

Pine Brook Press

A quarterly journal for, about, and by Pine Brook Hills residents | Summer 2021



HOA MEETING: JULY 27

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2021 COMMUNITY CALENDAR

HOA MEMBERSHIP MEETING - JULY 27

Please watch for further information regarding time and nature of meeting (in person, we hope, or Zoom if we must). See website: www.pinebrookhills.org

*Meetings are held at the Community Center/Fire Station
(1905 Linden Drive) unless otherwise noted.
All residents are welcome to attend.*

BOULDER MOUNTAIN FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Meets the second Monday of every month at 4:00 P.M. Call 303-440-0235 for specifics.

BOULDER MOUNTAIN FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT AUXILIARY
Meets quarterly on Sundays. Next meeting is July 18 at 3:00 P.M. by Zoom.
To receive a meeting link, please contact aharsh@comcast.net.

PINE BROOK HILLS WATER BOARD
Meets the third Thursday of every month at 4:30 P.M. Next meeting is scheduled for July 13. Call the Water Office at 303-442-5394 for more information.

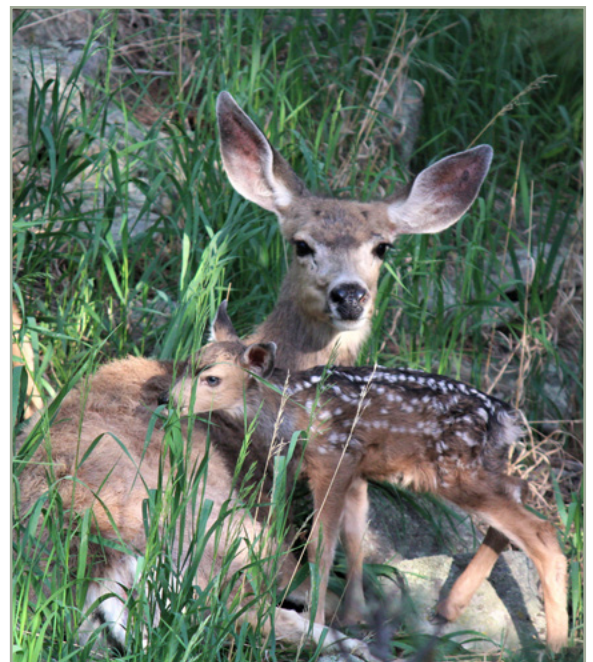
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Meets the second Tuesday of every month at 7 P.M. by Zoom.
Contact arc@www.pinebrookhills.org for the link.

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Thanks to Meg Viola
for sending this
beautiful image
of a Deer Mom
and her fawn.

On the cover: Deer
Photo by Susan Schiff



PRESIDENT'S PATTTER

By Sylvia Andrejczuk



Happy Summer! I hope this finds you all healthy and well, and you have all enjoyed the colorful explosion of growth that sprung up from the record rainfall this spring. Sadly, as we move into the dry heat of summer, our landscape will transform. Please keep your properties well mitigated, be sure to know your evacuation routes,

consider storing your precious items and documents close at hand and your to-go bags packed.

The majority of our HOA dues go towards fire mitigation: creating fire breaks, chipping, weed whacking the sides of the roads, etc. Please pay your dues if you have not already at <https://pinebrookhills.org/hoa-dues/>.

The Wildfire Mitigation Crew, led by Superintendent Mike Palamara, works hard to keep our community safe. Please consider hiring them for mitigation work on your property.

The primary purpose of the June block parties was to create an opportunity for neighbors to socialize, but they were also intended to encourage neighbors to share their best fire safety practices with one another. I hope you were able to participate and connect with fellow neighbors!

Please add the following summer events to your calendars:

1. The next PBH HOA meeting on Tuesday, July 27, 2021, with a potluck dinner at 6pm and the general meeting beginning at 7pm.

2. The Annual Ice Cream Social on Sunday, July 18, 2021 from 3-5pm at the Community Center. The Foggy Tops, a superb bluegrass band will be playing (featuring our very own neighbor, Tim Triggs).

There are many rewarding opportunities available for HOA volunteers. If you are interested, please reach out to me directly; I am happy to discuss them with you.

The PBH Google group and PBH forum (both separate from the HOA) are great places to reach out to the community for recommendations for builders, painters, septic clean outs, landscaping, etc. If you are not subscribed to either, please reach out and I will point you in the right direction.

Friendly reminder that any external home improvement projects need to go through the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) before construction begins. That includes sheds, decks, windows, roofs, siding, etc.

Lastly, should you have an issue with a neighbor, I implore you to engage in direct and respectful dialogue before coming to the HOA. Let's work together to keep PBH a friendly place to live.

Stay healthy and sane!

—*Sylvia*



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WILDFIRE CREW UPDATE: MAKING YOUR HOUSE FIRE SAFE

By Mike Palamara, Wildfire Crew Superintendent

Hello Fellow PBHers!

As many of you know, Boulder Mountain's Wildfire Crew completes wildfire mitigation projects throughout the district. In addition, the crew responds to a wide array of emergency incidents, both within the fire district and county-wide. To prepare for emergency events and keep skills fresh, the crew has a rigorous training schedule throughout the year.

Understandably, the Wildfire Crew responds to wildfires, and there are many training events to ensure the crew is ready for these incidents. This year the crew took the opportunity to work with another Boulder County agency and complete a multi-day wildfire scenario. Crew members gained valuable experience in implementing different wildfire suppression strategies and saw how those decisions played out over a few days.

Medical emergencies are the most common 911 call the fire department receives. The Wildfire Crew has a number of Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) available for these events. These crew members have trained with experienced senior fire department personnel from the BMF volunteer core. The EMTs have been run through medical scenarios and trained on current Boulder County medical protocols. Additionally, every member of the Wildfire Crew is required to maintain their current CPR certification for incident response.

Structure and vehicle fires are some of the other 911 emergencies that the Wildfire Crew respond to. They have qualified personnel to deal with these types of incidents, and much training occurs to keep these certifications current; even crew members without official certifications can be a huge help on these types of emergencies. The crew runs trainings on various types of 911 incidents, and how everyone on the crew can assist to keep operations running smoothly.

The area in and around the fire district has many miles of hiking trails. In rare cases, the Wildfire Crew responds to an incident where they need to extricate an injured patient from an area with no ambulance access. To familiarize crew members with all of these different trails, they take time throughout the week to hike these areas. This not only helps members know where trails are located, but also keeps up the physical fitness standards for peak performance during emergency events. Be sure to say "hi" if you see the crew out on your favorite trail!

Let's hope for a quiet year and few emergencies, but should something come up, the Boulder Mountain Wildfire Crew is ready for whatever comes its way.

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AUXILIARY UPDATE

By Rebecca Bratburd

By all indications, we are looking at the same or worse wildland fire conditions in 2021 compared to 2020, our new neighbors learned during our most recent New Resident Welcome. While this spring's rain pushed back the start of the fire season, it enabled more grass to grow. When this grass dries out in June and July, it will become fuel for wildfires, Boulder Mountain Fire Protection District Chief John Benson said. Households from Pine Brook Hills, Boulder Heights, and Carriage Hills learned about the services offered by the mitigation crew, from property assessments, to gutter cleaning, and tree removal for fire sustainability.

Now is the time to make sure your household is fire safe. Visit our online Community Safety Store: www.bouldermountainfireauxiliary.org/community-safety-store. This time of year, we like to ask these three questions to keep you out of harm's way:

1. Have you tested your fire extinguishers this year? If your extinguishers need to be replaced, Chief Benson's top picks are available for sale in the Community Safety Store.
2. Are your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors up to date? Did you know that Boulder County code calls for detectors in every bedroom and every level of your house? Check to make sure your detectors are still working because sensors can fail over time.
3. Can your house number signs be easily seen by first responders coming from either direction, and at night? After winter, clean or replace your house number signs. You can find a reflective house number and stake kit online in the store.

Even households that answered "yes" to all of the above questions may have more preparation to do to improve fire sustainability.

For a comprehensive guide on home fire safety, grab a copy of *The Fire Smart Home Handbook: Preparing for and Surviving the Threat of Wildfire*, written by BMFPD resident, Clyde Soles.

During the New Resident Welcome, a question arose about composting and fire safety. For those scratching their heads: compost generates heat, and can spontaneously combust. Chief Benson has seen one fire originate from composting, and it caused part of a house and a shed to catch fire. Be aware of the heat that composting generates. A longtime resident in attendance mentioned that bears and other wildlife can destroy structures built around compost piles. Have you successfully composted in your backyard? We'd like to hear about it. Email: aux.president@bouldermountainfire.org

In other news, Boulder Mountain Handmade, our 45-year festival celebrating handmade art, crafts, and specialty food products in the Boulder area, returns to Elks Lodge on November 13 and 14, 2021. This is the Auxiliary's primary fundraiser to benefit the fire department. We look forward to welcoming our artisan vendors, our many volunteers, and our loyal guests for our annual celebration of the arts in 2021.

Contact us at BMHArt@bouldermountainfireauxiliary.org to be added to our contact list. Visit bouldermountainhandmade.com for updates.

The invitation to join the Auxiliary, the organization that supports our fire district in a number of ways, is always open: www.bouldermountainfireauxiliary.org.



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EPIC SPRING SPURGE PURGE

By Lindsay Hale

1,460 pounds of bad news. Gone.

On May 12th, 23 volunteers and professionals dug out and hauled away nearly three-quarters of a ton of toxic, invasive Myrtle spurge from a steep and rocky lot in Pine Brook Hills. The day was pleasant—not too warm, blue sky, and fresh from recent rains, the wet soil yielding perfect conditions for digging. Conversations and laughter between old friends and new drifted in the breeze. Digging spurge is hard work, but after the long, dark months we've all gone through, it felt as fine, clean, and bright as the day itself.

The truck scale can tell us precisely how much spurge we removed, but we can never know how much good was done in the long term. Myrtle spurge is extremely aggressive and prolific; we'll never know how many thousands of square feet of habitat for native plants and how much forage for our native fauna would have been lost to these particular plants and their descendants in just a few short years. To be sure, given the habitat already lost or under threat from spurge, what we did was just a drop in the bucket, but our bucket needs every drop it can get.

What matters more is that this effort may portend well for the future. Many of us fight invasives on our own lots—a good thing, but small given the scale of the problem. Our work as a collaborative effort was a big thing. May 12th brought together our own Pine Brook Hills Forest Health - BeetleBusters, property owners, Wildlife Restoration Volunteers, Natural Resource Services, and Boulder Open Spaces and Mountain Parks personnel. This kind of collaboration between groups and individuals with differing resources and skill sets can go a long way towards meeting the challenges facing our Pine Brook Hills flora and fauna. Not just drops, but whole buckets.





FIRESIDE CHAT



John Benson, Boulder Mountain Fire Protection District Chief

By Penny Triggs

With wildland fire season upon us, it feels timely to highlight our Fire Chief extraordinaire, John Benson.

Many Pine Brookers are already well-acquainted with Chief Benson; they work with him, know what a gem he is, and realize our good fortune in having him lead our district.

If you are newer to our community, I recommend that you read the Pine Brook Hills Directory; it has a section that lays out everything you need to be informed about living in wildland fire country. I've lived up here in the foothills for 35 years, and in writing this feature I've only now fully read that entire section. The directory is more than a phone book; it contains invaluable information for harmonious mountain living, including tree and brush management and creating a defensible space around your home.

What a pleasure to take time with the chief, to better know him on a personal level, to come away recognizing his leadership, to understand some of his background, and to better appreciate the broad reach of his oversight and responsibilities.

Chief Benson refers to himself as a “Western Slope kinda guy,” and indeed, his family homesteaded over a hundred years ago in the Craig area, incorporating their cattle business in 1924. He said, “My first love was being on a horse, with my cattle and my Heeler dogs.” As early as six years old, he was riding steers. He graduated to bull riding on the rodeo circuit, then coached other riders years later. I wanted to know if he'd been busted up in this wild and crazy sport, and yes indeed, he had his share of injuries, including a skull fracture, with titanium now in his forehead, and well aware of it on cold

winter days! (He commented, “you have to pay to play!”) His wife is now greatly relieved that he has finally hung up his bull riding hat...

Although based here at Boulder Mountain Fire's Station 1 in Pine Brook Hills, Chief Benson manages an area spanning about eight square miles, which includes several mountain areas, three stations, and over a thousand homes. He refers to it as a “complex district,” requiring wide reaching oversight by a team of highly dedicated emergency response volunteers, executive officers, incident commanders, a fabulous department auxiliary team, board of directors, support staff, and our highly trained ERT (Emergency Response Team aka mitigation team). This agency's success is based on a complete team effort. Our community members continue to play a vital role in our success by supporting this agency beyond all expectations. No one person can take credit for the success. The credit is shared by all.

Chief Benson has attended the National Fire Academy in Maryland for many years, obtaining advanced training and certifications in Fire Science and Incident Management. Before signing on as our district's Fire Chief in December of 2002, Chief Benson worked as the Deputy Fire Chief, Fire Marshall, and Fire Investigator with the Greater Eagle Fire Protection District in Eagle County. In addition to his duties as Fire Chief, Chief Benson is an instructor of fire safety and awareness, wildland firefighting, command and control, and structure firefighting.

The Boulder Mountain Fire Protection District has a total of 64 responders, including 58 volunteers and six career firefighters. In some years, our responders completed between 7,000-9,000 hours of training, rendering them well-equipped to work under Chief Benson. He stressed that he can't speak highly enough of their competency and their dedication.

“I want the volunteers to have the independence to do their job, to grow by experience, and to work as a team under first rate crew leadership,” he said.

Chief Benson said that it was a cultural shift for him to move from the Western Slope to this area. He said he has learned “more from the caliber of people who live in this district than I could ever teach. People here are forward thinkers, committed to the work, and the community shows outstanding support for the fire department.”

Thoughts and images of the 2018 Paradise Fire in California were swirling in my head around the time I met with Chief Benson. I had been listening to the audiobook, *Fire in Paradise*. We spoke of the devastation that hit Paradise in just a matter of hours, razing at least 27,000 homes and structures, killing 85 people, some stuck in their homes, and others in their cars, desperately trying to escape. We noted that many of their residents were seniors, and some were disabled, dependent on help to navigate their way to safety. This hit close to home, as Pine Brook Hills has elderly residents living up here in the foothills.

Chief Benson said a lot was learned from that fire, out of which our district took to enact a plan to group households into polygons—predefined geographical areas for the purpose of evacuating the most impacted areas first. In Paradise, evacuation traffic was at a standstill. Traffic management was also a renewed focus included in

the polygon plan for the BMFPD. “You can’t save everything,” Chief Benson said. “Our priority will always be people and their safety.”

I have a forever memory of Chief Benson responding to a call for help from me. One morning many years ago, I had been walking our yellow lab, Charlie, before leaving for work. Labradors are famous for being water lovers, and for eternally chasing balls. His ball rolled down our steep road, and into a long culvert under my neighbor’s driveway. Charlie chased after it, getting stuck in the culvert halfway through.

Up came the Chief himself, dressed for the day in a spiffy white shirt with a gleaming badge, freshly washed jeans, and carrying a large

shovel. The shirt never recovered, but Charlie the dog made it out, thanks to heavy shovel work, and a volunteer crawling on hands and knees behind the dog, into the culvert. Chief remembered it well. He said, “I was ready to call out Animal Control, and get some heavy equipment up there!”

Later that day, there was a knock at the door. Chief Benson was standing there with a brand new container of tennis balls which to this day, stands in a place of honor on a shelf in our living room. These are the hearts of the people working on our behalf, all the volunteers for free, to care for our safety up here in our beloved foothills.

FIRE FACTS

1. Chief Benson currently has a young heeler pup named Marley; good chance you might be greeted by her at the firehouse, where she occasionally makes an appearance.
2. Chief Benson had high praise for our mitigation team, headed by Mike Palamara. He said that Mike has developed a mitigation program, possibly the largest in the state, and the best ever that Chief Benson could hope for, to keep our lands as fire-safe as possible. Check the PBH Directory for information on having your property assessed for tree and brush management to create a defensible space around your home.
3. Our most recent fires:
 - The Cameron Peak Fire, said to be the largest in Colorado history, started August 13th, 2020.
 - The East Troublesome fire in the Granby/ Grand Lake area, started October 14th, 2020. This fire threatened the Estes Park area, accounting for mass evacuations.
 - The Cal-Wood Fire started October 17th, 2020 heading for the Foothills highway 36, causing road closures and evacuations. Viewed from our home in Upper Pine Brook intense black smoke was drifting East.
 - The Lefthand Canyon fire started October 18th, 2020, near Ward, and put Pine Brook Hills residents on high alert for evacuating.



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ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

By Rob Mohr and Natasha Bodorff

Summer is here, and many of us are thinking about improvements to the exteriors of our homes. Don't forget that your Architectural Review Committee is here to review and approve home improvement projects to ensure that all of our homes are in harmony with the natural surroundings and the neighborhood at large. This includes such projects as repainting, re-roofing, a fence, a deck replacement, and new windows. Most of these can be approved on a fast-track basis in a day or so. More extensive projects such as a house addition or detached garage will require a full review and discussion at the monthly ARC meeting. Usually the architect or general contractor of such projects will present the details to the committee.

We have made the application process as streamlined and painless as possible. Your first step is to go to the application web page: pinebrookhills.org/arc-online-application/

Simply fill in the blanks with basic facts about your project, and click "Submit." We will confirm by email that we have received your application and state how long we expect the review to take. We will most likely ask for pictures or links to websites showing the colors and materials you plan to use. If your project involves a color for painting or siding, we will ask you for the manufacturer's name and specific color name. Any additional information we would need can be sent by email. Also on the web page, you will find more complete instructions about the ARC application process and examples of how to describe your project.

We are sure that you will find the application and approval process very easy to navigate. If you have any questions about the Architectural Review Committee, please write us at ARC@pinebrookhills.org. We sincerely appreciate the support and cooperation that we receive from our Pine Brook Hills community in keeping our neighborhood as beautiful and harmonious as it is.

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Black Bear. Photo by Ken Goldman

PLEASE DON'T FEED THE ANIMALS - IT MAY SAVE THEIR LIVES

By Mike Phifer

A black fox and a red fox often visit my yard, and I really like them as they are excellent “mousers” who keep the field mice away. Fascinating to me is another striking difference between those two foxes other than the colors. The red fox always stays a healthy distance from me. However, the black fox seems to have no fear and has come within two or three feet to stop and stare as if he were expecting me to give him something. To be honest, that closeness was unnerving and it's not good for the fox, as someone else might have called animal control. The behavior of that black fox doesn't make sense unless someone has been feeding him.

Altering the diet of any wild animal by giving it food upsets the natural order. Simple acts meant as kindness often have unintended consequences and endanger not only the animals but our community. When wild animals become less wary of humans, bad things happen.

Feeding deer and other wild animals can kill them because their stomachs are not designed for easily digestible carbohydrates such as corn. Grain acidosis is a horrible way to die, and Colorado Parks and Wildlife often find dead mule deer with stomachs full of corn or birdseed.

It is actually illegal in Colorado to feed game animals, including deer. This law not only protects deer and elk but also our communities. When deer are lured by feeding, mountain lions will follow, creating a greater danger to us, our children, our pets, and the lions. If a mountain lion becomes a regular neighborhood presence, no longer wary of people, the lion may be euthanized.

Bears can also become more dangerous when people feed other animals. Bird feeders provide an easy 12,000 calorie hit for a bear. The more that bears come into our yards for food, the more they associate people with food. This year, two serious bear attacks have already occurred in Colorado. One person was killed and another badly injured. Both bears were euthanized.

To best show our love for our animal neighbors, we must let them fend for themselves as nature intended. That way, those two foxes will keep catching the mice that would otherwise be running through our kitchens.

For more information, please visit Colorado Parks and Wildlife: <https://cpw.state.co.us/learn/Pages/do-not-feed-wildlife.aspx>.

MEET SOME OF YOUR NEIGHBORS



Fox mama & kit. Photo by Susan Schiff



Vulture. Photo by Mark Johnson



Western Tanager. Photo by Ken Goldman



Silver Fox. Photo by Michael Phifer

WATER MAIN BREAKS

BACKGROUND ON CONDITION OF WATER MAINS AND HOW WE FIX THEM

By Andrew Churnside

Water main breaks are a common occurrence in Pine Brook, and we get many questions about the condition of our pipes. So, why are we cursed with so many breaks? The majority of the approximately 16 miles of water mains were installed in 1964. To say they weren't installed to the modern standards would be putting it kindly.

Best practice for water main installation is to dig a trench, lay down sand or gravel, place the pipe, place more sand or gravel around the pipe, and then backfill the trench with dirt. The installers of the majority of our mains dug as deep as the rock allowed, laid the pipe on the bedrock, and then pushed whatever they had dug out right back on top of the pipe. As the ground moves, mostly with temperature changes in spring and fall, this contact with the rock creates pinch points and the pipe cracks circumferentially in what is known as a "beam break."

The process for fixing a break is fairly straight forward but can be time consuming:

- **Find the break.** Often this relies on phone calls from passersby who see water coming up through cracks in the road. With our new tank monitoring system (Summer 2021) we will get alarms if tank levels are dropping faster than normal, alerting us to potential breaks.

- **Locate the leak and main.** We use audio correlators placed at fire hydrants, valves, or meters which can give us a fairly accurate measurement of where the leak is located. We use an induced current in the main to locate its position in the street. At this point the water to the area is shut off at valves in the street.

- **Excavate.** We cut the asphalt and dig down to the main. It's supposed to be five feet down but we've found it as deep as 12 feet due to changes of grade made over the years. If the locations are accurate, this can go pretty quickly. Oftentimes deep mains and conductive soils make the location a bit less than accurate, and finding the main becomes a challenge. Once the main is located, we need to find the actual break.

- **Repair.** Once the offending rock is jackhammered away, a stainless steel clamp with a neoprene liner is centered over the break and tightened down.

- **Restore water service.** We very slowly open the valves that were shut for the repair and find a place at a high point on the line to bleed air and flush discolored water. The discoloration is accumulated iron and manganese that gets stirred up due to changes in water velocity during the break event. It is not harmful.

- **Cleanup.** Any exposed main is properly bedded with gravel and then backfilled with dirt, keeping large rocks away from the main. Soil is compacted so the area doesn't settle over time.

We work hard to keep water flowing in Pine Brook, given the challenges we have inherited. As for the pipe itself, it's in great shape. Often when we dig it up we can still read the original writing from the factory. If you see water where you shouldn't, please call us ASAP!



IMPORTANT PBW MEETING DATES:

July 15, 2021	12:00 pm	Board of Directors Meeting (Contact for updated information)
August 19, 2021	12:00 pm	Board of Directors Meeting (Contact for updated information)
September 16, 2021	12:00 pm	Board of Directors Meeting (Contact for updated information)

Ice Cream Social



2021
is back!

Sunday, July 18
3pm to 5pm
at the Community Center

Featuring: The Foggy Tops Bluegrass Band
Sweet Cow MooMobile

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

The Annual Ice Cream Social will be held at the Community Center on Sunday, July 18 from 3pm to 5pm. The Sweet Cow MooMobile will be serving cool delights, and the Foggy Tops Bluegrass Band (featuring our neighbor Tim Triggs) will be rockin'-n-rollin! There will be other surprises as well.

We will need volunteers for tent and chair setup/cleanup and in keeping the event running smoothly.

If you have ideas for additional community events and want to serve as a co-chair on the social committee, please reach out to: Emelie Griffith (303) 304-0676.

NEW RESIDENTS: LAURA HARMON, ERICH BYERS AND PUP STELLA



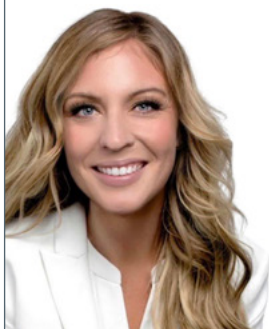
Hi Neighbors!

We are Laura Harmon and Erich Byers and we are thrilled to be part of the Pine Brook Hills Community. Laura is a trauma surgeon and will be joining the team at Boulder Community Hospital. Erich is an actuary but would really rather be on his bike! We have a 12 year old Aussie pup named Stella who rescued us four years ago. Besides operating and cycling, we are working towards becoming mountain hippies, conservationists, and all around better humans! We look forward to crossing paths and if you see us please say hello!



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By Caren Paul

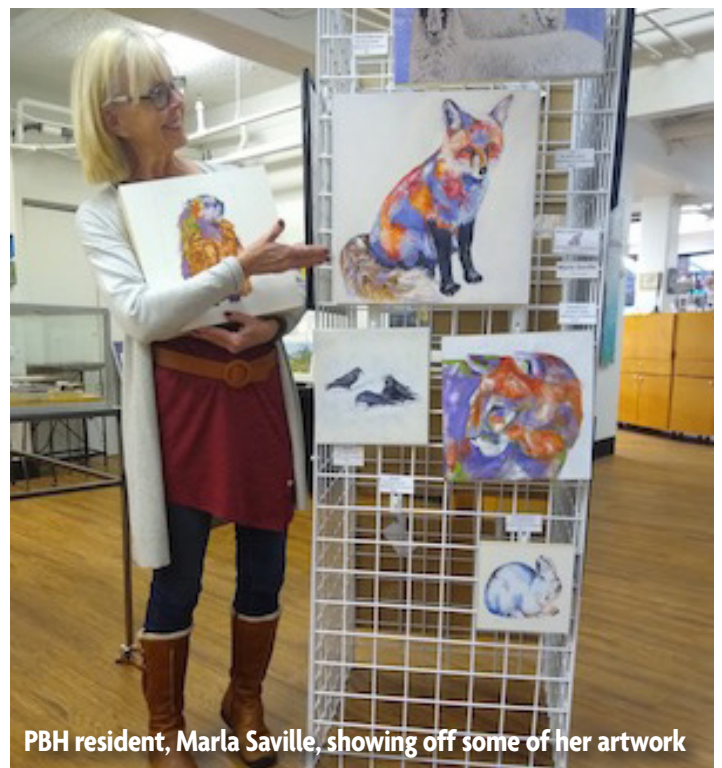
For this month's Arts column, I am excited to announce the opening of a new POP! Gallery by Open Studios. I've been working with this nonprofit organization for a couple years now, focusing on marketing and event management. The mission of Open Studios is to promote local artists and the visual arts in Boulder County, and it has managed to do just that for over 25 years!

Today, the organization provides six different art enrichment programs to the community, including the pop-up art gallery program—branded POP! While I have been a participant in the traditional OS Tour of Artist Studios program for many years, the POP! Galleries have been my real passion project, combining my love of art with the business of selling it and promoting artists. As you can imagine, artists everywhere have had a tough time this last 18 months, and with the closing of the Boulder Arts and Crafts Co-op, it is an important part of our mission to provide a viable retail gallery opportunity to as many artists as we can.

This year, with the help of Office Partners on Pearl, we have opened our most beautiful gallery to date at 1200 Pearl Street, in the lower level of the historic Broadway Building. The gallery is a lovely showcase for 60 Open Studios artists/members; we plan to stay open all summer. The collection is fascinating in its diversity, providing a multitude of mediums, subjects, and styles to browse. Everyone is sure to find something they love as well as the perfect gift. There are items available in all price ranges, and they run the gamut from functional, to fanciful, to fantastic.

Next time you are out on the mall, treat yourself to a unique art adventure while supporting the culture of art in Boulder, and visit the POP!

In addition to The Tour and POP!, other programs by Open Studios include:



PBH resident, Marla Saville, showing off some of her artwork

- Mobile Art Lab - bringing art activities to our underserved communities throughout the county.
- EdLinks - Open Studios artists/art teachers provide special programs in schools.
- Plein Air Festival - a biannual event bringing plein air artists from around the country to Boulder.
- Community Public Art - working with various other groups to bring mural art to public spaces.

For more info:

www.openstudios.org or caren@openstudios.org / 303.579.6777



Inside the POP! Gallery by Open Studios, 1200 Pearl Street

NOW OPEN DAILY

on the Pearl Street Mall



ART & GIFTS
Paintings
Ceramics
Jewelry
Photography
Sculpture
Art Glass
and more!

Come see our new summer pop-up gallery.

Featuring 60 Boulder County artists, you are sure to find the perfect gift or a beautiful item for yourself.

11 am - 6 pm daily
open later on Fri and Sat.

POP! Gallery is located at 1200 Pearl Street, lower level. Use the stairs just a couple of doors east of Weekends clothing store at the corner of Broadway and Pearl.



Comfrey

———— SUPERCHARGE YOUR SOIL ————

By Ashley Glenn

On my most recent visit to the Masons' home in Pine Brook Hills, they showed me all the improvements to their garden, the changes in the landscape, and the noxious weeds they hoped to get under control. When I pointed out the lush flowering comfrey dotting their land, I learned that they didn't know what a botanical treasure they had!

Comfrey, aka *Symphytum officinale*, is a non-native invasive in the area, and even a piece of root left behind will produce new plants. But unlike the irritating and dangerous hemlock, harvesting comfrey is a welcome task for any gardener. Indeed, its accidental escape and spread is due to it being a very favorite plant of farms and gardens for its many functions and ease of use. The bell-shaped flowers attract many pollinators, helping your garden plants, like tomatoes and strawberries, bear fruit. Comfrey is also a hungry plant, collecting important macro- and micro-nutrients from the soil better than most plants. These goodies accumulate in the leaves, making them perhaps the highest quality fertilizer on hand, even better than most store-bought products.

There are three main ways to fertilize with comfrey leaves, and they are all easy as pie.

1. Toss all your comfrey on your compost pile to jump start the decomposition process and keep those nutrients in your cycle.
2. Bury the leaves under any veggie plants, ornamentals, or even trees and shrubs to deliver the goods where they're needed most.
3. Fill a bucket with comfrey leaves and water, and just stash it anywhere. In a month you'll have concentrated liquid fertilizer. Mix one cup of this per gallon of water when watering your garden or container plants.

Once enough of your neighbors realize the gold they've got, the invasive comfrey will be stripped from the hillside and gardens will be lush and productive. By taking advantage of this accidental gift, your ecosystem, gardens, and families will be healthier than ever!

- Ashley Glenn
Visiting ethnobotanist at Missouri Botanical Garden

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Black Bear. Photo by Allen Saville