



# Pine Brook Press

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

SPRING 2012



## THE BIGGEST, BADDEST GARAGE SALE..... COMING TO YOUR COMMUNITY CENTER MAY 18, 19, AND 20

It's Garage Sale Time!

And the calendar has rolled around to that time again. Spring means GARAGE SALE!!!!!!

This year the committee has decided to try something new. Figuring that more hours open = more shoppers = more items sold = more money for the fire department, we've decided to open on Sunday morning.



3..2..1..Waiting for the Start

Every year we have had a tractor-trailer load of unsold treasures at the end of our sale. Although they go to a good home (Goodwill), we would much prefer to sell more of them so we are hopeful being open for an extra half day will help. We will be counting on our outstanding group of volunteers to step up to staff another shift.



If you are new to the area, here's the scoop on this big event. If you're not new, then consider this a reminder of

why it's important and how you can take part. This is the Fire Department Auxiliary's **largest single fund raiser (over \$ 18,000 in 2011)** for its work in support of our BMFPD volunteers. Monies raised are used for

such things as provisioning at training sessions and on incidents; helping to pay for additional equipment to improve the department's ability to service the

district; recognition events, etc.

To have yet another successful sale, we need the help of all of you. How can you help?

### 1. Donate

We will need lots of donations to have a

successful sale. Here are our guidelines:

**What makes a good donation:** Things that are in good usable condition, clean and in working order.

**What we won't take:** Anything that's broken, building materials, hazardous materials, computers more than 4 years old or incomplete systems (stand-alone monitors, printers, etc.), non flat-screen TVs, guns, large appliances, mattresses, and custom window coverings. Since we must be able to sell what we get, we do reserve the right to decline any donations.

**What types of items are good:** Almost anything that is not listed in the "won't take" list. To really help the bottom line, a car, boat, snowmobile or similar item would be a super donation!

Of course all your donations are tax deductible and we will provide a receipt. You are responsible for assigning the value to your donations.

### 2. Volunteer

Many volunteers are needed to make the sale successful. And with adding another shift during the sale, we're counting on y'all for even more help. If you have

previously worked at our garage sale, we will be calling you to enlist your help again this year. If you have not volunteered before but would like to help out, please call us at 303-440-6132. We have lots of possible "jobs" ... both before, during, and after the sale. We are a fun group to work with, so come out and join us!

**3. Publicize the Sale & Shop at the Sale**

No matter how much great stuff is donated, it takes a lot of shoppers for us to have a successful sale. Making some purchases at the sale is a great way for you to support our firefighters (and get some



The Complete Shopper, aka Diane Waddell

goodies for yourself). This is one of the best sales in the area, so spread the word amongst your friends. We will have flyers available for distribution in advance of the sale. If you would like some flyers, please let us know. We will also have a version that can be distributed electronically. We would appreciate anyone who is willing to pass this along via e-mail, facebook, twitter, or however you stay in touch electronically with all your garage-sale loving friends

Here's the schedule. Please mark the dates on your calendar.

**Collecting Donations at the Pine Brook Firehouse**

Saturday, May 5	10 AM – 2 PM
Sunday, May 6	10 AM – 2 PM
Saturday, May 12	10 AM – 2 PM
Sunday, May 13	10 AM – 2 PM

**The Big Sale**

Friday, May 18	9 AM – 4 PM
Saturday, May 19	9 AM – 4 PM
Sunday, May 20	9 AM – 4 PM

See you there.  
Babette and Art Markey, Garage Sale Co-Chairs  
303-440-6132

**NEWCOMER NEWS**

Compiled By Jo Wiedemann

**Dan and Jana Weinberger** moved to Pine Brook Hills in the middle of November 2011 – just in time for Thanksgiving in their new home. Prior to moving, they lived in Boulder for the past 10 years. While the Weinbergers enjoyed the community of Boulder, they always had a dream of living in the foothills. The Pine Brook community was exactly what they were looking for. According to Dan, "To be honest, we did not know it existed until we started looking for homes." Jana, a native of Estonia, came to Boulder on a ski scholarship from the University of Colorado in 2002. She is currently the Nordic Ski coach for the University and has been for the past 4 seasons. Dan is a financial advisor with Wells Fargo Advisors in the Boulder Office. Their daughter, Klara, is 20 months old and keeps their life very fun and active. Klara seems to love the house and the nature that surrounds Pine Brook Hills.



Jana and Dan met on the CU ski team in 2002, and they married in 2008. Skiing is a big part of their lives, and it allows them to enjoy the outdoors in the winter. Like most PBHers, they also enjoy being active in the summers as well, whether it be camping, biking, or hiking. Traveling is also an important and enjoyable part of their life, and they take a trip each summer to Estonia to be with Jana's family. Dan says, "We are very happy to become a part of this community and look forward to meeting more of the neighbors."

**Mike and Catherine Von Hatten** moved to Pine Tree Lane from St. Thomas in the U.S. Virgin Islands in



November 2011 along with their dogs, Lily and Louie. They had been visiting the Boulder area for several years, since their daughter, Ashley, and son-in-law, John, live nearby in Westminster. They were drawn to the mountains, beautiful views, and quiet of Pine Brook Hills.

Mike is a retired architect who owned his own practice in St. Louis, MO, for many years. He enjoys redesigning and rebuilding houses having just renovated a home in St. Thomas. Catherine is a retired public school administrator who continues to consult with schools, enjoys walks with her dogs, and is learning to water-color paint.

**PINE BROOK HILLS  
HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION  
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**COMMUNITY CALENDAR**

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

**HOA MEETING, Tuesday, April 24th.** Potluck at 6 P.M. followed by new neighbor introduction at 7 P.M. At 7:10 P.M. talk on our weather - "How the Big Scale Influences the Small Scale," by local expert Ron Schwiesow. Business meeting at 7:40 P.M.

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

**AUXILIARY GARAGE SALE** - Garage Sale Donation drop-off: 10 AM until 2 PM on 5/5, 5/6, 5/12, and 5/13. The BIG SALE: 9 AM until 4 PM on 5/18, 19 and 5/20. (See page 1.)

**FIRE BOARD** - Meets the 2nd Monday of every month at 6:30 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 444-9851 for confirmation.

**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 Patter**

By Dave Davies, HOA President

Our next Members meeting is Tuesday, April 24th, at the Community Center.

Join us on April 24th at 6 pm for a potluck dinner and at 7pm we will have as speaker noted local expert Ron Schwiesow. His talk's thought-provoking title is "How the Big Scale Influences the Small Scale." Ron will present a light hearted look at the origins of our local weather.



Ron is not only a degreed Meteorologist but he also is well known locally for his excellent, insightful and yet light humorous presentations on the origins of Boulder's weather. As Ron says, "My goal is to inspire you to look up regularly at your atmospheric environment with increased understanding and enjoyment of what is going on around you."

There are more details on page 15 of this issue.

In the last issue of the Pine Brook Press, I asked for input as to what we could do to broaden the scope of the HOA and to make it more meaningful for the community.

**A number of you responded with some ideas, they included the following:**

- a) Organizing a Spring neighborhood “clean up.” This would include putting together a team of volunteers, fixing them up with appropriate tools and protective gear, and walking the verges and public spaces in PBH to clean up the garbage and debris that has accumulated during the winter months. We could even extend this to removal of “slash”—the tree and bush debris left after cutting and trimming. Removal Dumpsters would be provided.
- b) Setting up a local community EcoPass program to facilitate the use of public transportation. Community-based programs exist in several county subdivisions and for at least the first two years they are subsidized by the county. Even though we don’t have direct access to the bus service it is only down Linden to Broadway, not far. The county requires a minimum number of people. So let me know if you have interest.
- c) Several of you have suggested that we consider extending the roads program to fund the addition of bike lanes on PBH streets. A wonderful thought BUT very expensive. Unfortunately, it appears beyond our resources. Cleaning up the edges of Linden as described above might be a small contribution however.
- d) Helping our elderly and infirm “shut-ins” by organizing a neighborhood program that assists with transportation and provides a resource base also seems to be a popular idea.

**Let me know which of these attracts your attention and in particular let me know if you might be able to volunteer to help.** The HOA has some financial resources and can help organize. Email me at [davedavies.pbh@gmail.com](mailto:davedavies.pbh@gmail.com).

### **PBH Directory Update**

We have had MUCH feedback on the PBH Directory—ranging from “Where is it?” to “Don’t put me in.”

As I am sure most of you know by now, we are for the first time creating the Directory electronically and have a great team to help us: Bob Olliver, Cheri Cathey, Chris Cullen and of course (where would we be without him) Param Singh. It should be ready very soon after this Press issue. Generating it directly electronically means that YOU enter the information; this eliminates errors that come from manually tran-

scribing scribbled names, emails, etc. It also reduces the amount of work for the team and cuts cost. As always your first copy of the Directory is free.

### **Last But Not Least**

Two very helpful members of PBH have left PBH and created openings for volunteers.

We thank Pam Creswell for all her hard work in almost all the positions in the HOA; she has been President, Treasurer, and most recently Social Chair. Good luck in Florida Pam and Marshall!

This leaves the Social Chair position open. The main tasks of this position are to organize a summer social event and a Christmas party. The rest of the Board can help. This is a fun job for a social person! Please think about volunteering and email me or call me at 303-938-0522.

And our recently-appointed PB Press Ad collections coordinator, Hillary Grady, is departing for Minnesota. Hillary has done a great job in the last few months to re-establish and collect ad revenues for the ads that run in the PB Press. This position is now also open. Please help--I can explain what needs to be done and since Hillary and the previous coordinator Tim Gercher have done a good job it should be relatively straightforward.

Two ways you can help your neighbors while having (believe it or not) some fun.

### **A Very Last Note**

Our VP candidate for 2012 was unfortunately forced to withdraw his name due to work obligations (yes — the economy is picking up!). For now Bill Alexander, our last year’s President, will assume the duties of the VP and join the ARC. Neil Patel will join the board as an “at large” member to help out.



## **TREASURER’S REPORT**

By Terry O’Brien, HOA Treasurer

**D**ear PBH residents,  
Spring is officially here, the daffodils will be blooming soon, and our HOA is off to a good 2012 start, from your Treasurer’s financial perspective. Through March 20th, the deadline for submission of these comments, we have achieved approximately 61% of our 2012 budgeted dues collection from 159 checks received, an average of more than \$100 per household. These results have been achieved through only email solicitations.

The next step will be to mail a postcard reminder for those residents still on the "unpaid list." Please make your dues payments payable to Pine Brook Hills HOA (do not include my name or others as additional payees). Your checks can be dropped off at the drop box near the entrance to the Community Center or mailed to 1907 Linden Drive, Boulder, CO 80304. If you receive a postcard and have already sent a check in some time earlier, please let me know and I'll check to make sure we did receive your check and please accept our apologies if our notes are incorrect.

We appreciate the financial contributions from you homeowners and those who also contribute their valuable time in the many PBH activities. Thank you!

### Help Wanted

My wife Cathie and I have decided to implement a plan we have been thinking about for the past couple of years since I stopped actively working. We have found that we spend more time in the summer away from Boulder and want to spend more time away in the winter. Therefore, we have decided to relocate our primary residence back to Minnesota (not for their winters). As a result, PBH will need a new Treasurer in the next couple of months (if we are fortunate in selling our house).

The job is not technical, but it does need some organizational skill and attention to detail. It would be helpful for a replacement to have some overlap with me prior to our departure. The largest part of the job is collecting dues and that task should be essentially completed prior to our departure. If you have the willingness to invest some of your time, your HOA members and officers would be very grateful. Please feel free to contact me at 303-530-3199 or email [thobrien@comcast.net](mailto:thobrien@comcast.net) with any questions.



## ON THE WATER FRONT

With Bob de Haas

Many of you may have noticed that the reservoir level has dropped more than normal for the winter. This is not due to any problems with the reservoir; it is still outperforming the design criteria.

So why does the reservoir look "low"? What has happened this winter is that some of the junior water rights that we normally have at least some opportunities to move have not been eligible to be used. So we

have not been able to move as much water this winter as we usually do.

This is not a problem! At the beginning of spring, we can start moving our most senior water rights and we should be able to fill the reservoir by the end of June or early July.

Credit Card payments are accepted at [pinebrookwater.com](http://pinebrookwater.com) for your convenience.

**REMEMBER: If you see running water on the street and it isn't obvious where it is coming from, call our office, 303-443-5394! It could be a water main break!**



## ROADS COMMITTEE UPDATE

By Cindy Lindsay

Since the November 2011 election, in which PBH residents voted down a bonded road rehabilitation plan specific to our subdivision, the Roads Committee has been working with other subdivisions to pressure the county commissioners to readdress the roads at a county level. At this level, the costs can be managed at a reasonable level. All conversations to have the county take on the financial responsibility for road rehabilitation have failed. The commissioners have been very clear with us that they have tax funds for road maintenance, but do not have the funds to cover subdivision road rehabilitation.

The options being explored by the commissioners are to put road rehab back on the ballot or to use the commissioners' power to establish a LID to address the need for road rehab.

There will be on-going discussions with the commissioners. They hold an open session on the first Tuesday of each month at 11:30 AM at the county courthouse. If you would like to express your opinion on the roads issues, join us there.



## BARK BEETLE TIME AGAIN

It's that time of year again! With Spring just around the corner, it's time to protect your evergreens against the 2012 generation(s) of bark beetles. Traditionally Ips beetles are on the move when daytime temperatures consistently reach 50-60 °F. Mountain pine beetles are supposed to start to fly in July, but in the last few years we have seen fresh pitch tubes as early as April. And there is growing support for

the theory that we may be seeing two generations of mountain pine beetles each year.

### What do you need to do to protect your trees?

First, you want to be sure you didn't miss any beetle attacks last year. Check trees for dead or dying branches, fading of the needles from dark green to light green, and pitch tubes.

### Spray

The BeetleBusters recommend that you spray the trees you would really hate to lose. There are a number of contractors who spray for bark beetles in and around Pine Brook Hills. Be sure you understand the services offered and be sure to check on references.



These white/cream colored pitch tubes on the trunk of the tree are associated with mountain pine beetles.

how Verbenone works and how to use it, check out: [http://www.fortheforest.org/page\\_68](http://www.fortheforest.org/page_68).

### Keep Your Property Tidy

Remember how your mother always told you to keep your room clean and tidy? The same applies to your property. It was a windy winter, and many of us have to deal with downed trees and branches. It is important to remove this wood from the neighborhood, especially if it is still "green." Recently cut wood emits pheromones that attract bark beetles.

If you need more information on spraying, ordering Verbenone patches, what a beetle-hit tree looks like, getting rid of downed wood, etc., email the BeetleBusters at [beetlebusters@gmail.com](mailto:beetlebusters@gmail.com) or visit the BeetleBuster website at [www.beetlebusters.net](http://www.beetlebusters.net).

Let's keep our Pondys alive and well!

## WILDFIRE MITIGATION - WHY YOU SHOULD TAKE ACTION

If a wildfire started in your neighborhood today, do you feel confident that you have done everything you can to protect your home? Wildfires can start in an instant, but actions taken today could be the reason your home survives.

Ryan Ludlow, Boulder County's Outreach Forester, gave a presentation at our recent Pine Brook Hills HOA meeting about how to create and maintain effective wildfire mitigation around your home. His talk focused on steps that you should take that can dramatically improve the chances of your home surviving. For more than 20 years, researchers such as Dr. Jack Cohen of the Missoula Fire Sciences Laboratory have studied why homes burn. They are convinced that large fires can continue to occur without the associated large numbers of homes lost. The ultimate factor in whether a home survives has everything to do with the actions you take before the fire occurs.

Here is a brief list of the most important actions Ryan covered during his presentation.

### On-going Yard Work

- Cut all grass within 30 feet of your home to 6 inches or less. The farther out you weed-whip the better!
- Clean up all pine needles and dead grass from around your home's foundation, gutters, and roof.
- Store firewood and other flammable material at least 30 feet away from your home on the uphill side.
- Don't keep flammable items on your deck. Store patio cushions, rugs, or other flammable items inside when not in use.

### Tree Modification

- Remove most, if not all, trees within 15-30 feet of your home.
- Prune the lower 10 feet of branches on most mature trees within 100 feet of your home.
- Remove most "ladder fuels" within 100 feet of your home. Ladder fuels are small trees that grow beneath mature trees and act as a ladder which allows fire to climb from the forest floor into the tree tops.
- Thin mature trees so that there is at least 20-30 feet between individual tree tops or clumps of 3-5 trees.
- Make sure no branches overhang the roof, chimney, or any decks.

### Build or Retrofit with Ignition Resistant Building Materials

- Install 3-5 feet of rock around the entire home!
- Replace wood whenever possible with ignition resistant materials. Especially wood roofs.
- Install 1/8 inch metal screen on all attic and crawl-space vents. This can help prevent burning embers from entering your home.

If you would like further information, please contact Ryan Ludlow at 720-564-2641 or [rludlow@bouldercounty.org](mailto:rludlow@bouldercounty.org) or online at [www.bouldercounty.org/foresthealth](http://www.bouldercounty.org/foresthealth).



### YES, PBH HAS A BOULDER COUNTY APPROVED FIRE CODE

In the last decade, there have been multiple wildland fires on every point of the compass around Pine Brook Hills. While there have also been some near misses within PBH, there has been no loss of property. We can attribute this to the significant amount of fire mitigation work in our community (the biggest item in the HOA budget), a vigilant and proactive volunteer fire department (staffed by your neighbors), and a fire code intended to minimize the risk of fires originating here.

With the approach of summer and long range forecasts pointing to drought conditions, it is pertinent to reacquaint ourselves with the important features of our fire code.

- 1) All open burning is prohibited at all times except for the burning of slash, which has to be approved and can proceed only under the direct supervision of the fire department. "Open burning" includes all outdoor fires except fires completely contained in a cooking unit, such as a charcoal grill.
- 2) The storage, sale, use, or discharge of fireworks, including permissible fireworks, is prohibited. Around the July 4th holiday, the fire department has instituted patrols to enforce this ban.
- 3) The Fire Chief is authorized to fully enforce this Boulder County code by taking whatever reasonable action is necessary to correct the fire hazard, including but not limited to a cease and desist order and/or the issuance of a citation.

The entire fire code can be viewed at [www.pinebrookhills.org/Fire/fire\\_code.htm](http://www.pinebrookhills.org/Fire/fire_code.htm). Questions should be directed to the Boulder Mountain Fire Protection District at (303) 440-0235. Let us stay safe!

### PINE BROOK HILLS PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION GUIDELINES

One of the most common issues brought before the Architecture Review Committee in recent years has been the complaint of residents about noise, inconvenience, and indeed dangerous situations revolving around home construction in PBH.

To address these issues the committee has drawn up a potential set of construction guidelines that we would like have you, the residents, review and comment on prior to it being formally voted on at the next general meeting. These guidelines are based on our existing covenants and the Boulder County Contractor Guidelines and input was taken from local builders before drawing these up. It should be noted that Boulder County has a strict noise ordinance. If the county noise ordinance was rigorously enforced, it could severely impact the ability to do construction or many other activities in PBH.

If you have any comments, you can send them to us ahead of the meeting. You may address your comments to Neil Patel at [ARC@pinebrookhills.org](mailto:ARC@pinebrookhills.org).

The ARC expects these construction guidelines to apply to all PBH lot owners, residents, guests, construction contractors, architects, workers, etc. The potential set of construction are as follows...

- \* As you begin to plan any construction on your site, please contact the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) for informal advice. This should help you make informed design decisions that will alleviate future issues.
- \* PBH ARC approval is required before any construction or other visual changes can be made to your property.
- \* In addition to the discussion of your project with the ARC, you will also need permits/approvals for your project from the Boulder County government at various stages of design and construction.
- \* For the construction of one detached single-family dwelling, all work must be completed within two years from the commencement of construction (a one year extension is possible under certain conditions).
- \* For work that will entail any significant noise, it should be performed during the following times: Mon. – Fri. 7:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m.; Sat. 8:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m.; Sun 9:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. Please consider limiting noise on Sunday if possible, your

neighbors would be very appreciative. We are a quiet, residential, mountain community, and we hope you will bear that in mind as work is conducted on your property.

- \* Wherever possible, temporary structures, heavy machinery, portable toilets, workers' vehicles, and any other facilities/equipment on-site should be situated out of sight of neighboring properties. It is especially important that all equipment and construction vehicles be parked off of public roads to enable emergency access by fire, police, and ambulance apparatus.
- \* Please pay special attention to cutting and/or removing Mountain Pine Beetle infested trees. For advise on identifying infested trees or advise on protecting your trees from infestation, please contact the PBH Beetle Busters on their website: [www.beetlebusters.net](http://www.beetlebusters.net).
- \* There should be no detriments to other lots and residents such as dangerous, unhealthy, hazardous, or unsightly conditions. This includes excessive noise, general construction debris, and trash. Because wildlife is abundant in PBH, there is a particular concern that food and trash not be left unattended so as to attract bears, vermin, or other wildlife.
- \* Due to the dry and forested environment of PBH, wildfires are a real concern for our community. Please help reduce the risks of starting a wildfire by paying special attention to combustible hazards and alerting those doing work or visiting your property to do the same. Some special concerns are that cigarettes and other ignition sources be disposed of properly and never thrown out of car windows or into dry brush. Also, please ask those working with welding or other highly combustible materials to attend to the sources at all times.
- \* Consult our local fire professionals for fire mitigation advice for your property at any time.

Please contact the Architectural Review Committee at [ARC@pinebrookhills.org](mailto:ARC@pinebrookhills.org) if you have any questions, concerns, or requests to accommodate particular needs. Your cooperation is anticipated and greatly appreciated!

--The Pine Brook Hills Architectural Review Committee



## THE GRANITE GARDEN

By Jay Markel

In Spring there is more than enough to do in the garden. Remember the native plums we noticed in late summer? This is a great time to prune, pardon the pun, those and other native shrubs on your property.



"Why?" people often ask. Well, pruning is done by deer and other critters all the time. One of the most beautiful lilac bushes I've seen in the mountains was constantly trimmed by deer into a beautiful tall fountain spray of flowers. By pruning the native shrubs, you can give them a more attractive form, help them in drier years, and increase the flowers and fruiting in wetter years.

Pruning is easy. Simply remove the dead branches. These branches are easy to identify by scratching the branch bark with a thumbnail. This time of year, especially, it should be green under the bark. If not, trim back to where it is green or just cut off the dead branches.

Shrubs continue to try to energize these branches instead of putting the full force of spring behind the best growth. Also, you can tidy up long runners and branches reaching out into unwanted areas. Trimming can yield a much greater abundance of flowers and give our wild areas a much healthier and attractive garden presence.

The last month has been hot, dry, and windy so water, water, water! It's early, but perennials are starting to pop up and they'll appreciate a nice soak.

If you have harvested native seeds from a previous year, it's not too early to plant them. I like to give them some cold nights, so that the seeds get into the cycle of the season. I've had better germination rates this way rather than waiting for consistently warm weather.

A particularly good native perennial to plant is *liatris spicata*. You can find these bulbs at McG's for only 59 cents. I have found they will come up in even the driest years, but are just smaller. In good years, they can reach 18 inches or more. *Liatris* are great cut flowers, which is good as they aren't deer proof. Of other bulbs, I can really only recommend the large selection of daffodils. They are deer proof and multiply very well.

Anything you hope to put outdoors for a vegetable garden should be growing up from seed indoors now. A fan, or a place where seedlings can get some fairly strong natural ventilation, will help the stems



strengthen for their future outdoor life, don't let them get too tall and thin. Pinching them back while indoors will also keep them shorter and more bountiful.

I've planted some of our native *blue delphinium* seeds. These had a great year in PBH two years ago and were particularly prominent on the drive up the entrance canyon below the community center along Linden. Those of you who prefer not to harvest seeds thinking that they should just multiply in situ, I can only say they already spread to their capacity naturally. The small fraction we can harvest can be propagated about 100 times, or more efficiently, than the rate they would germinate if left in the wild. So, don't worry, there are plenty to go around!

The Sonoran *Sunset hyssop*, which I've mentioned in the past, is deer proof and spreads very well. I've planted some of their harvested seeds behind walls where water naturally collects.

I'll be talking at a Center for Resource Management event on April 11, in Golden, on water wise and xeriscape gardens, if you have any interest. One of the points I'll discuss is how small walls can slow, and thereby utilize, water that would simply run off your property.

A happy and beautiful spring to you all!

## GROWING COMMUNITY GARDENS

By Mark Cronshaw and Aria Seidl

Wildstar Farm Community Gardens will be marking its third season this year. Located on Mark Cronshaw's property at 138 Wildcat Lane, this large garden offers enticing advantages for Pine Brook Hills' mountain gardeners (a notably dedicated breed). The Community Gardens are enclosed by a six-foot, deer-proof fence and include south-facing terraced beds, good fertile soil, an irrigation system, compost piles, an existing small orchard, plus raspberries and herbs. The farm is certified as organic by the Colorado Department of Agriculture.

The garden has a magnificent sunny southern exposure and is a beautiful place to garden. Over the past two seasons, various gardeners have grown a wide variety of produce such as flowers, salad greens, beans, squash, radishes, cucumbers, tomatoes, carrots, beets, and more. The small orchard and existing gardens are producing increasing amounts of apples, cherries, black currants and raspberries, as well as culinary and medicinal herbs. The plum and pear trees are still young.

The farm is located in a part of Pine Brook Hills known as Two Mile Gulch. This area has been farmed off and on for decades. With each year, the gardens continue to improve. Last year we activated the compost piles, brought in organic compost, and continued our quest to improve the soil and better manage the weeds. This year, if all goes well, we hope to upgrade our irrigation system. There are also possibilities for more fruit/nut trees and specialty gardens, depending on what people want. How about a strawberry patch?

One of the benefits of community gardening is the sharing of knowledge and experiences. It is also a joy to watch other gardener's plots change from bare soil to young shoots to vegetables and fruits over the course of the season. Friendship is another 'blossom' that grows as a by-product of shared time in the garden.



Cherry Pickers

Plots are available for this 2012 growing season. They measure roughly 24 by 8 feet, which is plenty of space to grow a variety of vegetables and fruits.

The rent for the season is \$100 per plot, and the cost for water/irrigation is shared. The water bill for each plot last year was just under \$200. Unfortunately, it is a fact of life that water is expensive in PBH. Organic compost is available at the farm for a small fee.

The gardeners who had community plots last year will be returning again this year. Newcomers can rub shoulders with them and find out what worked well. To quote one gardener: "Ann and I enjoyed working our plot at Wildstar Farm last summer. Our top crops were green beans, lettuce, kale, cucumbers, and cherry tomatoes. The soil was great, and so was the company." — Nick

Our lives tend to be busy, yet there is a real satisfaction from working in harmony with nature to prepare the soil, sow the seeds, nurture the plants, pull the weeds, and enjoy the (literal) fruits of our labors. Then if desired, come celebrate with an end-of-the-season harvest festival that we host every year.

If you would like more information, please contact Mark Cronshaw (the property owner and novice gardener) or Aria Seidl (an organic gardener and community assistant) at [mbcronshaw@gmail.com](mailto:mbcronshaw@gmail.com) or [ariaseidl@comcast.net](mailto:ariaseidl@comcast.net). We hope to see you in the garden!

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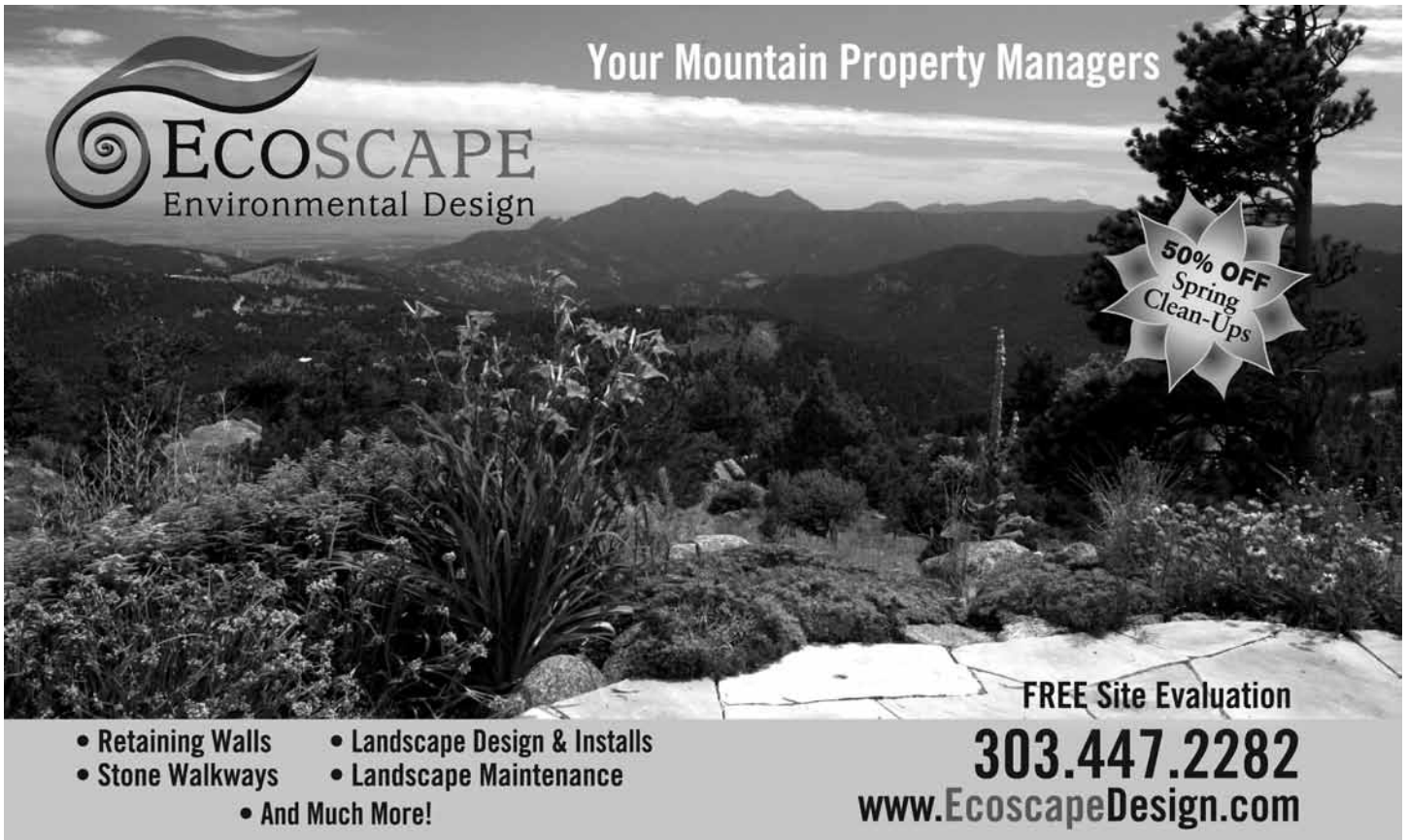




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## UP THE COLORADO RIVER

Pine Brook resident Steve Maxwell recently took a two-week, 3000-mile road trip up the entire length of the Colorado River basin. Maxwell, who is a water resource consultant and who has lived in Pine Brook for nearly 20 years, joined a buddy from his graduate school days, Steve Cox of Washington, D.C., to make the epic road trip.

The trip started out at the Mexican border town of San Luis Colorado. The mighty Colorado River – the major river system of the western United States – carries at its peak some 15 million acre-feet per year of water (one acre-foot is enough water to cover an acre of land to a one-foot depth). By the time the river reaches Mexico however, it has shrunk to only 1.5 million acre-feet per year – the amount which the United States must deliver to Mexico under a 1944 treaty – and it is channelized into a small canal, with a massive human migration fence on the far side.



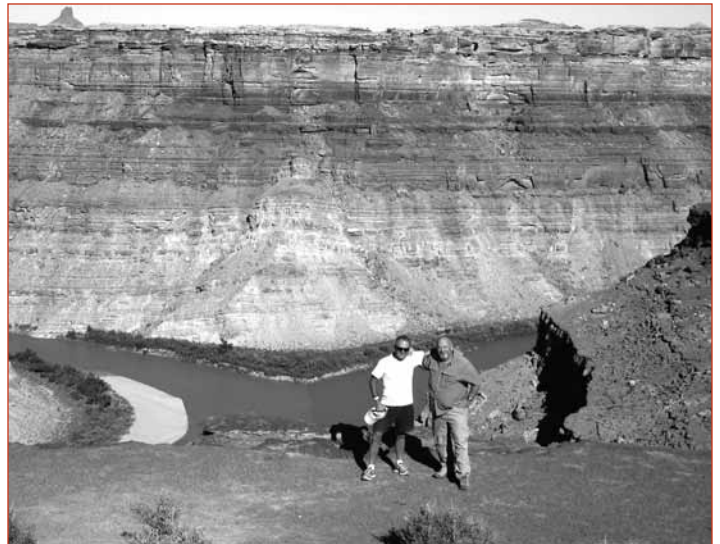
The Colorado “river” at the Mexican border.

Indeed, the entire flow of the Colorado River is almost entirely consumed before it reaches its historical delta at the Sea of Cortez, some fifty miles south of the Mexican border. Given the great historical and economic significance of the Colorado River (cheap electricity from the Hoover Dam supported the development of the U.S. aerospace and defense industry) as well as the vast expanse of land which it drains, Maxwell said that it was pretty deflating to see what the great river looks like at its mouth.

From the border, Maxwell and Cox drove up the Colorado River, which forms the boundary between Arizona and California, to Las Vegas. Along the way, Maxwell had arranged special tours of the major Bureau of Reclamation dam and hydropower facilities – the Imperial, Palo Verde, Parker and Davis dams, and particularly the Hoover Dam facility, which creates Lake Mead behind it. After a night in Las Vegas and a couple of days biking and hiking the Grand Canyon, the

road trip led to the massive Glen Canyon Dam near Page, Arizona, – which forms Lake Powell. Lakes Powell and Mead are the two largest man-made reservoirs in the country, capable of storing almost 60 million acre-feet of water when they are full. Both reservoirs are however, now dangerously low, as a result of the on-going drought in the southwestern United States. Maxwell, who also serves on the Pine Brook Water District Board of Directors, points out that in comparison, our reservoir here in Pine Brook has a capacity of approximately one hundred acre-feet!

Near Moab, Utah, the duo hiked about fifteen miles through Canyonlands National Park to the confluence of the Green River with the Colorado River. The Green is the major tributary to the Colorado River, and during many times of the year, boasts both a much larger drainage area, as well as a bigger flow than the Colorado itself at that point. In fact, in the early 1900s, there was a move by Wyoming and Utah politicians to rename the entire river system the Green River, but they were over-ruled by Colorado’s politically stronger Congressional delegation.



The Confluence of the Green and the Colorado.

After a quick run through Arches National Park, it was on through central Utah, over the Uinta Mountain range, and up to the Flaming Gorge Dam. This dam creates another massive and spectacular reservoir on the Green River and spans the border of Colorado and Wyoming. On the way back down into the northwestern corner of Colorado, the duo hiked to the confluence of the Green River and the Yampa River – a spectacular deep canyon just north of Dinosaur, Colorado. The Yampa River, which rises in the mountains near Steamboat Springs, remains the only major tributary of the Colorado which still runs wild, i.e., on which no

dams have been built.

From there, the journey continued up to the Grand Lake area to visit the workings of the Colorado-Big Thompson project. This is the largest trans-mountain diversion project in the state, which brings about 200,000 acre-feet of water per year from the Colorado basin through a 13-mile tunnel directly under Rocky Mountain National Park, to provide irrigation water for northeastern Colorado agriculture. Interestingly, this waterway also provides some of the city of Boulder's drinking water. Finally, Maxwell and Cox went on to the very headwaters, north of Grand Lake in the national park, where one can virtually step across the very beginning of the Colorado River.



Headwaters.

Maxwell, who has recently written a book about global water resource challenges entitled *The Future of Water* said that the trip was a great combination of both work and play. Besides reconnecting with a friend whom he hadn't seen much in 30 years and checking out a lot of micro-breweries along the way, he also learned a lot. In retrospect, although Maxwell has been studying and working in Western water issues for years, he said that "it was a very educational experience" and that "there is nothing like seeing it with your own eyes."

## WEATHER: HOW THE BIG SCALE INFLUENCES THE SMALL SCALE

At the HOA meeting on April 24th, we'll be joined by weather expert Ron Schwiesow.

He will discuss a very interesting topic: Weather: How the big scale influences the small scale.

Ron's talk will focus on answering weather questions such as "Why does the wind blow?" and are current conditions "Stable or unstable?" The ability to answer these questions allows us to make our own weather predictions. Once we can imagine how the big scale is set up at the moment, and where the pressure systems are located from our own observations of wind and clouds, we can forecast what to expect in our neighborhood or area over the next few hours.

Ron will not only present on the origins of local weather he will also demonstrate some actual experiments that illustrate the concept of cloud formation!

Ron's goal is to inspire you to look up regularly at your atmospheric environment with increased understanding and enjoyment of what is going on around you.



After beginning a career at NOAA in Boulder in developing laser instrumentation to measure the atmosphere, Ron earned a degree in meteorology at Penn State to help him understand how better to apply the instrumentation. Subsequent projects moved him to NCAR and Ball Aerospace, where he helped develop a space-borne laser system to measure atmospheric aerosols. Ron enjoys boating because it gives him a platform from which to observe the weather and it motivates him to try to stay out of weather trouble. Now retired, Ron and Nan occasionally cruise both coasts of the United States, and in between, in their trailerable sailboat, *Romsø*.

Ron teaches a weather course for the local Power Squadron and works on computer-aided designs for unusual boats.

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