



Pine Brook Press

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

SUMMER 2006



TWO FIRE DEPARTMENT FUNDRAISERS PLANNED

Pine Brook Hills residents are organizing events to compensate our fire district for the loss of funds usually generated by the Boulder Mountain Fire Protection District Auxiliary's community garage sale, cancelled this year because of the reservoir construction.

CAR SHOW AND BLOCK PARTY!

Date: Sunday, August 27

Concours/Car show: 12 noon-5 p.m. \$10

Block Party 4-8 p.m. \$25, including Dinner, Drinks and Live Band

HOME TOUR, PLUS DAM VISIT!

Dates: Saturday and Sunday, September 23 and 24, 10 to 4

Price: \$15 purchased in advance; \$20 on the days of the tour



Car Show Organizer: Art Rancis

Boulder View Lane will be closed in mall type fashion to make it easy to view a variety of automobiles including sports cars, specialty SUVs and assorted classic cars ranging from antiques to current models. Judges, led by a Nationally Certified Concours judge with 20 years car judging experience, will include Frank Amoroso, the "Car Guy" on KWGN's weekly auto show, and Melanie Pray, BMFPD firefighter whose family has been involved with Concours since she was a child. Only recall that Melanie's daughter is named Portia (pronounced Porsche)!

Wanted: Cars

As Art navigates through PBH and Boulder Heights, he reports regularly seeing real gems that their owners cherish. Some recent sightings include:

- ▶ Very sharp 1966 Fort Mustang Convertible being polished in a garage

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Organizers: Bert Johansen and the Fire Auxiliary

The fall home tour will feature four (and perhaps five) outstanding homes, plus the dedication of the Pine Brook Reservoir and dam, and a guided tour of the new filtration plant. The homes include two that have been nominated for awards:

Nancy and Scott Coburn's home at 1142 Linden Drive (you've watched it being built - now see the innovative and delightful interior!) and Cindy Lindsay and Steve Sheafor's home at 1133 Timber Lane (an astonishingly beautiful home nestled in huge rock outcroppings).

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Car Show and Block Party....

- ▶ Brand new SLK55 AMG Mercedes Roadster on Olde Stage Road
- ▶ Anthracite grey H2 Hummer on Linden
- ▶ Nicely pin-stripped supercharged Mini on the way to work
- ▶ Vintage GTO
- ▶ 1930's Ford being restored

If you have a car that you would like to show, or if you would be willing to volunteer for a few hours to help with this event, please send an e-mail to artrancis@aol.com or call 588-5622 as soon as possible. Entry forms for the car show are inserted in this issue. A planning social event will be held for volunteers, who will get some fun perks plus free tickets to the Block Party/BBQ.

Block Party Organizer: Pam Creswell

Join your neighbors for THE fun community event of the summer, the block party/dinner - "Taste of North Boulder" on Boulder View Lane. Arrive early, see the cars, stay for a great dinner and drinks supplied by some new and exciting North Boulder eating places, then dance in the street to a popular local band. The Concours Awards Ceremony will be held at 7. All proceeds from the \$25 ticket price will go to support our Boulder Mountain Fire Protection District.

Volunteers are needed for the block party/dinner and ticket sales. If you can give a little time to support this community event please send an email to pcreswell@aol.com.



House Tour and Dam Visit.....

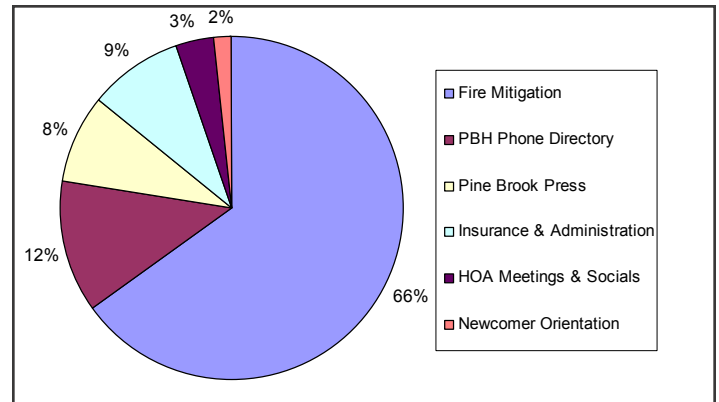
Ken Goldman's home at 260 Bristlecone Way is a wonderful example of Southwest architecture, with breathtaking backrange views. Peter Ramig was general contractor and did much of the design work for his home at 95 Acorn Lane. The house, which is built into a canyon adjoining Mt. Sanitas Open Space, features spectacular views to the East, North and West. Included as part of the tour will be a ceremony naming the "de Haas Dam," recognizing the extraordinary contributions to the Water District made by the de Haas family over the years. This part of the tour is especially recommended to all Pine Brookers.

All funds from the tour benefit the Boulder Mountain Fire Protection District.

WHERE DOES THE MONEY GO?

Your annual voluntary HOA contributions of only \$50 pay for a number of projects benefiting the community. The biggest expenditure by far is for fire mitigation. By obtaining matching grants we have doubled our investment in mitigation and fuel breaks (one of which, on Bristlecone Way, helped our fire department control the Sunshine Canyon Fire last March). Publishing and mailing the Pine Brook Press and the Pine Brook Hills Phone Directory, support for the Forest Health Initiative (a.k.a. Beetle Busters), insurance and community social events account for the remainder of the spending.

The HOA hopes that you will agree that the money is well spent. But only 65% of households contributed this year. If you haven't sent in dues this year, it's not too late! Our ability to work together as a community is one of Pine Brook's finest attributes.



Pie Chart from HOA Treasurer Alex Baris. Total annual budget approximately \$20,000.



Newest PBH residents on Meadowlook. How do we tell them apart? Why, Boy A and Boy B of course! Hope they don't lose those caps. (See Scat, p. 8).

**PINE BROOK HILLS
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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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

**HOA MEETING THURSDAY JULY 27 AT THE CHAUTAUQUA
PICNIC CENTER.** Potluck, 5:30 P.M., Concert (Mozart) at 7:30
P.M. Go to www.coloradomusicfest.org or call 303-440-7666 for
discount tickets (code word is "pinebrook").

PINE BROOK KIDS! Come to a Pine Brook Explorers party at Ayla Besemer's house, 1431 Timber Lane, on September 6, 4:00 to 5:30 P.M. at 1431 Timber Lane. Please RSVP to ayla@besemer.com or call Ayla at 443.0545. See story on p15.

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.

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

PRESIDENTIAL PONDERINGS

By Tim Triggs

Here we are in an exceptionally hot, dry summer. We should be proud that Pine Brook Hills, as a community, made the decision at the ballot box to create a reservoir. Of course we aren't sure when it will be full, but at least we aren't scratching our heads, trying to figure out how to get through the next drought. And if you pay attention to the climate experts, hot and dry could become the norm.



The water district plans to finish the dam by placing dirt on the face, creating a much flatter slope that can be walked without difficulty. I think the HOA would be interested in seeing additional native plantings such as native grasses, trees and shrubs (see story on p. 5). This idea will be open to discussion at our next HOA meeting.

As you may know, we have exhausted our current matching grant money on the Timber Lane fire mitigation project. We have completed work on many of the most hazardous areas, but another grant along with matching HOA funds will be required to complete the project. It will most likely be next year before work can resume.

At our last HOA meeting, concerns were voiced regarding the HOA income

received through our voluntary HOA membership dues. The concerns are twofold. First, we need to promote a higher percentage of households that pay the dues (currently 65% of households contribute, compared to 86% in previous years). Various ideas for doing this were expressed. Second, we may want to consider increasing the dollar amount of the dues. An increase to \$100 per year was suggested and seemed reasonable to many, when compared to other community organizations and when considering the services provided through HOA funding. See chart on expenses in this issue (page 2). Fire mitigation projects, even with matching grant assistance, are extremely expensive.

So there you have it, two good topics for discussion at the July HOA meeting. Again this year, our July HOA meeting will be held at the Chautauqua picnic shelter (just south of the concert hall) on Thursday July 27. The picnic-potluck starts at 5:30 pm, followed by the business meeting. This is an earlier than normal schedule, tying in with the Mozart concert that follows. See the top of page 3 for ticket information. This will be a wonderful concert if you enjoy classical music. If you don't, come to the picnic anyway!

Again, thanks to all of you who generously donate your time to our community. You make my job really easy, and you make this community a fantastic place to live.

I am looking forward to seeing everyone at our next HOA meeting in July.

(Tim can be reached at timtriggs@comcast.net or at 303-444-4093)



FIRE SIDE CHAT

From John Benson

NOTICE: Everyone is urged to exercise utmost caution; we are in a period of extreme fire danger. If you see someone using fireworks, notify dispatch (911) immediately. Also, DO NOT call the station to report smoke or emergencies. There is no one here most of the time to take a call. Calling the station for emergencies when there is no one here is just going to add unnecessary delay in the event of an emergency. Always call 911.

THE THIRD ARM: Would you like to be a part of the fire department but cannot commit the time or energy necessary for firefighting? A new possibility has just opened. "The Third Arm" is a new volunteer activity organized to supplement the two existing "arms," fire/

medical responders and the auxiliary. We foresee three major areas of activity: data collection, traffic control and direction during fire emergencies, and emergency evacuation assistance for people and animals.

The need for this group became clear during the March Sunshine Canyon Fire, when firefighters had to be used to direct traffic, and firefighter time was needed to evacuate pets. Members of the new organization will receive communication equipment and training, but the time commitment will be far less than for fire fighting. For more information or to volunteer call the fire station at 440-0235.

"FIRE! WILL YOU BE READY?" Watch your mail in July for a new DVD made by our own fire district. Based on the information in the Anchor Point Fire Risk Assessment commissioned for the Boulder Mountain Fire Protection District, this DVD was shot in our community and outlines the specific fire risks faced by each small neighborhood within the district. You'll probably spot places and people you know. The 15 minutes required for viewing will give you additional information about reducing the prospect of catastrophic losses within our fire district.



ON THE WATER FRONT

By Bob de Haas

The dam is done and the filtration plant is being built! We started filling the reservoir on June 2. Unfortunately we missed some of the early rains and snows that occurred back in March. None of us recall ever having seen an April and May so hot and dry. To get water into the reservoir we are de-treating treated water right out of the system and putting it directly into the reservoir. By doing this we can take advantage of the higher flows that are occurring now and will not be there later this summer, if this weather continues. Will we be able to put enough water into the reservoir to make it operational in early August? We don't know yet, but we'll give it our best shot.

As our newsletter stated we are advising everyone NOT to plant new landscaping. If this weather continues we may have to impose water restrictions again this year. We don't know exactly when, since it's weather dependent. In our opinion this year could rival the drought of 2002; currently this year's precipitation is only about 55% of normal. If it starts raining,

and by that we mean REAL rains on a regular basis, then the summer could turn into a fairly easy affair to handle.

If we don't get the rains we fully expect to lose our surface water source. If that happens we will be dependent on the wells and our tanks. The wells cannot keep up with demand, so that means once we have to switch to the wells each day we will be slowly draining the tanks. Until that time we are keeping the tanks full so that we are prepared.

We have also been out doing work on the system. We discovered minor leaks in a couple of manholes. The good news is that we fixed them. You might also be well served to check your homes for leaks!

To wrap up, the District is doing everything under its control to be prepared for another drought year. We hope you are, too.



HELP NEEDED TO PLAN REZ LANDSCAPING

Know anything about landscape design, wildflowers, native grasses or shrubs? Have opinions about how the reservoir site should be used? Your knowledge and opinions are needed! With the dam completed and the reservoir filling, questions of landscaping and re-planting the area arise. Pine Brooker Pete Lillydahl offers to head a planning committee to consider the options. All those with an interest in restoring the beauty of the reservoir area and weighing the possibilities for public use are urged to call Pete, in preparation for a meeting at the Community Center in early September. Bob de Haas, Pine Brook Water District Manager, encourages input from the community on this important question.

To volunteer or for further information call: Pete Lillydahl at 303.449.1447



BARK BEETLE EPIDEMIC

The Colorado Forestry Association is offering a tour of beetle-ravaged Grand County on September 9, 2006. The purpose of the tour is to increase public awareness of the magnitude of the epidemic. Foresters, including Bruce Benninghoff, our forest health consultant, will be available to answer questions. As the beetle population is rising in Pine Brook Hills, the tour is strongly recommended. Go to www.coloradoforestry.org for more information.

MOUNTAIN EXPRESSIONS RETURNS!

Your Fire Department Auxiliary is pleased to tell you that Mountain Expressions, our annual art, craft and baked goods sale, is returning after a year off due to the dam construction. Please mark your calendars for Saturday, November 4, 10 am - 5 pm and Sunday, November 5, noon - 4 pm and plan to spend a few minutes at the PBH Community Center (Fire Station 1) shopping and thereby supporting your dedicated firefighters.

We are, of course, going to come back with great gusto, so we are hoping there might be a few of you out there who would like to do more than shop. Helping with an Auxiliary event is a great way to get to know your fellow Pine Brookers - we have a lot of fun while working. In particular, we would love to find a publicity guru for the sale and a couple other new committee members, too. Give us a call.

Susan Maxwell, Mountain Expressions Coordinator, B.M.F.P.D. Auxiliary 303-444-9851.



NEWCOMER NEWS

By Pam Creswell

Robert and Joy Kaaz moved here from California after taking early retirement. They share their Alder Lane home with their dog, Belle, a Rhodesian Ridgeback. Joy is a fervent reader and Rob enjoys carpentry, graphic design and art. Both Rob and Joy practice Chi Kung, which they learned from a Chinese Taoist priest in San Francisco's Chinatown. Anyone who would like to learn and practice with them is welcome. Rob's special passion, though, is playing roots inspired music on his guitar. He would like any local musicians that might like to jam to email him at rkjk@comcast.net.

Isabel and Ed McDevitt

The McDevitts moved to Pine Brook from New York City in February. Self described as "East Coast-Philadelphia and Maine people," they say they are adjusting well to the western lifestyle. Isabel is enjoying time with her 9 month old daughter, Sophie, while Ed pursues a career as an Iron man Triathlete.

Marc Oarst

Mark shares his Pine Brook home with two other renters. He is studying Business and Finance at CU and enjoys spending time on his basketball team.

Cullen and Kirk O'Brian

"Awesome" and "a warm welcome" are the words they use to describe Pine Brook. Self-described as people

who "work hard and play hard," they place tremendous value on friends and family. With four children between ages 4 and 9, they enjoy their hobbies, most especially sailing their Hobie Cat on Boulder Reservoir. If you have children who might enjoy meeting this new Valley View family, please call them at 303-545-0183.

Dave and Hanneh Rothstein

Dave is a geologist. Hanneh, along with homemaking, makes and edits films.

They have two children: Ananda, age 9, and Izek, age 5. They are "so happy here" and hope to meet neighbors (close to South Cedar Brook) who have children the same ages. If you would like to contact them, please email tohanneh@msn.com.

Lee Strickler

Lee has been in Boulder for most of the last 18 years but has just purchased a home on South Cedar Brook. Lee practices law and is a partner in a Boulder firm.

If you are a newcomer who is not listed, I either don't have your phone number or I simply couldn't reach you. You can send information for the next issue to pcreswell2@aol.com.



PAINT YOUR WAY TO FIRE SAFETY?

By Suzanne Adams

When Fire Chief John Benson reached the scene of the fire, it looked like a possible case of arson. The smell of gasoline suggested that someone might have sprayed oil on the log home and tried to set it on fire. But, amazingly, the house did not burn. There was some charring of the garage door and trim, but after minimal sanding the house looked like new. Was it luck?

No. The owner had previously treated his home with a flame retardant. There are several on the market. Both McGuckins and Kwal Paint can special-order a product called FlameStop, a one-application, nontoxic material that turns ordinary wood siding, decks and railings into Class A fire resistant material. I decided to test it and coated a spare grape stake from our highly fire-hazardous fence, made a huge fire in the fireplace and placed the treated stake on top. While it did finally succumb to the flames and crumble, it resisted them for a very long time and did not actually catch fire. *Ran Ranson* at McGuckins suggests that when a wildfire comes through, it typically ignites what it can and moves on. The FlameStop-treated wood

will not support or spread a fire. *Ran* cautions that FlameStop is only effective on wood that is new, power-washed or sanded, because the product must be able to penetrate the wood.


FlameStop comes in three varieties. FlameStop I is designed for interior use. FlameStop II is a milky looking substance that goes on clear and doesn't alter the appearance of the wood, while FlameStop III is designed to be mixed with paint or stain to match any surface. Both II and III serve as wood sealers as well as fire retardants. FlameStop II is rather expensive, coming in 5 gallon containers that cost \$250 (enough to cover 625 square feet). However, the manufacturer says that it need only be applied once every five years. The material to be protected can be sprayed, brushed, or dipped into the product. As I didn't have a sprayer and dipping the fence and deck sounded challenging, I brushed FlameStop II on our power-washed decks and brushed FlameStop III, mixed with stain, on the fence. Both products were aesthetically acceptable.

These products differ from the residential based foam protection systems that can be sprayed on a home as a wildfire approaches. Foams provide protection for about 24 hours. Chief Benson doesn't recommend these systems for several reasons. Upkeep and maintenance may cause problems. Also, Benson is concerned that the system might give homeowners a false sense of security, leading them to ignore evacuation warnings. In case of fire, "I want the homeowners safely out of there," he says. However, he added that if any readers already have a foam system, please let the fire department know about it.

Does FlameStop work? I certainly hope so, but hope even more that it's never put to the test.



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HOPSCOTCHING PINE BROOKERS

We all love Pine Brook Hills. Some people love it so much that, when they need or want another house, it has to be another house in Pine Brook. Here are some recent hops:

1. Alex and Mitch Baris, from North Cedar Brook to Meadowlook Way
2. Jan Gordon and Derek Chow, from Alder Lane to Wildcat Lane
3. Gail and Bob Loveman, from Pine Tree Lane to Bristlecone Way
4. Bert Johansen, from Linden Drive to Hawk Lane
5. Cindy Lindsey and Steve Shaefer, from Wild Cat Lane to Timber Lane
6. Tom and Susan Noyes, from Linden Drive to Bristlecone Way
7. Matt Rheingold and Ashley DeWitt, from Linden Drive to Pine Brook Road
8. Thomas and Priya Huffman, from Pine Tree Lane to Bristlecone Way
9. Peter & Renee Maybee, from 4 Acorn Lane to 71 Acorn Lane, one of the smaller hops
- 10 Peter Ramig, from 274 South Cedar Brook to 95 Acorn Lane.

And, of course, we have Queen Hopscotcher Donna Johnson, who has built and lived in houses on North Cedar Brook, Alpine Way, Hawk Lane and Bristlecone Way. That's hopping!



INCREASE IN MOUNTAIN LION ACTIVITY

This spring there has been a noticeable increase in sightings and attacks in the Boulder area. On April 15, a seven year old boy was attacked on Flagstaff Mountain while hiking with his family. That lion was tracked and killed. There have been numerous sightings in Boulder, Louisville and Lafayette. In May, a pet cat was taken in the Newlands area, just below PBH. That lion was captured and removed.

In PBH, two dogs are reported to have been killed this spring and there have been several sightings in both upper and lower PBH.

As always, we should be aware that we live in a mountain zone overlapping with native wildlife. The PBH phone directory, on page 8, lists sensible precautions for living with mountain lions and bears. Children should not play outside alone and should come inside

before dusk. Similar precautions should be taken with pets. Do not feed deer or encourage them to come near your house. They are the primary prey for mountain lions. Where there are deer, lions will follow. Another attractor for lions may be your garden! See "The Granite Gardener" on p. 14.

If you have an encounter or feel threatened by a lion, call the Colorado Division of Wildlife (DOW) at 303-291-7227. In an emergency you can also call the Boulder Emergency Dispatch Center at 303-441-4444.

However, to put things in perspective, in Colorado history there have been only two confirmed and one possible fatality caused by lions. None have been in Boulder County.



CEDRIC FOSTER 1985 -2006

Cedric Foster, son of Tom and Veronique Foster, passed away at home in Pine Brook Hills on April 14, 2006. Cedric had been a student at Naropa University. A large number of friends gathered at the Shambhala Center in Boulder on April 20 and at a subsequent service at Naropa on April 23 to celebrate the life of this young man, who, in his mother's words, "was so caring for others and so thoughtful and mindful of the world."



Tom, Kelly, Veronique and Cedric (left to right).

PINE BROOK SCAT

The Straight Poop (OOPS!) Scoop

Twin boys, Raef and Liam, were born to Roger Henderson and Wren Schauer on March 22nd (see photo on p.2). They weighed 5.6 lbs. and 5.13 lbs. and by June 19th had already doubled their weight! Welcome, Raef and Liam!

That first week in March was pretty exciting for rookie firefighter Gail Loveman. After fighting the Sunshine Fire on Wednesday, she cancelled dinner plans to head on over to the Left Hand Fire the following Saturday. Describing her week's activities to family and friends back in Chicago, she asked whether a 56 year old woman should really be doing these things! A friend replied that yes, indeed, she should be doing what was clearly needed, but she should keep notes for a subsequent book, Old Women and Fire.

Jim and Dana Huddle's baby boy, Lucas James, was born on April 15th, weighing in at 5.15 lbs. He joins sisters Annabelle, 3, and Serafina, 1½. Boy, is he ever going to have an exciting childhood with his two older (and beautiful) sisters. Serafina was on the Press' front page last year as she decided to arrive early. Her birth is one that Dana, Jim, and some members of the Fire Department will long remember!

Our friend Jo Noble is leaving Pine Brook, but happily for us she will still be nearby part of the year, in a condo on North Broadway. Jo has created a nonprofit organization, Partnering for Africa's Future, and plans to spend half the year or more in Uganda.

Grim humor department: yellow evacuation ribbons fluttered from mailboxes and address markers in Pine Brook during the Sunshine Fire, after Sheriff's deputies had gone door-to-door, telling people to leave. Most did, but a few remained. Fire Chief John Benson has one message for people who refuse mandatory evacuations: "I just ask them to tell me the name of their dentist!"

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OH DEER

By Peter King-Smith.

Do the deer in PBH over the last few years seem to be less quick witted, intelligent and communicative? It may be our fault!! With good intentions we may have inadvertently contributed to a dilution of the superior deer gene pool we have come to appreciate in PBH.



Let me explain...

It all started around this time in 2001. Over Memorial Day weekend we had a house full of guests from out of town for our daughter's high school graduation, and we were all on the deck having coffee and enjoying the view. Much excitement ensued as a mother deer we knew quite well as Split Ear was headed our way with 2 very small newly born wobbly fawns in tow. Very cute. Anticipation and enthusiasm grew as she headed toward the mostly dry creek bed running between our place and our neighbors' in the direction of our prime viewing location.

My wife, Della, and I however saw the potential for a major problem. Split Ear usually kept her young ones in the rocks over by our other neighbors' place overlooking the creek which runs along the bottom of all of our properties. As she easily jumped the narrow deep ravine of the creek bed heading for "home," her fawns stopped and looked toward her with trepidation. Eager to be with its mother, the first fawn jumped and just managed to scramble to the other side, leaving one very small, very frightened baby left.

Reluctant to jump, but even more reluctant to be left alone, the last member of the family made a valiant attempt, scrambled for a moment and disappeared. Our guests let out a collective "Oh no!" and looked to me for answers. Feeling as though I should at least act as though I had some idea what to do, I confidently ran down to the ravine to survey the situation. The little fawn was about 12 feet down a 4 foot wide chasm looking very frightened but relatively healthy.

Now, in super-hero mode, I went quickly to the garage

to get our longest ladder. At 12 feet long it would only just reach. I could barely fit down the narrow confines but managed to get to the bottom, all the while trying to remain positive while hoping to hide my growing claustrophobia. Fortunately the fawn was so young that it hadn't yet learned to run or attempt to escape, so I was able to pick it up and with much difficulty get it to the top and to safety.

Split Ear had been wandering around at a distance looking very concerned. As I emerged with her baby she appeared ready to charge at her child's



abductor. Bravado evaporated and I put the fawn down and quickly headed out of the

way. I guess fawns learn very quickly to run and the little one scampered around in all directions and then, yes, back down the ravine.

Down I went again, retrieved the frightened little fawn and climbed back to the top. This time however it was unresponsive and would not even stand up. We made a nice comfortable temporary home for it and called the Colorado Department of Wildlife for advice. They came right away, checked the fawn over and explained that playing dead was its natural defensive behavior and that we should return it to the mother who was still down at the bottom of our property. With my now considerable experience in these matters, I braved the attention of a very agitated Split Ear, carried the fawn down much closer to home and far from the ravine, and once again put it down. Success! After a short while the deer family regrouped, Split Ear proceeded to undertake a thorough cleaning to remove my ever so unpleasant odor from her little one, the guests on our deck cheered and the story ended happily. For now.

A week or so later Split Ear came by with her two little ones to enjoy her favorite green patch below our deck. We congratulated ourselves on our humanitarian (deeritarian?) act and proceeded to enjoy the company of our bouncy little spotted grandchildren.

So what does all this have to do with dilution of the

gene pool you may well ask. Well, maybe there's no harm in helping a new mother who made an honest mistake. However, Split Ear and, we surmise, her offspring, have continued to make this ill-fated journey every year since, with the same result, and yes, we have continued to save them.

As of this writing, no such calamity has occurred yet this year. Maybe Mother Nature has noticed and inter-



vened in favor of the smarter members of our local deer population empowering them with the honor of creating our latest crop of fawns. Let's hope so!

If not, we confess to being responsible for contributing on an ongoing basis to a possible increase in the number of deer of diminished intellectual capability in our PBH population.

Sorry.



PINE CONE BOMBARDMENT!

Have you felt that you needed a hard hat to sit outside this summer? The trees seem to be dropping pine cones in unprecedented numbers this summer. But why?

Like flowers that struggle to put out blossoms just before they die, the trees that were pollinated last summer produced an unusual number of their "blossoms," the pine cones. This doesn't mean that the trees are going to die, but it is a definite sign that they are stressed. Pollination, our spring "yellow cloud," was hardly noticeable this year. There are few first year cones visible, meaning that next summer's cone crop will be very small.

Looking on the bright side, it's a great year to make pine cone wreaths - perhaps for Mountain Expressions this fall?

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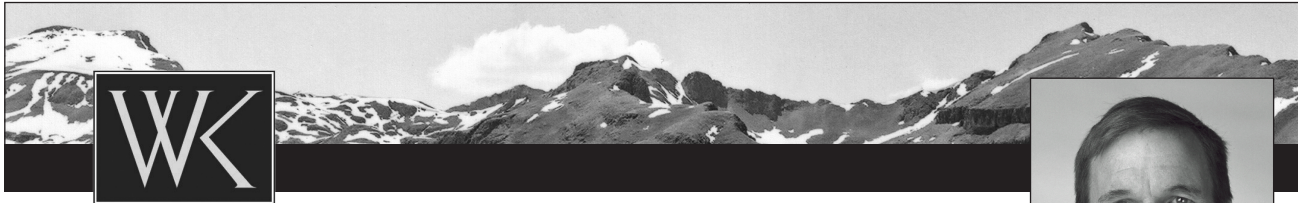
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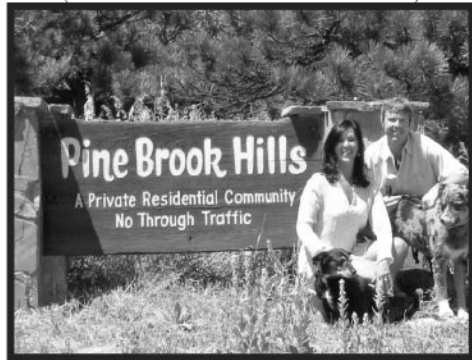


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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Becoming American....

Dear Neighbors:

Just wanted to let you all know that it's official: My husband and I were sworn in as American Citizens on Friday, May 26th. It was an incredible day. The ceremony was held in a theater in Denver. The judge who swore us in told us about some of the other immigrants who had come to the US and become American Citizens, Albert Einstein, Alexander Graham Bell, Madeleine Albright....we were in very good company indeed. The theater had two levels and friends and family watched from the balcony as about 300 of us were seated in the lower levels. There were so many smiling faces and lots of tears to go around. The theater was filled to capacity and represented by 78 different countries. They asked us to stand and remain standing as they called out the name of each of our home countries. It was amazing to watch the group slowly stand up. Each of us born in another country but all united by the dream of becoming an American Citizen. When they called Mexico, half the theater stood up and there was a big round of applause.

The hardest part for me was when they played the National Anthem, the version by Whitney Houston. I have always loved the American Anthem and while I have heard it played many times at baseball games and other sporting events...this time it was being played just for us. I really had to choke back the tears because it occurred to me that from that day on, the Star Spangled Banner would now be my National Anthem.

We were then asked to pledge the oath of allegiance and while my voice was cracking through most of it, I looked over to see tears streaming down my husband's face, because he had wanted to become an American Citizen since he was a child.

If you happened to drive by our house on the weekend you would have seen our deck covered in American Flags and red, white and blue balloons as we continued to celebrate throughout the memorial day weekend. Many people asked us why we wanted this so badly and why we had worked so hard to go through the process of becoming American Citizens...it's simple,



really. The United States had become the place where our house was located and we had grown to love it and wanted to make sure that legally we were granted the same rights and protection as other Americans - the right to vote, and carry an American passport.

But mostly we wanted to part of this amazing country that had welcomed us so warmly and given us such happiness and contentment.

Both my husband and I felt this incredible elation and relief when we were handed our naturalization certificates officially and legally naming us as American

Citizens....our dream was now a reality and after 7 years of waiting... we were finally home.

Patrica Belanger



THE GRANITE GARDEN

By Barbara Hosmer

In Search of Groundcovers That the Deer will Hate...

With a determination to make the deer find food that I have not paid for nor spent my time and effort planting and weeding and occasionally watering, I am researching my choices for groundcover plants. I have places near my house that have been ignored for years that I now want to make look as if there was some landscaping plan all along.

Initially, two plants that sounded promising because they smell good to humans, tolerate a lot of neglect, and the deer hate the way they smell so they leave them alone, got my interest: catnip (*Nepeta cataria*, also called catmint) and creeping thyme (also called common thyme, or *Thymus vulgaris*).

Catnip grows in sun or partial shade. It reseeds easily. Since it can grow to 3'x3', it can be easily cut back for a groundcover and gets more bushy and compact when you do so. It's an attractive gray-green with flowers that bloom all summer. Cats love the plant while in the ground or dried cuttings, HOWEVER, other neighborhood kitties might also be attracted, including MOUNTAIN LIONS. If you have experienced mountain lion visits in your yard, you might want to check to see if you have catmint attracting the big



kitty. Based on this information, I am not inclined to plant a large patch of catnip.

Drought-tolerant creeping thyme is recommended as a good groundcover to plant in the cracks of a stone or patio floor because it's smaller and shorter than catnip. It has a great fragrance and is a perennial, most of the time, in our zone. (The early hard freeze last fall was hard on some thyme I have had growing for the last several years.) It likes full sun and soil that has good drainage. I like this plant and I should also point out that that the bees like it too. The small lilac colored flowers bloom June through July. It's also considered the most popular culinary thyme because the leaves are so aromatic. You can use the leaves fresh or dried for seasoning your fish, poultry, soups and vegetables. Thyme tea is said to help digestion, sore throats and coughs.

Of the two choices, I'll take the bees over the mountain lions any day!

Other "odor" info: If you think you have skunks taking



Catnip

Creeping Thyme

up residence under a deck or similar place where they sleep during the day, sprinkle flour on the ground to watch for their tracks. If the tracks are leading away a few hours after dark, you can confirm your suspicions. Skunks usually head out one to two hours after dark. Some remedies suggest that the smell of Massengill lemon douche works very well (better than moth balls) to get skunks to find a new home. (I'm not kidding!) If you have the unfortunate need to try this remedy on skunks, please let us all know if it worked.

Happy gardening, no matter how small or grand your garden! Plant what smells good to you.

SUMMER FUN FOR EVERYONE

By Ayla Besemer, Age 9

Hi Pine Brook Kids!

Yeah!!! We are finally out of school! I'd first like to thank all the kids who came to the May Day party.



Left to right, Izak, Ananda, Ayla , Chloe, and Amber

It was great to meet new friends. Since we are out of school our days are filled with fun

things like swimming, hiking and just playing. One of my favorite things to do during summer is explore our neighborhood. I try to find all sorts of interesting natural items like trees, plants and animals. I thought you might like to try too. I have included a scavenger hunt for you, all things you find in Pine Brook Hills. Feel free to add more things you find. It might be fun to make a scrapbook of all your finds with samples (not animals though :-). You can include the date and time you found something along with sketches or photos. When our summer is over, we'll have a party to see what we all found. I'll see if I can get a park ranger or naturalist to come and speak about the amazing environment that we live in. Our Pine Brook Explorers party will be Wednesday, September 6th from 4:00 to 5:30 at my house (1431 Timber Lane). Please let me know if you will coming by calling me at 303-443-0545 or sending me an email at ayla@besemer.com. Have fun scavenging, Pine Brook Explorers!!!

Pine Brook Explorers Scavenger Hunt

Animals: Coyote, Fox, Rabbits, Bear, Abert Squirrels (black with tufted ears), Regular Squirrels, Deer (bucks, does and fawns), Mountain Lion, Flicker, Magpie, Mountain Jay, Hawk.

Challenge: Find a buck and count its points. Let's see who finds the buck with the most number of points.

Plants: Ponderosa Pine, other kinds of Pine Trees, Spruce Tree, Douglas Fir Tree, Cacti, Chokecherries, Columbine (state flower of Colorado), Poppies.

Challenge: Find Chamomile plants, pick the buds and dry them out to make your own tea.



A HOT seat for the Fire Chief!

BMFPD's Chief John Benson Competes in Rodeo Bull Riding, June, 2006 *Photo by Bart Adams*

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