



# Pine Brook Press

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

AUTUMN 2008



## PINE BROOK MOVES MOUNTAINS

The Pine Brook Water District moved the dirt! Buoyed by \$10,940 raised by the community at the summer picnic/auction and matched by a generous anonymous donor, the Water District was able to replace the dirt on the face of the dam and on the northern slope above the reservoir. The area has been seeded and provides for a small walking trail by the water.

The picnic was a joyous affair with good food, dancing and children's games (which were joined by some of the adults!). An estimated 100 Pine Brookers attended. However, two Pine Brook neighbors who made a generous contribution were not able to attend, and for a very good reason. Ashley DeWitt and Matt Rheingold sent regrets as Ashley was engaged in giving birth to their second son just hours before the event. Welcome, Baby!



Photo By Ron Kovtar



All lit up!

Pam Creswell and Art Rancis were an "auction item," as friends vied to raise money for the privilege of seeing them dine at Laudisio's in their lampshade hats. Watch the community email for information on how to join in on this event, tentatively scheduled for November.

### MORE MOVING THE DIRT AND PBH SOCIAL PHOTOS



Photo By Ron Rovtar

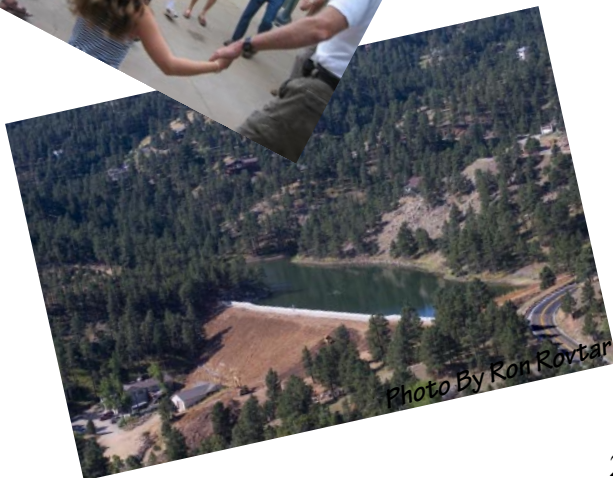


Photo By Ron Rovtar

### LADY BUG, LADY BUG... ANOTHER PBH PHENOMENON



A Lady Bug Plant?



A Lady Bug Heap!

The ladybugs gather at a house on top of Alder Lane in the fall, sometimes in numbers so great that they cover the bricks of the house. These ladybugs looked like berried plants at first. That end of Alder Lane used to be called Ladybug Hill.

### LETTER FROM SCHOOL BUS DRIVER



We got this little letter from the school bus driver. He wanted it included in the Press:

Pine Brook Hills Parents,

Recently we received a call from a parent whose child had not been riding the school bus as a result of a miscommunication. If you have questions regarding eligibility or stop location, please call Boulder Valley School District Transportation at 303.447.5125. I will be glad to talk to any parent waiting at a bus stop along the route. Thanks for letting me drive your children safely to school and back!

Mike Rice, Bus Driver

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BOARDS AND COMMITTEES**

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**COMMUNITY CALENDAR**

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

**HOA MEETING, October 29, Potluck at 6 P.M.,  
Business meeting at 7 P.M., followed by League of Women  
Voters non-partisan presentation: STATE AND COUNTY  
ISSUES ON NOVEMBER BALLOT.**

**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 440-6132 for confirmation.

**MOUNTAIN EXPRESSIONS** - Nov. 8, 10 A.M. to 5 P.M., Nov. 9, 12 noon to 4 P.M. (see page 6).

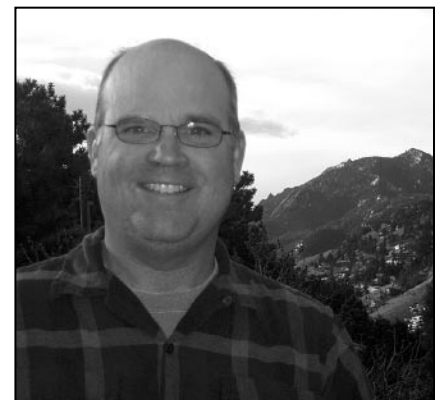
**WATER BOARD** - Meets first or second Thursday of every month at 4:30 P.M. Call Water Office at 443-5394 for dates.

**PRESIDENT'S THOUGHTS**

By Mark Menagh, HOA President

Well done, Pine Brookers!

What a wonderful time was had by all at the HOA picnic and auction to move the dam dirt on August 10! I was very pleased to meet so many people who had not attended community events before. The feedback I've received was that it was good fun and good food, all the necessary components for a successful picnic. A special thank you to Pam Creswell and Marshal Swanton for the outstanding venue and to the Pine Brookers who once again heard the call and worked with exceptional coordination to make the event happen. Also, thanks to all who donated and purchased auction items (a resounding success with often heated bidding competition). We raised \$10,700 to be matched by an anonymous donor. Bob de Haas and the water board now have \$21,400 from this one event to help fund the PBH Water District's "move the dirt" project. Already we see results with a fine job of grading the dirt. We will watch in anticipation to see how the grasses and plants fill in.



Not all news is good this summer, as the number of people reporting beetle hits on the trees on their property is alarming. We need to join forces with our neighbors and work together to save our forest. Please, take time to walk through your property to see if the trees have any pitch tubes. If you notice them be sure to contact the Pine Brook Hills Beetle Busters team for advice at [beetlebusters@gmail.com](mailto:beetlebusters@gmail.com). Managing our forest is a continuous, year round process and if you would like to become more educated see the beetle buster article on page 9. Sadly, at this time of year we will notice more beetle-hit trees that may need to be removed because we don't want an infested tree to become a nursery for new beetles to infest healthy neighboring trees.

Our Home Owners' Association general meeting on October 29th will begin with the famous potluck starting at 6:00. At 7:00 we will transition into our business meeting that will include a few options for the next fire mitigation project in our neighborhood. A presentation follows on the November general election, providing a summary of the ballot measures, as this will be the longest ballot since 1912. It will be great to get some non-partisan information before voting on the 18 Colorado state ballot issues and two Boulder County issues that will be on our ballot. A spokesperson from the League of Women Voters will be our featured speaker, both talking about and distributing information on all these issues. The presentation will order the referenda and amendments to make them more understandable and give a short synopsis of each one. We will not be talking about candidates for election, just about the ballot issues. So consider waiting to return your mail-in ballot until after the educational meeting.

Enjoy these last days of summer !



## YOU KNOW YOU GREW UP IN COLORADO WHEN...

You planned your Halloween costumes around your coat.

It snows five inches and you don't expect school to be cancelled.

You think that May is a totally normal month for a blizzard.

~A few comments from Lorajean Current (who grew up in Pine Brook Hills)

## FIRESIDE CHAT

### What Are The Dangers of Red Trees?

By John Benson, Fire Chief



Red trees. Beetle-hit trees. Here in Boulder County we are seeing and hearing a lot more about the beetle problems. So what does that mean to you as a home owner and me as a firefighter? It means a possibility of increased fire activity, an increased fuel load on any given property, and an increased danger to homeowners who do not take down these dead trees.

When a tree dies, the tree as a whole becomes more susceptible to fire. This is due to a lack of moisture in the tree and dead needles which have not shed yet. These trees ignite quicker and burn more intensely. If these trees are still standing among an existing grove, the increased fire behavior could potentially cause a running crown fire, depending on topography, tree densities and weather.

Once the needles have shed, the trees becomes less volatile, but now if the trees are not cut down and removed, you have the problem of blow-down. This occurs when the tree's root system begins to rot away. Due to a lack of nutrients, wind and time these trees will eventually blow down and produce more surface or horizontal fuels for a fire to consume.

What are the other dangers? Without cutting down these dead trees homeowners run the risk of having these trees fall on houses, vehicles, septic fields, power lines and, possibly, people.

Think about this: you are out walking around on your property with dead trees above you, and a tree decides to fall down. Will you be able to move quickly enough to get out of the way or is that tree going to hit and perhaps kill you right there? What if you have kids or grandkids? Are you willing to accept the risk that a tree might fall on a loved one? This is a risk that can be avoided completely by removing dead trees.

Recommendation: If you have dead and dying trees have these trees removed immediately. You can call BMFPD's mitigation coordinator to have us remove those hazard trees or we can recommend a tree cutting service to you. Let's get rid of these hazard trees before any further damage can occur.

## ON THE WATER FRONT

By Bob de Haas

The "dirt piles" that were piled everywhere are now history. The dirt has all been moved and the final contours completed. The entire area has been seeded, hydro mulched, and a sprinkler system installed. The goal is to get a fall growth of the grasses so that, come spring, the area will really start growing! The District planted all native plants with the goal, of course,



Photo By Ron Rovtar  
Bob and Honeybear at work.

to make the area look as natural as possible.

The "Move the Dirt" fundraiser really helped the District. The total raised was \$51,444.41.

Of that total,

\$10,940.00 was raised

by the auction, and that amount was

matched by an anonymous donor. Al Gerrish, Pam Creswell, and Marshal Swanton were all key in motivating people to donate. I know there must have been more people whom I am not aware of, but our hats are off to everyone. While the total may not have reached the goal of \$75,000.00 it is still a very impressive amount. It's not too late to donate if you like what you see. If you haven't seen the area, take a moment and drive by. It really does look very nice.

Everyone should have received our newsletter showing that the District is again in compliance with the State and EPA regulations for disinfection byproducts. The "natural" solutions that the District used performed better and faster than anticipated and were more cost effective than other alternatives.

The last bit of news is that it is budget time for the Water District. The Board of Directors will be discussing the budget for 2009 on November 6 and December 4. The budget needs to be adopted by early December so that it can be submitted to the County Commissioners. All of the meetings will start at 4:30 P.M. and will be held at the Pine Brook Hills Community Center. Everyone is welcome to attend. Copies of the proposed budget can be obtained from the Water District Office.

The District employees and the Board of Directors would like to thank you all for your patience and support during the last five years while the reservoir project went from just an idea to what you see today.

## CLOSE CALL IN PINE BROOK HILLS

By Ron Rovtar

Dan Pears was standing on his deck September 4, watching what should have been a routine maintenance procedure when a near disaster occurred. Larry Munholland, of Apex Rooter and Plumbing Services, had exited his septic pumping truck and was going to work on the septic tank's opening.

"I heard like a snap or something and I heard him shout," Pears said. "I looked at the truck and it started to move and he (Munholland) yelled." Soon the truck tumbled over the ridge at the side of the driveway, but not before Munholland had apparently scrambled into its passenger door in a futile attempt to stop the out-of-control vehicle. "I heard him screaming. I went down the driveway. I called 911. I thought he was gone, to tell you the truth," Pears related.

Munholland ended up trapped from the waist down under the heavy tank truck, which came to rest at the edge of



Photo By Ron Rovtar

Timber Lane below Pears' and Nancy Solomon's home at 66 Timber Lane. A truck from Marv's Quality Towing Service helped stabilize the septic truck while rescuers from Boulder Mountain Fire Protection District and neighboring response agencies worked to extricate Munholland. Personnel from the Boulder County Sheriff's Department and the Colorado State Patrol were also on the scene. The Patrol did not issue a ticket.

Munholland was transported to Boulder Community Hospital by a Flight for Life helicopter. He was released from the hospital on September 7. Apex said Munholland will probably be off work for a couple months as the scrapes on his legs heal and swelling subsides.

"Considering what could have happened, Munholland was pretty lucky," Pears noted. "My wife spoke with his wife. He had a serious road rash. No broken bones or anything like that. I was really impressed with all the firefighters that came up here. They knew what they were doing. They had everything organized pretty well. They did a good job."

The Fire Department Auxiliary invites you to:

## MOUNTAIN EXPRESSIONS 2008

Mark your Calendar!

*Fine Arts, Crafts and Home-baked Goodies*

**Saturday, November 8**

**10 am - 5 pm**

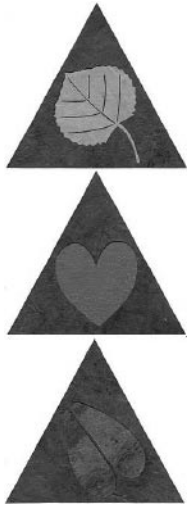
**Sunday, November 9**

**noon - 4 pm**

**At the Community Center**

**1905 Linden Drive**

*Exhibit and Sale to Support  
BMFPD Volunteer Firefighters*



### Mountain Expressions Returns!

My name is Marysue Huckabee, 16 year resident of Boulder Heights and a past Board Member of the Boulder Mountain Fire Protection District. We appreciate all the community support in the past and look forward to another successful year.

Watch your mail for further details. We will have lots of returning artists and some new participants. Come support your neighborhood artists and the fire department by shopping locally!

I am eager to work with you as we prepare for yet another season. There are plenty of opportunities to participate either as an artist or a helper before or during the event. We would love to count on your help! Please contact Marysue Huckabee 303-443-7409 or [mwhqhl@comcast.net](mailto:mwhqhl@comcast.net).



### RAPTORS ENRAPTURE PINE BROOKER

By Will Toon

My name is Will Toon. I'm ten years old, I am in fifth grade, and go to Bixby school. I have lived in Pine Brook Hills for ten years. I like living up here because it is quieter than the city of Boulder and it's forested.

I became interested in raptors when I was about three years old because of the turkey vultures (*Cathartes aura*) that flew over my head from time to time.

When I was older I saw the red-tailed hawks (*Buteo jamaicensis*)

that were searching for prey. I like raptors because of the way they fly, hunt and live. A few special things people don't know are that raptors help the environment, but sadly a lot of raptors are endangered. This is a pity because if



there were no raptors there would be a lot more prairie dogs, rabbits, squirrels and mice. Which means a lot more rabies, which means a lot more people getting rabies so there would be a lot more very painful shots and more death, which would not be good.

I have been to many places to see raptors. I've been to Panama where I saw my favorite raptor, the harpy eagle. I also went to the Galapagos where I got close to a Galapagos hawk. I loved going to British Columbia where I got to hold the raptors when I was on a falconry course. I have also been to Barr Lake in Brighton, which has a bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) nest that I went to see on international migratory bird day. Westminster has an eagle nest at Standley Reservoir where you can see the eagles from a blind.

There are a lot of bird species in Pine Brook Hills. You can see Swainson's hawks in the summer, but in September, they go to Argentina. You can also see red-tailed hawks flying around year round. There is even a red-tailed hawk nest near Linden in lower Pine Brook. In winter you can see sharp shinned hawks, Coopers hawks, and northern goshawks. Another common raptor you can see in Pine Brook Hills is an American kestrel. You can spot males because of their bright colors, but females are trickier to spot because of their darker color. Some common non-raptors you can see are Steller's jays, nuthatches, downy woodpeckers and American red robins. Pine Brook Hills is a great place to see birds!

## A GIFT FROM FRIENDS

By Janet Graaff

My 21 year-old son, David Parrish, died March 26 of a gunshot wound sustained while defending me from two attackers in the city of Puerto Vallarta. Friends and Pine Brook Hills neighbors have built a memorial path near my house at 228 Alpine Way. David's sister, Lesley (age 19), and I very much appreciate this. There were two work parties - one in May and the other in June. People arrived with shovels and pick-axes and cooperated beautifully in clearing, leveling and laying flagstone (P.S. someone might want to return to collect his brown sweater left behind after the first work party). A small patio was built with a bench and a small Thai statue of the Buddha placed beneath the "eagle" tree at the bottom end of the path.

I commissioned Pine Brook sculptress Cha Cha to produce six life-size eagles that were mounted



Janet beneath the Eagle Arch

to as many trees by All Seasons Chalice (Star House) members Jerry Gehringer and Toby Marchard. Cha Cha also created an eagle arch over the beginning of the path half way down the driveway. The path starts a little distance away from the house because Lesley and I want friends and neighbors to feel free

to visit and walk the path at their convenience.

The eagle theme commemorates some of David's visionary qualities. His photography and writing make clear that he cared about finding creative ways to bring people together across the world. He had traveled to Thailand while at Alexander Dawson School, and subsequently to Southern Africa, Europe and also Morocco, where he spent a semester learning Arabic. The next country he had hoped to visit was Kenya - in part because when he was a child I called him my Maasai warrior: tall, skinny, quiet, dignified, and always respectful of others.

David cared deeply about protecting children in the Third World from easily-preventable diseases such

as hookworm and tetanus. So does a nonprofit, Soles4Souls, that now has a David Parrish webpage from which one can order flipflops with a logo of the Flatirons designed by David and Lesley when they were together. A twenty-four dollar contribution will get you a pair shipped to you and two pairs shipped to Africa. Please consider visiting [www.soles4souls.org](http://www.soles4souls.org). Also, Boulder's own Adventure Records has produced its 2008 CD, Curvee 5, in David's honor. You can support local musicians by visiting [www.adventurerecords.com](http://www.adventurerecords.com).

I am taking a sabbatical from CU for the fall semester, maybe longer. I am renovating our home to allow for paying guests and possibly also a long term renter (please contact me if you know of anyone who might be interested). We still own a home in Sayulita, north of Puerto Vallarta. We intend to keep it both as a vacation home and a vacation rental.

I wish to thank all the friends and neighbors who have made the David Memorial Path a reality, and I invite you to visit it in person.



### NEWCOMER NEWS

By Pam Creswell

After looking at only one Pine Brook house, newcomers **Jason and Katy Pollock** were smitten. On opening the front door, Jason declared, "This is our house." Jason, originally from Missoula, is a creative writer in advertising. Katy, who comes from Portland, works in marketing and creates home-sewn apparel. With hiking, biking and reading as shared hobbies, they certainly chose a perfect community.

Newcomers **Kiki Mock and Dion Sheronis** love U.S. and international travel but suspect that they will miss their new home on Highview when away. Since retiring, Dion is able to enjoy more time gardening. They have been Boulder residents for years but are now facing new challenges - deer! Kiki, when not working as a dental hygienist, loves to bake and cook. Kiki describes the two of them as people of Greek heritage who are very family oriented. With gardening and baking as hobbies, I'd suspect that they are very home oriented too.

Newcomers on Wildwood Lane, **Donna and Alan Bourey**

have only been in Boulder since August but had been coming to the area to hike for 18 years. Donna and Alan had worked together for 30 years, Allen as an attorney and Donna as a paralegal. Now that they are retiring Donna plans to spend more time with her hobbies of travel (U.S. and abroad), reading and photography. Alan quite ambitiously plans both to write a book and to go back to school for a second graduate degree.

**Mark Cronshaw**, our new Wildcat Lane neighbor, comes from an international family: he is American, his parents are English, and his three siblings are Canadian. He got his BA in Chemical Engineering at Cambridge in the U.K., his Masters in Chemical Engineering at CalTech, his MBA in Dallas and his PhD in Engineering-Economic Systems at Stanford with a dissertation on game theory. His parents weren't the only ones who moved around a lot!

While new to Pine Brook Hills, Mark has been teaching economics at CU since 1989 and has raised two kids here. He currently works as a chief economist for a Boulder oil, gas and mining consulting firm. His work took him to Afghanistan four times, and he expects to travel soon to the Caucasus to visit Georgia. Mark says he would like to find a way to share his large organic garden with the community (hmm?). When not working or gardening, Mark enjoys music, cooking, hiking, skiing, and time with friends.

**Ron Rovtar and Kady Offen** recently made the move from Sunshine Canyon to Timber Lane and are already deeply involved in the community. You may have seen Ron's photography in **The Boulder Camera**, Boulder Mountain Fire's newsletter **OnFire**, and our own **Pine Brook Press** (see pp. 1, 2, 5 and 16). Ron was previously a writer and photographer for the Columbus Dispatch. He has recently become affiliated with Keller Williams Realty, with a special interest in using photography and the internet to assist in real estate transactions. His wife, Kady Offen, has two degrees in English and worked in journalism and educational publishing, but switched to drug and alcohol counseling and worked in a huge range of settings. Currently she is a Court Appointed Special Advocate ("CASA") with Voices for Children, acting as an advocate for children in social service cases. She also volunteers at the Homeless Shelter. Ron and Kady have a 23 years old daughter and a son who is turning 18. They are pleased with the move to Pine Brook, commenting, "People are so friendly

here!" Welcome!

After Richard's experience as a Special Education teacher, **Richard and Denise Kaplan** became organic gardeners in Canada. Next big move was to New York City where Richard became a commodities trader. Their odyssey eventually landed them in Boulder where it took them just one day to find and to put under contract their new Pine Brook Road home. They bought it last June, they have just recently settled in. An avid skier, Richard knew he belonged in Colorado and Denise wanted a longer growing season for their garden than they had in Frisco, where they had been spending time over the previous seven years. Denise makes beautiful quilts and donates them to charity. She is also quite the voracious reader and book collector, I'm told. They have jumped right into our community and are a great addition.

#### **OOPS! Corrections to our story in the summer issue on the Reed/Zimmer-Reed family:**

Bob Zimmer's wife's name is Laurajane, not Maryjane, and the co-housing community that they were involved in for 15 years is Nyland in Lafayette, not Newlands in Boulder. Sorry!

I asked Laurajane for more information about her sculpture website and want to share that information in her own words. "I began doing third world people initially because I found their faces so interesting. I had done traveling in Mexico, the Middle East and Africa and thoroughly enjoyed the people I met. The process of creating these pieces in such detail became a very intimate experience, and I felt like the sculptures began to come alive. I saw the humanity in each piece and wanted to share that with others, since we can sometimes have preconceptions about people and cultures we haven't experienced. My wish is that we can appreciate our differences and recognize the similarities in the heart of who we are as human beings." Laurajane's website is [ljzimmer.com](http://ljzimmer.com), and it's wonderful!

**Important notice to all newcomers:** If you haven't gotten on the Pine Brook Hills email list, and would like to be in the know about meetings, minutes, community events, bear and mountain lion sightings, etc., please email [president@pinebrookhills.org](mailto:president@pinebrookhills.org) to be added to the list.

Also, if I have been unable to reach you and you would like to be featured in the next Pine Brook Press, please email me at [pamelasuzzane@gmail.com](mailto:pamelasuzzane@gmail.com). Thanks!



## THE SHIFTY LITTLE HABITS OF PINE BEETLES

By Suzanne Adams

As soon as we learn some facts about Mountain Pine Beetles, the beetles change their behavior. For example, we were confidently told that pine beetles wouldn't attack trees above 8000 feet. Tell that to Summit County. And that they wouldn't attack trees under 8 inches in diameter. Grand County found out about that one. Or that the beetle epidemic wouldn't shift from lodgepoles to ponderosas. Surprise, Boulder County!

Even when you are discussing beetle behavior at one elevation, diameter and species, things change. Beetles behave differently when their numbers are at endemic v. epidemic levels. When they are at endemic levels (which is a normal number for a given location) they prefer weaker trees that a small number of beetles can overcome without being pitched out by the tree's resin. In this situation, thinning trees is effective because it causes each tree to be healthier, with more resin available to expel an invading beetle. Even when the beetles conquer a tree in an endemic situation, fewer beetles survive, because the thinner phloem provides less nourishment.

What should a tree-loving community do in an endemic situation? Begin by walking your own property looking for the signs of bark beetle infestation, such as "popcorn" (pitch tubes) on the bark. Help the neighborhood by pointing out beetle-hit trees that property owners may not have seen. Join the campaign to hunt down the beetle-hit trees, and remove the beetles' habitat by cutting the infested trees and treating the wood by stripping the bark and chipping the slash, or removing the wood from pine forests.

But when the beetles have reached epidemic levels due to various factors such as drought, warmer winters, and overstocked forests, their behavior changes. Now they prefer the nicest, biggest trees. A larger number of beetles attacking a big, healthy tree can overwhelm the tree's defenses. And then the beetles have another advantage: the thicker phloem of the tree aids survival during the winter - better nourishment - so the beetle population increases even more. Tree huggers in an epidemic need to spray their pet trees, that being the best defense against the beetles. Spraying does work. A subdivision near Breckenridge sprayed 14,000 trees and lost only two of those trees to beetles. Most unsprayed trees will be

lost in an epidemic. Ways to encourage the regeneration of pine forests will be discussed in a future issue.

**Where are we now? According to Forest Health Consultant Bruce Benninghoff, who has examined PBH's forest over the course of several years, we are in the buildup stage from endemic to epidemic levels of bark beetles.** 121 property inspections this year by the Beetle Busters and the BMFPD Mitigation Program revealed 64 properties with an infestation by at least one of the four kinds of bark beetles that threaten the forest. It is still possible to mitigate the effects of the infestation, but it will take a whole community effort to do so. Learn the symptoms of bark beetle infestation and check your property. Write [beetlebusters@gmail.com](mailto:beetlebusters@gmail.com) for help from friendly neighbors!



### A NEW KIND OF "HOUSING CYCLE"

PBH resident and realtor Chris Cullen has taken on a new real estate endeavor. Formerly with Home Real Estate (providers of the PBH car stickers), Chris has joined Pedal to Properties of Boulder. Pedal to Properties is an innovative new real estate company that offers home buyers the option of viewing properties on cruiser bikes.



"It takes a bit more time to do showings on bikes and I'm certainly not going to make anyone pedal to Pine Brook," said Cullen, "but high gas prices and growing environmental concerns made me realize there is a market for this. The biking service is an option that can be requested at any time and we do have racks that can accommodate

the bikes if there is a neighborhood you would like to see that is out of town." Pedal To Properties also provides bikes free of charge to area hotels for clients to use. Articles about the company's innovative approach have appeared in The Wall Street Journal and on ABC News.

Chris donated a new cruiser bike to the "Move the Dirt" auction at the community summer picnic. Luke Landin, of S. Cedar Brook Road, was the highest bidder. "Watch out for him on Linden!" says Cullen, "and please call me if you see someone on our bikes!"



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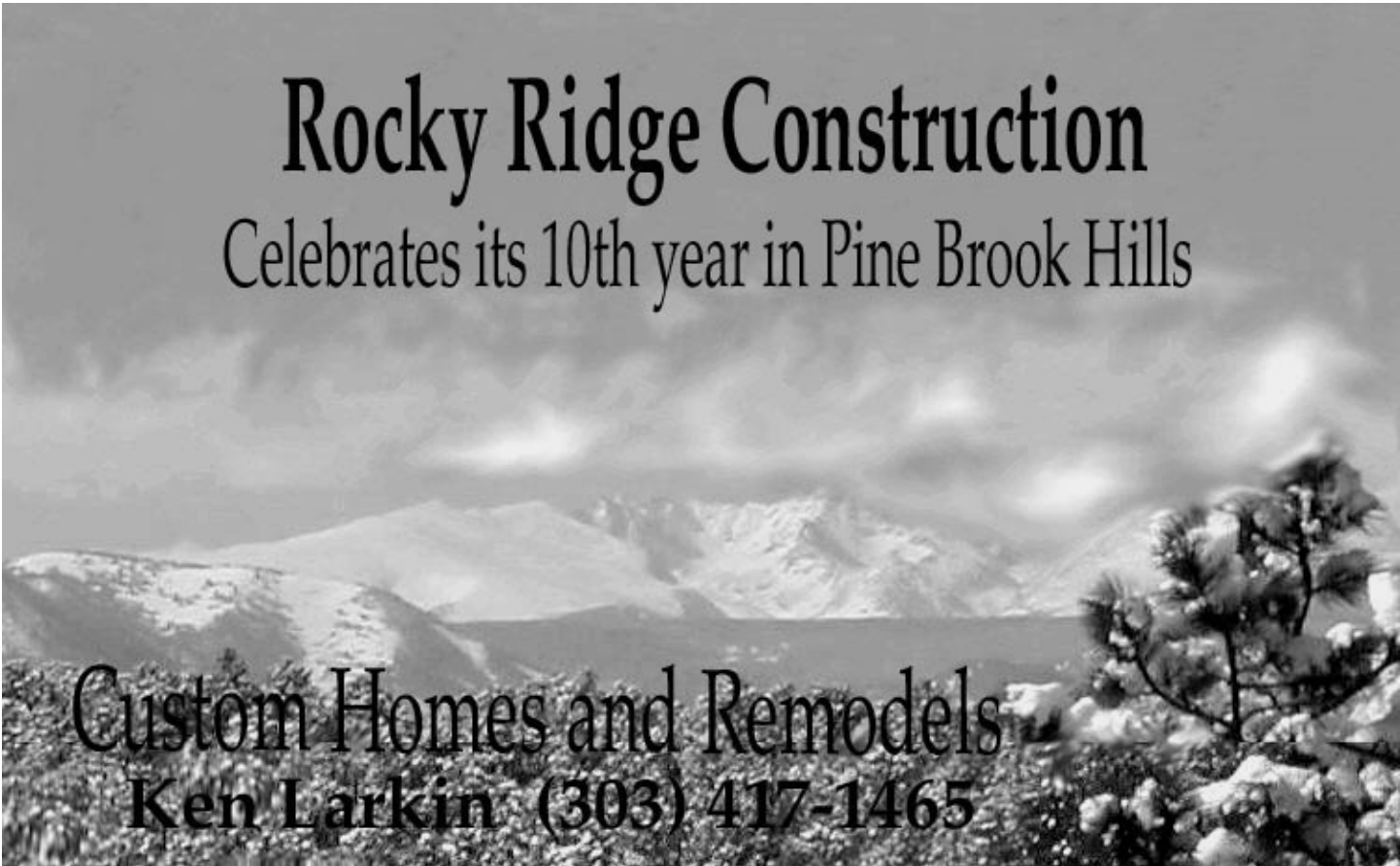
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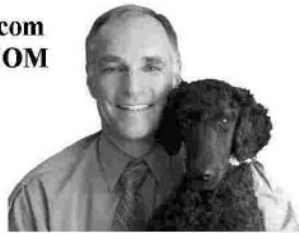


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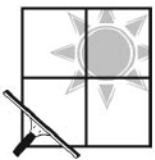


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## THE GRANITE GARDEN:

### A Conversation with Jay Markel

It's exciting to see that the Water District has moved mountains and Pine Brookers now have a new preoccupation: watching the grass grow! But, looking ahead, could there be anything more than grass on the slopes around the reservoir? A conversation with Pine Brooker and landscape designer Jay Markel suggested that there are a multitude of possibilities, both for the Rez and for our own gardens. For example, wildflower seeds could be planted in the late fall between Halloween and Thanksgiving. Another possibility is to buy flats of wildflowers through contributions made to the Water District. Because the Water District is a governmental entity it can obtain plants at very reasonable prices. Jay adds \$50 to his water bill each month as a contribution to cover more interesting vegetation.

But WHAT plants would make sense? Jay suggests *Liatris*, the little pink flower you see growing wild all over Pine Brook. *Blackeyed Susan*, *Mexican Hat*, *Pentstemon*, *fireweed* and the bushy type *sunflowers* can all be planted from seed. *Corkscrew Willow* would grow by the water and is an interesting plant, useful in flower arrangements. *Birdsfoot Cinquefoil*, the white *dianthus* and *Sheep Fescue* are great ground covers. They do turn brown when they need water but they don't die. Jay says, "I just love them!" As they are zero maintenance, low-growing and don't need mowing, they are good plants for fire prone areas like our own. A shrub he particularly enjoys is *Prunus Americana* - native plum - which grows wild in Pine Brook. Jay has found it on Timber Lane, among other places. The fruit is tasty, and the shrub will succor and grow into a thicket, much enjoyed by birds.

Where to get good plants and seeds? Jay recommends *Timberline Gardens*, which has a useful connection to *Santa Fe's High Country Gardens*. It's possible to request flats now for the next planting season. Another good way to get seeds is to hike in the high country and harvest seeds by shaking the tops of the plants. That's what *Restoration Botanists* do: they harvest the seeds before construction and replant what grew there naturally. Seeds are tough. Some of them have been known to last hundreds of years. Scatter the seeds and work into the soil with a small steel rake.

What about deer? Jay has a Nietzsche-like approach



to plants: what doesn't kill them makes them stronger. Yes, the deer may chomp the flowers but they don't care for mouthfuls of dirt, and chomping helps the plants develop substructure. It says here.

Jay's thought is that people could plan for little area to donate as memorials, for an anniversary, graduation, or whatever. Around the fire station where the community gathers and by the walkway along the water would be good places for community projects. But, Jay emphasizes, make an AREA, not just a single tree plopped somewhere. Maybe a little stone bench, a tree, some groundcover. "Give a bag of 100 daffodils - that's such a sweet thing! And there will be 300 daffodils in a few years."

His enthusiasm for the reservoir is great, and as we talked, he suggested that he could offer a garden workshop in the spring with thoughts on design and plants that would survive in our granite gardens. It's a generous offer. He responded, "No, I'm so grateful that this gets to be my life. I'm just so grateful."



## A PINE BROOK STORY

Ten years ago, after suffering debilitating injuries in a motor vehicle accident that interrupted her career in writing and editing, Susan Woodcock took what she envisioned as a temporary house sitting job in PBH at a house that was for sale. Ten years later, Susan is as much a fixture in Pine Brook as many long term residents. That first house sitting job lasted only a month as the house sold quickly. As she was loading her car, neighbors asked where she was going? They said that they were going away for two weeks and she could stay in their house. These were the *Wedlakes* who used to live on *Hawk Lane*. From them everything flowed. They treated her as family and introduced her to the neighborhood. Susan had no family here and PBH became her family. She sat for the *Hummers*, the *Springers* and the *Triggs*. Then she met *Suzanne Adams*. Suzanne called others and soon Susan had an extensive house sitting network here.

She calls PBH a very special place, everyone has treated her with compassion, openness and unexpected acts of kindness. She says that people here mean what they say.

With hope and optimism, Susan is looking forward to restarting her career and we wish her the best. She has given us at least as much as PBH has given her.

A QUIZ: HOW MANY BROWN TREES ON THIS PBH SLOPE?



How Many Beetle-hit Trees are on this PBH Slope? If each tree contained Mountain Pine Beetles, how many new trees could be hit in the next year? If the trees were infested with Ips Beetles (with a potential four generations a year), how many new trees might be infested in the next year? Answers below. HINT: each MBP tree can infest two to eight new trees in each annual flight. Ips could have the same infestation rate but with four flights a year. However, a caveat, reliable statistics on this question are hard to come by. This is biology, not engineering!



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Answers to the Beetle Quiz: 6, 12 to 48, Potentially 192



Growing Grass by the Rez after Moving the Dirt

*Photo by Ron Rovtar*

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