neighborhood effort.

I would be glad to be a collector and disseminator of stories of how this is going. I can be reached at gloveman@ameritech.net. Good luck.



LETTER TO THE EDITOR: NOXIOUS WEEDS

Fellow Pine Brookers:

Colorful Colorado may no longer be as colorful in a few decades. Why? Invasive noxious weeds. So far Colorado has lost the equivalent of three Rhode Islands - 1.8 million acres - to invasive weeds. When native plants go, so do wildlife and butterflies. Dale Bosworth, Chief of the U.S. Forest Service, visited Colorado recently. He calls invasive weeds a threat second only to the dry fuels that feed the forest fires we all worry about: "People should be as alarmed about seeing a new patch of leafy spurge (Euphorbia) as they are about seeing a forest fire...Weeds are just as insidious. It just happens over a longer time."

An area the combined size of California and New York is already lost to weeds in the U.S. There is land in Oregon that is valued at 15% of its former value before the weeds came. In a 2002 study the USDA and Cornell University found that 400 of 958 species protected by the Endangered Species Act are at risk, a situation that the USDA called, "one of the most serious economic, social and environmental threats of the 21st century." In the last few years the state quit funding the \$300,000 Colorado State Weed Management Fund, which had brought a matching U.S. Government Grant of \$1.5 million. Some local governments are trying to help. A Summit County legislator proposes a 25 cent fee on car tags for the Weed Management Fund. Larimar County and the city of Fort Collins are offering a \$10 bounty for any size bags of weeds this year. Next year, they will remove the weeds and charge the property owners!

Pine Brook cannot solve all the weed problems in the country or the state, but we surely can solve our own, especially those on our own properties. Look around and see the Canadian Thistle (with millions of seeds flying in the fall), the Knapweed, the spurges. The donkey tail spurge is the bright yellow flower, first to bloom in the spring, that is all over the ditches and hillsides in places like lower Timber Lane and Linden. If you touch spurge sap, then touch your eyes, you could be permanently blinded. The roots are very long,

so spraying with RoundUp in the spring will take persistence and a number of years to destroy them.

For further information contact Joey Bunch, the writer of a front page story in the Denver Post on Sunday, Sept. 5, 2004.

Sorry for the long letter. There really is much more.

Leon C. Tupy,
1330 Timber Lane

Be Prepared: THE BOOK

Shoni Kahn, a former resident of Pine Brook Hills, spent one year creating a user friendly book on Home Disaster Preparedness. This book will help individuals and communities prepare for disasters such as fires, hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, power outages and yes..maybe even terrorism. The information was taken from the American Red Cross, FEMA and the Department of Homeland Security. Shoni offers these reasons to buy the book:

1. Each person who has read the book and become more prepared for disaster is one person less needing help from emergency response teams (for PBH, that's BMFA).
2. A percent of the purchase will be donated to the American Red Cross. After the hurricanes, the Red Cross needs the money.
3. The book is a great accomplishment by a previous 20 year resident of PBH.
4. You will never regret being prepared but you certainly could regret not being prepared.

For more information go to www.homedisasterpreparedness.com, or go directly to www.amazon.com.

WHAT ARE YOU READING? And Can I Read It Next?

Say you've just finished a really good book. You enjoyed it - but you don't think you'll want to read it again and your home bookcases are already groaning. Solution! Let's have a small bookcase in the meeting room of the Community House where people can drop off books and exchange them for ones they haven't read. At the end of each season the books could go to the Auxiliary's Garage Sale to benefit the fire department.

All we need now is a bookcase. Anybody have one?

THE PACK RATS OF PINE BROOK

By Ratbart Adams

Suddenly, this summer, after slow beginnings last fall, there has been a crescendo of reported wood rat encounters in the gentle community of Pine Brook Hills. These rodents are also called pack rats or trade rats, and are to be distinguished from the large, odious Norway rat, which is what "rat" usually brings to mind. Some people consider pack rats to be "cute," with their big round ears and amusing behaviors.

A Pine Brook matron sitting on her deck one night was startled to see a wood rat jump over her foot. In another home, a rat ran up the stairs into a bedroom and a human frightened the little rat under a chair. Spoons have disappeared. Some gardeners have noted flower blossoms gone missing or yuccas clipped off. A rat was seen packing off a bouquet. There have been confidential reports by other Pine Brookers who feel too respectable to openly admit being infested by PACK RATS.

Rat populations can fluctuate in response to various changes in their ecosphere, such as predator populations, plant life, various parasites and diseases, humans and the weather. Increased moisture last fall and this spring is probably the cause of the current upsurge of mice and rats, according to Boulder City and County wildlife experts. It could also be that decreased numbers of coyotes, foxes and owls during the recent drought are a factor. Some owls, by the way, consume an average of 2000 rats and mice a year, or about five to six rodents per night, while humans sleep unawares. Other wood rat predators include skunks, raccoons, bobcats and snakes.

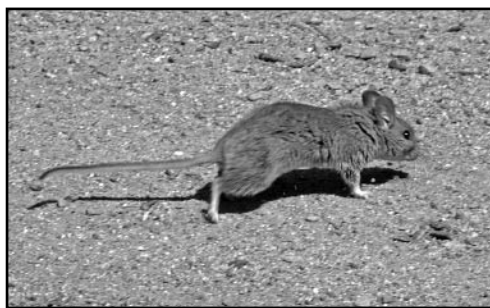
Of the six species of wood rat in Colorado, the Mexican woodrat or *Neotoma mexicana* can be found along the Front Range and in Pine Brook Hills. The fur is grayish buff above, white on the underside, the tail shorthaired. Total length is 11.5-15 inches, including a 4-5 inch tail. The wood rat looks like an oversized mouse with Mickey Mouse ears. Females in Colorado usually produce in quick succession two litters of 2-5 young, gestation period 31-34 days. In some species, the young are born with an oval hole between the incisors, which, when the jaws close, fits around the mother's nipples, allowing a tenacious hold until removed by the mother.

The pack rat makes its residence in a site sheltered from rain and predators: among boulders, in buildings,

log piles and the like. A nest may contain two or three burrows lined with soft grasses, open at the top. Adjacent or nearby is a heap of collected items which may include sticks and other building supplies, stones, bones, feathers, plant materials, nuts, pollen, and more. A modern heap might contain such treasures as bottle caps, rifle casings, coins, spoons, nails and car keys. The rats collect materials ranging from 30 to 100 yards from the nest, using the same trails repeatedly. On a return trip with an acquired object, the rat might espy a more interesting item and trade it for the first, hence the term "trade rat." The piles, which can be several feet across, are called "middens", an archeological term meaning roughly "garbage pile." Over time, the agglomeration is gradually covered by viscous, amber-colored rat urine which crystallizes into what has been called "amberat," a lacquer-like casing which acts like a glue and essentially mummifies the pile, in some cases preserving it for more than fifty thousand years.

The middens have provided paleobiologists with treasure troves of plant and animal specimens, which permit reconstruction of likely past biotic communities at a specific fossil site. Perhaps the most rewarding site to date is Porcupine Cave in Park County, Colorado. Excavations of pack rat-collected teeth and bone fragments at deep levels there have permitted identification of fossil remains from 800,000 to about 1,000,000 years ago, including extinct camels, sloths, jaguars, horses and saber-toothed cats. Changes in plant and animal ecosystems have been correlated with global warming and cooling associated with periods of glaciation which serve as markers in time. Thus, wood rats have unintentionally created detailed fossil records of extreme value over the eons, which paleontologists are now deciphering.

What are some of the consequences of having wood rat neighbors? They can chew into electric wires of automobiles. Various items disappear. Having achieved entry into your house, heaven forbid, they can wreak noisy havoc within the walls. When nervous or perhaps communicating, the rats have a habit of drumming loudly with both feet, or standing and drumming with the tail. This could provide a clue to just what sort of rodent is making itself heard.



There are certain health considerations, for the rats as well as humans. From the rats or their parasites and microorganisms humans may acquire a shopping list of maladies, though uncommon, including Leishmaniasis, Ehrlichiosis, Babesiosis, Lyme disease, Arbovirus and Hanta viruses and Plague. Some are transmitted by bites of ticks that feed on infected wood rats. Recently, a tick was found in a 90 million-year-old amber outcrop in New Jersey. Scientists are now fairly confident that these ticks fed on dinosaurs. Wood rats themselves can acquire Raccoon roundworm, potentially fatal, by eating raccoon scat to get undigested nuts. Presumably, this poses no risk to humanity.

What to do if your territory becomes infested? There is the cage-trap approach, which captures a live rat that can be relocated. A spring-powered oversized mousetrap can snap shut and leave a dead rat in need of removal. Some people simply throw away the trap plus rat. One neighbor caught eight or ten rats this way, including one that disappeared before she could remove it. Apparently several pall-bearing rats traipsed away with the trap and corpse and conducted their own burial service. I, myself, have progressed to the use of rat poison (for the rats).

For those who have become enamored of rats while reading this, let me recommend The Rat Fan Club at www.ratfanclub.org. A one-year membership is available for a \$25.00 annual subscription to The Rat Report. The site is immensely helpful, including such features as Rat of the Week, and links to rat merchandise retailers (rat furniture, toys, etc.). Even without membership, one may acquire much valuable information pertaining to rat care. **Emergency Care:** Rat First Aid, Raising Orphan Rats, Bloating and Megacolon, Understanding Grief when a Rat Dies. **Housing:** Cages and Toys, Building Plans for Rat Cages. **Health Care:** How to Find a Good Rat Vet, Rat-Bite Fever (if bitten by your pet rat), Treating Rats With a Nebulizer, and finally, How to Do a Rat Autopsy.



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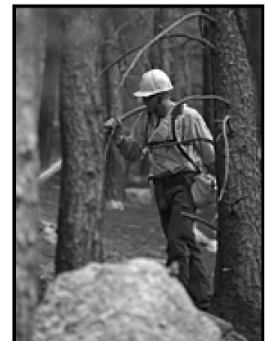
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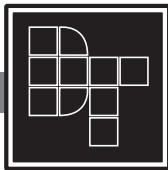
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BOBSIE IS LEAVING PBH

By Param Singh

From her living room window, Bobsie Donahue looks down North Cedar Brook, the narrow Linden Valley, verdant after this wet summer. "I will really miss it, miss everything," she says. "Everybody in here is together." She pauses and then adds, "Though there are a few fast drivers!"

Bobsie is moving down the mountain to a town house near her sister in her childhood home of Hinsdale, Illinois. Her health dictated the move to a lower altitude. Otherwise, she is absolutely sure she would continue to live here, as she has for the last 35 years.

In 1969, two years after her husband died while they were living in suburban New York, Bobsie packed up and moved with her three boys to PBH. Together the family had decided, "Let's live in mountains." The options were Boulder and Vermont. Boulder won because Bobsie had attended CU and she thought it would be a good place to raise her kids plus college was close by. [We Pine Brookers know that Vermont does not have real mountains] The house on North Cedar Brook was one of three on the market; the other two had flood damage. It was one of the first houses built on the road.

She was involved with the HOA, Planned Parenthood and kept an eye on her three growing boys. Like many others at that time, she kept horses in the barn by the house. One dark foggy night at 1:30 AM a dog started barking. Investigating she found that a post on the corral had dropped and her two horses were gone. It was too foggy to see beyond her driveway, so she called the Sheriff. A while later, her neighbor called. A sheriff's officer had found the horses way down Linden. She went down in the dark and she and the officer walked the horses back in the fog, each hugging a horse. She thanked the officer. "Don't thank

me," he replied, "I was bored as hell sitting in East Boulder. You just made my day."

She was a volunteer firefighter for many years. She remembers the equipment as not being the best. Once she had to drive an old tanker to Gross reservoir. The fastest the old bucket would go was 15 mph and she was sure that by the time she got to her destination the traffic behind her was backed up all the way to Broomfield! Bobsie stayed in the department until shortly after she fell off a fire truck. She took it as a sign that it was time to retire.

There was a time when there were a lot of burglaries in PBH. The HOA met with Sheriff Nelson

who suggested that residents call his department if they noticed strange cars. One day, while walking, Bobsie saw a car start up a driveway and then back down. It repeated that maneuver at several other houses. There were six people in the car, all very dressed up. She thought they might be realtors, but noted the car's number and called the Sheriff's office. Three nights later, on Thanksgiving evening, there was a big commo-



tion around a house down the road. It was a drug raid. A couple of days later a Sheriff's officer turned up at Bobsie's door, laughing, "That suspicious car you saw - you blew the whistle on the Denver Narcotics squad, posing as realtors." It also explained something else; walking past the busted house she had noticed "the largest tomato plants" she had ever seen. They were not tomato plants but a marijuana farm!

Her strangest PBH experience occurred when she was working at a property management firm. The office staff were talking about the 1966 Alan Arkin movie, "The Russians are Coming," about a Russian submarine that runs aground in Maine, convincing the local people that they were being invaded. That night her black Labrador puppy started barking. It was snowing and when she looked out she saw shadowy

figures behind a fence. Groggy with sleep, she thought that these must be the Russians. Then she thought she must have had a crazy dream and went back to bed. A while later the dog started barking again. It was still snowing and when she looked out, there appeared to be 20-25 people trudging between the house and the barn. Then they disappeared into the night. The

number appeared to be the size of a platoon and she confirmed it by looking up "platoon" in the encyclopedia. The next morning she went out to check for foot prints - they were there! Could the Russians be really invading PBH? She started calling neighbors to ask if they had seen a platoon of soldiers marching through the snow. One neighbor was head of CU's Naval ROTC. "You are talking about my nice young men and women," he said. "Every year they come up to serenade me on my birthday. They do not have 4-wheel drives, so they walked up in the snow." Bobsie's sanity was restored and the Russians had spared PBH.

Over the years the family had so much company that the house came to be known as the "Donahue Hilton." Ironically, none of her sons attended CU.



Bobsie (center) with some of her sorority sisters at a recent surprise going-away party at the community center.

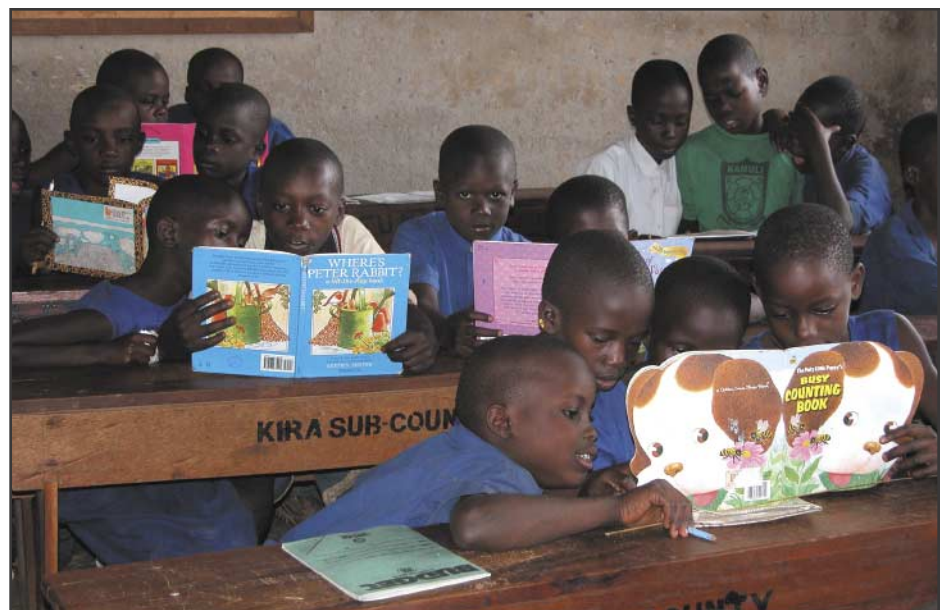
County Legal Services.

Bobsie is modest about her contributions to PBH. But how many neighbors can you call at 2 AM to babysit while you respond to a fire department call? Just ask Lilly Pray.

Bobsie is leaving PBH and we will be the poorer for it. Many of us moved to PBH because of the mountains, its services (water and fire protection) and its proximity to Boulder. A most pleasant surprise is the strong sense of community and small town feel that exists here. People like Bobsie Donahue are the reason why. We hope that while her health has forced her to move away, it will not prevent her from sneaking back once in a while.

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Photo taken in 1972 from PBH by former PBH resident Jeremy Pickett-Heaps

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