

Pine Brook Press

A quarterly journal for, about, and by Pine Brook Hills residents | Summer 2022



HOA MEETING: JULY 26

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Community Calendar

PINE BROOK HILLS HOA BOARDS & COMMITTEES

PRESIDENT

Kevin Smith, 301-641-8415

VICE PRESIDENT

Ethan Lake, 832-524-0063

SECRETARY

Kristin Gafric, 415-867-4372

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Bob Loveman, 303-926-0204

MEMBER-AT-LARGE

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ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

Rob Mohr, 303-442-2606

Natasha Bodorff, 425-457-9002

NEWCOMER WELCOME

Heather Fenity, 303-955-5739

SOCIAL CHAIR

Vacant. *See page 5.*

FIRE CHIEF

John Benson, 303-440-0235

FIRE BOARD PRESIDENT

Bob Loveman, 303-926-0204

FIRE AUXILIARY PRESIDENT

Susan Schiff, 719-250-5890

WATER BOARD PRESIDENT

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WATER DISTRICT MANAGER

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Peter King-Smith, 303-442-7698

HOA MEMBERSHIP MEETING - WEDNESDAY, JULY 27, 7PM

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.*

ICE CREAM SOCIAL

Sunday August 14, 2 to 4 pm, PBH Community Center

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. Please check www.bouldermountainfireauxiliary.org/calendar-1 for the next meeting or contact aharsh@comcast.net.

PINE BROOK HILLS WATER BOARD

Meets the third Thursday of every month at 12:00PM (but no meeting in June 2022). Call the Water Office at 303-442-5394 for more information.

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

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



SHARE YOUR PHOTOS!

Email your high resolution
PBH images to
press@pinebrookhills.org

Thanks to Susan Schiff
for this photo of a Flicker.
Beautiful bug eater, and
excellent at pecking.

On the cover:
Red Fox by Susan Schiff.

A Word From the President

By Kevin Smith



It is hard to believe that Spring is almost over. With the warmer temperatures there is an increase in wildlife activity. Pine Brook Hills has an abundance of wildlife, and we all need to be aware of their presence and take appropriate actions to guarantee their safety and ours. Bears and Mountain Lions are two large

carnivores that frequent our neighborhood.

There is an excellent presentation by Kristin Cannon (Colorado Parks and Wildlife Manager) on the Pine Brook Hills web site that details steps to limit adverse interactions with wildlife. If you have not looked at the presentation it is worth taking the time to read it and follow the advice given by Kristin. Some key points in the presentation to minimize conflict with bears include: eliminate any source of possible food, keep doors and windows shut or locked to prevent unwanted entry, do not leave food in your vehicles – bears can smell food even if still in the wrapper, preferably use bear-proof garbage cans left out only on the day of collection, and make sure your pets are protected.

We also have many other animals living in Pine Brook Hills that are not as dangerous as Black Bears and Mountain Lions such as Mule Deer, Foxes, Wild Turkeys, Skunks, and Bobcats. Be mindful of this other wildlife and drive slowly enough (especially around corners) to avoid potentially running into them. Often one must stop to allow deer to cross the roads so drivers need to be alert to the fact that cars can be stopped anywhere at any time allowing the deer to clear the roadway.

Enjoy the warmer temperatures, the wildlife and beautiful scenery that is available to us in Pine Brook Hills.

Switching subjects, I will spend part of each column spotlighting some of the amazing volunteers that make PBH such a great place to live. This quarter I would like to give great thanks to two people who spearheaded the effort to get the 2022 Pine Brook Directory updated and published.

First a word about the directory, an invaluable resource for PBH residents. A primary reason the directory exists is that it includes resident information used by the Fire Department in case of emergencies. They use it to contact people in emergencies and as a location reference when they need to know where people live. Additionally, it has key contact information (Fire Department, Water District, and HOA leaders) that can be very helpful. It

details the purpose of various HOA committees and has a copy of the Covenants. There are useful tips on how to prepare for an emergency and evacuation routes should an emergency occur. In short, it is a handy guide to help all Pine Brook Hills residents.

The 2022 directory would not have been possible without the work of Bob Olliver and Rob Quinn. They put forth an enormous effort getting the information for the directory, formatting and entering the text and articles and working with the publishers to get it published.

In addition to his work on the Directory Bob is also a key member of the Boulder Mountain Volunteer Fire Department. He is Deputy Chief and has been an active volunteer for over 20 years. Rob Quinn also supports the community in many other ways. He is a past president of the Homeowners Association, a member of the BMFPD and is now leading the effort within PBH to achieve Firewise certification, a program sponsored by the National Fire Protection Association to help communities identify and reduce wildfire risks.

Bob and Rob are both very visible members of PBH and can often be seen walking the roads. If you see Bob or Rob out walking be sure to stop them and thank them for their efforts. Without people willing to put in this effort PBH would not be the great community that it is.

Finally – a couple of Public Service announcements:

- We are looking for a Social Committee Chairperson. The role of the Social Committee is to organize events promoting PBH neighborhood interactions. Last year's Ice Cream Social was a great hit, and we are hoping to have another one as well as other events this year.
- If you are planning any construction or changes to your home please make sure to notify the Architectural Review Committee. They are here to help people understand the Pine Brook Hills covenants as they relate to structures and have a wealth of experience about Boulder County building requirements.

The Pine Brook Press receives financial support from the Pine Brook Homeowners' Association and advertisers. Please support the advertisers. A win-win: you benefit from their service and the Press benefits from their support.

Meet the New Editor

By Mark Cronshaw

*Many thanks to Dave Mason and others for having edited previous issues off the Pine Brook Press!
I have picked up the editor's baton. A few words about me....*

Domestic and world tragedies are saddening. They include refugees. I am the son of a refugee. My father left Germany on the Kindertransport and was welcomed by a family of strangers in Manchester, England. He met my English mother there. She



Then



Now

accepted his proposal and they were married in New York City. I was born in Salem, Massachusetts. We moved to Switzerland within months, but only for a year. Next home was Montreal where my brother and two sisters were born. Immigration agents were amused during our subsequent travels by the collection of passports: two British, one US, and three Canadian. When I was five years old we moved to upstate New Jersey. When I was almost nine, we moved to Brussels, Belgium.

Fictional Hogwarts has captured the attention of many people. I did the real thing: boarding school

in England, flight to London, train to Somerset (SW England) and car to school. My first UK school was in Wookey Hole which had a reputation for witchcraft and was known for its caves. I went to Winchester College when I was thirteen. It was founded in the fourteenth century! We had to wear straw boaters. I then read Chemical Engineering at Cambridge, a beautiful town 60 miles north of London.

Not sure of a career, I procrastinated by getting a Chemical Engineering master's degree at Caltech in Pasadena CA. What an amazing change of scenery, culture, and weather! I went to a seminar there (on Brownian motion) organized by famous

physicist Richard Feynman, and remember doing one particularly hard homework problem based on an Einstein discovery. But the oil business was booming (and the TV show Dallas was captivating), so I took a job in Texas doing computer modeling of flows in wells and subsurface reservoirs. My two wonderful kids were born there.

Graciously, my British wife at the time agreed to my crazy idea of leaving a proper job and returning to graduate school. I got my PhD in Engineering-Economic Systems at Stanford. Ask me about game theory sometime. That led to a job as assistant professor of economics at CU-Boulder. I also taught at the Economics Institute, which prepared international students for study in the US (a good fit for me).

My career had unusual twists and turns. I worked in cable TV for a while, doing analyses of cable telephony, video on demand, and back-office operational support systems. In 2006 I made another switch, joining Boulder-based Gustavson Associates as their chief economist. This led to international travel to such garden spots as Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Kazakhstan. I wish we had been able to kick-start the natural gas market in Afghanistan. They could have used the energy.

I formed a consulting practice, Resource Economics LLC, in 2013. It has given me the chance to work on various oil & gas and mining projects. Springer published my book "Energy in Perspective" last year. Energy makes such a difference in improving the quality of life. The book describes where energy comes from, how it is used, and the technologies behind oil, gas, coal, electricity, and petrochemicals.

I moved to Pine Brook Hills in 2008. What a delightful place to live! It is made even more delightful by sharing a home with Carron Meaney. Her biological knowledge and experience bring extra appreciation to living here. It is a joy to share our home occasionally with our three kids and three grandkids.

In closing, I have a request. You doubtless have had interesting lives. Let's start a "Neighbors" column in this magazine with entertaining biographies of Pine Brook residents. Please submit your biography to press@pinebrookhills.org. There is no guarantee that it will be published, and it may be edited. But do share stories of your lives: a small step towards an enhanced community. The next issue will be in the Fall.

Architectural Review Committee Update

By Rob Mohr and Natasha Bodorff

Welcome to all of the new residents who have recently moved into Pine Brook Hills. Many houses have changed hands in the last few months, and many of those new residents are contacting us to find out how to go about getting remodeling projects reviewed and approved.

Not surprisingly, many people want to start their new life in their new house with a new exterior paint color, or new boards on the deck. Once you have made your color and material selections for whatever project you are planning for your home's exterior, go to the website pinebrookhills.org, and click on "HOA",

then "Architectural". There you will see links to the application form and instructions. Be sure to submit the specific color and material names. You will find that most applications can be handled with a simple "fast track" review that is completed in a matter of days. More complex projects such as a home addition require more time.

If you have any questions about this process, feel free to contact us at ARC@PineBrookHills.org

P B H S O C I A L C O M M I T T E E



Do you love
community events?

*it's your time
to shine!*

The social planning position(s) is open for someone ready to make inspired community events happen. Contact Emelie Griffith if you're curious about taking over the reins.

303-304-0676 emelieks@gmail.com

Neighbors Helping Neighbors

By Toni Erickson, Chair

Neighbors Helping Neighbors (NHN) was created to assist aging members of our community, young families, moms having babies, middle-aged people with medical problems, and anyone who needs a helping hand. We have many volunteers who are eager to provide services to such individuals and families.

A big thank you to Peter King Smith — we now have a website. Just log onto www.pinebrookhills.org and you will find the link to NHN that will provide more information and valuable resources.

I know that many people are reluctant to ask for help; but on the flip side, many others are givers at heart and really love to contribute to the lives of others. They consider it a true gift. We can set up a Meal Train, shop for groceries, pick up meds, offer companionship, assess needs, provide safety evaluations, and much more.

“When we give cheerfully and accept gratefully, everyone is blessed.”

—Maya Angelou

We are calling all neighbors. If someone you know or have become aware of could use assistance, here are some options:

- Contact Toni Erickson at 303-447-0671
or
Pbh.neighborshelping@gmail.com
or
Param Singh at 303-417-0373, param645@yahoo.com.

We will make contact to assess the situation and gather support and aid.

- Tell those in need that they can contact Neighbors Helping Neighbors at Pbh.neighborshelping@gmail.com.
- Personally help those you know who need some type of help.

We hope you will take advantage of this wonderful service and assist our community to thrive in every way possible.



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Pine Brook Water Update

The election for three Directors for the Board of the Pine Brook Water District has been completed. The election was cancelled as there were only as many candidates as they were positions up for election. Bob Loveman and Mel Beauprez are continuing their duties to the District.

Signe Hawley decided not to seek re-election and will be missed!

Sarah Wahlert filed to stand for election and since there were no other candidates she is now our newest Board Member. She will bring a new perspective to the Board and the District as we move forward. Welcome aboard Sarah!

As many of you may be aware it has been warmer and drier than typical for this time of year. Currently we are filling the reservoir with our annual goal to be full by the end of June. Based on the stream flows, the District should not have any problems meeting that goal. The District is well positioned to handle whatever type of summer we have.

One of the main issues before the Board right now is how to fund capital projects moving forward. The discussions have looked at many options, from a onetime special assessment to a vote to add a mill levy to the property taxes to fund the projects, to an additional water surcharge. These options are being considered for both immediate needs and longer term projects.

While the District has a goal of adding funds from water revenue each year to the capital project fund, current inflation and supply and demand issues are creating a challenge in meeting those goals.

The most immediate capital project is the rehabilitation or replacement of our last two water storage tanks. The most obvious question is “isn’t it cheaper to rehabilitate than replace”? The answer is not always that obvious, as there are long term maintenance costs and more.

One of the possibilities the District is studying is building a new tank by our filter plant to reduce water age and therefore improve water quality. So far we show that this would reduce water age substantially which in turn improves the water quality. The District is also considering other options to achieve the same goals to see what is most cost effective and serves the District best in the long term. More on these topics to come and please watch for notices about special public meetings where these topic(s) will be discussed in more detail!

Everyone is always welcome to attend our meetings held at noon on the third Thursday of each month, either in person or virtually. If you wish to attend virtually please email the District at contact@pinebrookwater.com and we will provide you with the link. There will not be a Board Meeting for the month of June.



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Auxiliary Update

By Susan Schiff

I would like to thank everyone who attended our membership meeting on April 24, 2022. It was wonderful to be able to meet in person again after two long years. The meeting was special for that reason and because we had a chance to celebrate our friend and leader Catherine Von Hatten. Mike Von Hatten, Catherine's

daughter Ashley Von Hatten, son-in-law John Yerten and grandson Ben were all in attendance. The memorial plaque that was designed by Nancy Mohr and Ann Blonston featuring one of Catherine's watercolors now hangs in Station 1. Thank goodness Sue Brundege brought extra Kleenex.



Catherine's plaque designed by Ann Blonston and Nancy Mohr



Mike Von Hatten



Ashley Von Hatten, John and Ben Yerten and Joyce Colson share a laugh.

The Auxiliary is continuing fund-raising efforts for Boulder Mountain Fire Protection District. We will be hosting Boulder Mountain Handmade on November 12-13, 2022, at the Boulder Elk's Lodge, 3975 28th St., Boulder from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. This art and craft fair has been a favorite in Boulder for over 45 years and is the Auxiliary's main source of fund-raising. Please join us as a volunteer, artist, customer, or doner of baked goods. We look forward to seeing everyone.

The Auxiliary donated a total of \$30,00 to the construction fund for Station 2 and \$10,000 for the interior furnishings. A big shout out to all the members who worked hard over the years to raise the funds to make this donation possible.

In addition to our fund-raising efforts, the Auxiliary will be hosting a series of educational events regarding safety and emergency preparedness. Allen Saville and Joyce Colson presented information regarding bugout bags and evacuation at the Membership Meeting. If you have specific topics that you would like to have addressed, please contact me at aux.president@bouldermountainfire.org.

Thank You From the Treasurer

Thanks to the 55% of residences who have already paid their 2022 voluntary dues, and special thanks to those paying more than the \$75 suggested amount. Remember that your dollars fund (1) mitigation projects, (2) roadside weed whacking for safety, (3) the new Directory, (4) Pine Brook Press, and (5) a few social activities, especially for the kids.

You can remit dues via the website or by dropping a check to 1907 Linden Drive, 80304.

Thanks again.

Robert B. Loveman, Treasurer
Rloveman47@gmail.com
303-926-0204



Allen Saville shows off his bugout bag.

The Community Safety Fair, formerly known as the Fire Safety Sale, was held at Station 1, 1905 Linden Drive on May 14, 2022, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Over the four-hour event, we hosted 96 of our neighbors, and 34 of them bought new safety gear. The firefighters trained 36 neighbors to use an extinguisher, and the recycling crew tested 44 and recycled 24 extinguishers.

Upstairs, our CPR trainers educated 11 neighbors in hands-only CPR; Chief's spring New Resident Welcome hosted 15 newcomers from 7 households. Information regarding mitigation, evacuation and volunteering withing the District was available.

A recognition BBQ for the firefighters in our District and the members of the Auxiliary will be held on June 11, 2022, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Station 1. Please join us to celebrate our District.

The Auxiliary is a great way to give back to our beautiful community and meet new friends and neighbors. Please join us for our next membership meeting on July 24, 2022, at 3:00 p.m. at Station 1.

An advertisement for Corners Too House Cleaning Service. The top left features the logo "CORNERS too" in orange and white. To the right is a photo of a woman with brown hair, smiling. Below the photo is the text "HOUSE CLEANING SERVICE" and four orange flower icons. The main text reads "PUT YOUR FEET UP AND RELAX..." followed by a paragraph: "Since 1986, Corners Too Housecleaning has provided high quality residential and light commercial cleaning services to homeowners, property managers and businesses in the Boulder area." Below this is another paragraph: "We are a friendly bunch committed to supporting a clean and safe environment for people, pets and the planet." At the bottom, it says "Visit our website, then call or email to schedule a free estimate 303-642-0839" and "marlene@cornerstoohousecleaning.com www.cornerstoohousecleaning.com". The bottom left corner has the text "Serving Boulder area residents since 1986" with a decorative swirl.

LIVE MUSIC



APPEARING AT THE
PBH ICE CREAM SOCIAL

PBH Community Center

Sunday August 14, 2:00 - 4:00

Trial by Fire

By the BMFPD Mitigation Team

A Busy Start for Boulder Mountain Fire's Seasonal Mitigation Crew

What better way to welcome Boulder Mountain Fire's seasonal mitigation crew than with a wildfire on their second day? How about three wildfires in their first week!

April 18th marked Day One of work for our largest-ever Mitigation Team, which numbers 21 men and women. Their first week was literally trial by fire. On Day Two, they responded to two Boulder County wildfires—one off Jay Road and another on Flagstaff Mountain—and on Day Three, they were called to help with a third fire in the county, this one near the Table Mountain area.

These experiences helped the team be better prepared to serve our district during this year's wildfire season. They provided opportunities to work collaboratively from the start, to deepen their knowledge of wildfire, and to build relationships with the department's volunteers as well as with firefighters from neighboring departments.



The Mitigation Team, also known as the Emergency Response Team, works within our fire protection district 10 hours a day from Monday through Thursday. The team not only provides a variety of mitigation services, they are also ready to respond to all types of emergency calls, including wildland fires, structure fires,

medical emergencies, vehicle accidents, and search and rescue operations. They respond alongside the department's regular volunteer firefighters.

Every member of the Mitigation Team is a certified wildland firefighter. Additionally, this season's team includes five emergency medical technicians and five people with incident command qualifications. Please join us in welcoming these seasonal firefighters into our district, where they will be putting their skills and talent to good use.

Residents of our fire district have been very proactive in their efforts to mitigate their properties, which helps to enhance the entire neighborhood's preparedness. This demand has kept the Mitigation Team very busy, and this year's work slots are filling up quickly. If you need mitigation work completed, please contact the crew soon at 303-440-0235 to reserve your spot before we are booked for the season.

Here are some simple yet effective mitigation measures that many people can take care of themselves or with help from a friend or hired handyperson:

- Remove flammable debris (e.g., mulch, bushes, doormats) from the base of your house and around and under decks
- Clean your gutters and roof of needle cast
- Move wood piles to safe locations (e.g., at least 30 feet from and uphill of any structure)
- Weed whack grasses to a height of 6 inches or less in the defensible space. Learn more about defensible space here: bmfmitcrew.com/defensible-space
- Remove deep needle cast away from the base of large trees
- Limb low-hanging branches within the defensible space
- Remove any accumulations of trash and other flammable debris from the defensible space
- Apply fire screens to roof and attic vents
- Fill any holes and gaps in siding and repair any loose or missing roof shingles

If you have time to complete this work before a wildfire, you can make great strides in helping to increase your home's chances of survival.

Community Safety Fair

By Ann Blonston



Have you ever had to operate a fire extinguisher? You may be familiar with that moment of panic when you have to use it correctly RIGHT NOW.

Thirty-eight fire district residents are less likely to panic since they learned how to use an extinguisher — from our own volunteer firefighters — at the 2022 Community Safety Fair, held on May 14 at BMFPD Station 1.

BMFPD Auxiliary launched the Fire Safety Sale in 2011 with the simple goal of making it easy for fire district residents to get rid of outdated safety gear, replacing it with gear selected by Chief John Benson.

Since that first event, hundreds of district residents have done just that— bringing old extinguishers for free testing and recycling, buying new gear for their homes, and learning about mitigation and evacuation in the process. Nearly a hundred residents visited the re-named Community Safety Fair this year.

“Five percent of our district households turn over every year, which is why we host a New Resident Welcome event during the safety fair,” explained Ann Blonston, who was one of the

founders of the event. “We want to get them started with a good baseline of knowledge about safe mountain living — and with some tools to help.”

Since the majority of 911 calls that BMFPD volunteers respond to are medical calls, the planning team expanded the mission of the safety event, adding home medical safety training; this year, the topic was hands-only CPR, again taught by certified BMFPD personnel. Auxiliary’s online Community Safety Store added Bleed Control kits, and the group will soon offer a Stop the Bleed class to district residents.

Residents with suggestions for other home safety training topics are welcome to share their ideas; email president@bouldermountainfireauxiliary.org.

“Thirty-eight fire district residents are less likely to panic since they learned how to use an extinguisher — from our own volunteer firefighters...”

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*Pine squirrel (a.k.a. chickaree)
(James Beissel <https://jamesbeissel.com/>)*

Squirrels: Love Them, Loathe Them? Know Them.

Pine Brook Hills is located in the montane forest, a low-elevation forest comprising Ponderosa pines, Douglas-firs, and aspens as well as open areas of meadow grasses, shrubs, and flowering plants. This habitat provides food, nest sites, and cover for three species of tree squirrels.

The Abert's squirrel, or tassel-eared squirrel, is the least common one. This beautiful animal is noted for its long, tasseled ears, light underside, and relatively large size. Black is their dominant color along the Front Range, although they come in various colors, even within a litter. Occasionally a rusty strip is visible down their back. They select Ponderosa trees of a certain chemical and physiological makeup for their feeding. They feed on the inner bark, seeds, twigs, buds, and young cones. They also eat carrion and fungi, including mushrooms that are poisonous to humans.

Abert's squirrels build nests with branches and twigs. Sometimes they excavate nests in dwarf mistletoe clusters. They have one litter of three young in May or June. In winter, a female and one offspring may occupy the nest.



Young Abert's Squirrel (Susan Schiff)



Fox Squirrel (Susan Schiff)

The fox squirrel is another large tree squirrel. They are reddish with a rufous belly. They occur in riparian (creek-side) woodlands. Our yards provide extensions of that habitat. They are canny at figuring out how to access bird feeders. They came from the eastern US along major drainages in the 1900s. Their range expanded both naturally and by people translocating them into the foothills and higher mountain areas where they compete with Abert's squirrels. Once a man in Boulder proudly explained to me that he didn't want them at his bird feeder, didn't want to kill them, and had relocated 28 animals up Boulder Canyon. This timing coincided with their appearance around Sugarloaf Mountain. He had no idea how he had changed the montane ecosystem and the resulting harm done to Abert's squirrels.

Fox squirrels eat a variety of foods during different seasons: nuts, twigs, buds, tender leaves, berries, apples, small grains, bird eggs, and nestlings. They nest in tree cavities, and in the crotch of trees, lining their nests with leaves, twigs and other materials including fiberglass insulation! They have two breeding seasons a year, in late winter and early summer. They have three young per litter.

The pine squirrel, or chickaree, is a smaller squirrel. We more often hear them chatter their territorial call rather than see them. They are generally reddish to grayish with a distinctive white eyeline and white belly. They tend to occur at higher elevations than the other two species, including in lodgepole pine and subalpine forests of spruce and fir. They feed on buds, berries, and leaves, but their focus is conifer seeds and fungi. Pine squirrels have coevolved with the conifers upon which they feed. They play an important role in dispersing mycorrhizal-forming fungi, which are important to conifers. Most evergreen cones ripen in the fall. Pine squirrels chew them off before they ripen, dropping them to the ground in order to cache the cones near their middens at the base of the trees for later consumption. Feeding sites are visible due to the accumulation of cone bracts at the base of trees. Grizzly bears (which are extirpated in Colorado but exist in Wyoming) dig up these middens to feed on whitebark pine cones.



Rock Squirrel (Kevin Smith)

Pine squirrel nests are made of leaves, twigs, and grasses usually in conifers, but also in sheds and buildings. My neighbor has a nest off her deck. Females typically have three young in May to mid-July.

Unlike these tree squirrels, **rock squirrels** are ground squirrel that live in rock piles or other ground structures, although they can climb trees and bushes to forage. They have been seen in Pine Brook Hills, and are typically colonial. Note the distinctive variegated markings or dappling on the body.

Pine Brook resident Carron Meaney is co-author of "Mammals of Colorado". She was Curator of Mammalogy at the Denver Museum of Nature of Science, and subsequently worked as a wildlife ecologist at local environmental firms.

Remove Myrtle Spurge Before it Goes to Seed

By Jim Adams

Myrtle spurge matures early. It shows bright yellow flowers while snow is still melting, and it goes to seed in mid-May. We can remove this noxious, toxic weed before it produces seed, but disturbing mature seeds causes them to disperse. Each flower becomes a capsule with three seeds under pressure. When it pops, seeds project as far as 15 feet. Most of them travel down along drainage, and critters can carry them anywhere.



Recently formed seed capsules.

White milky sap that is released from broken stems or roots is extremely corrosive. On skin it causes an inflammatory reaction with a painful blistering rash. Sap in the eye can cause blindness. If it is ingested, severe illness occurs. Sap contains the chemical *resiniferatoxin* that is at the top of the Scoville pungency scale with sixty billion (60,000,000,000) Scoville Heat Units – the hottest pepper, the deadly Dragon’s Breath, rates only 2,480,000 SHU.



The end of each stem has a cluster of seeds

We strive to eliminate myrtle spurge in Pine Brook Hills. The Colorado Noxious Weed Act designates it as a “List A” species that must be eradicated from the state because it is an environmental and economic threat.

Mechanical removal (digging) is effective control. When seeds have begun to form, the mature plants must be bagged and sent to landfill, not composted. Seedlings are easy to remove, they can be left on the ground to decompose if kids or pets won’t contact them. When handling this plant wear eye protection, long polyvinylchloride-coated gloves, and clothing that covers all skin surfaces. Wash digging gear and clothing with detergent.



A ripe seed capsule ready to pop



Myrtle spurge seedlings

Information about myrtle spurge and a safe removal method is available at <https://pinebrookhills.org/hoa/forest-health/>. If you see this bad weed on your property or along the road, please report the nearest address to forest.health.bb@gmail.com. The HOA Forest Health – BeetleBusters committee can inspect your lot for spurge and other forest problems. We teach safe spurge removal method, and we loan tools and personal protective equipment.

Passings

By Cheri Cathey

During the Covid pandemic, time with friends and neighbors became less frequent. Here are a couple of reflections on two long-time residents of Pine Brook Hills who passed away during this isolating time.

Donna Johnson passed away in May 2021. Donna originally moved to PBH around 1969 when she completed the home she and her late husband had started to build. About three years later, Donna wanted to build another house in PBH, but one that was atop the ridgeline. She now had the confidence and giftedness to not only be the general contractor, but also the architect. That house was completed in 1972.

Around that time, Donna met and married Greg Johnson. Careers ended up taking them away from PBH for several years but they returned in 1980 for Donna to design and build their dream home in PBH.

Donna was known in our community for her incredible artwork. She painted in oil and watercolor and was voted in the Boulder Camera in 1992 as Boulder's best visual artist. We were lucky enough to see her works often at the Boulder Mountain Handmade sale where she contributed her art to help support the fire department.

Donna will be remembered in our community for the homes she designed and built and the artwork that hangs in many of our homes.

Art Levy passed away in April of this year. Art moved to PBH in the early 1980's and shortly thereafter got involved with the Fire Department. He was part of our volunteer crew for 14 years serving as a fire fighter, medical officer and communication officer. The last 2 years on the department he served as Assistant Fire Chief.

For a career Art worked as a freelance cameraman for ABC, CBS, NBC for such shows as 60 Minutes, 20/20, Today Show, and the evening news.

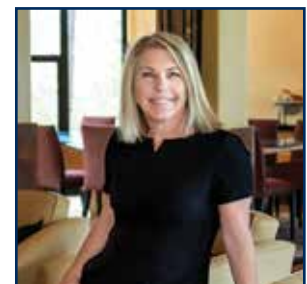
What most neighbors will remember about Art is his love, dedication and training of his German Shepard, Cody. Art continued his interest in serving the community as he had done as a volunteer for the fire department, but shifted to search and rescue. Art worked with Cody to train him to track lost children and even avalanche victims. Cody was very successful in his finds and was often called upon by rescue teams. Art and Cody were a common sight walking the neighborhood daily. Cody, an incredible dog, died last year.

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Neighborhood Photos by Gail Loveman



White-breasted nuthatch



Western Tanager



Sunrise in Trees



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Mom and baby Photo by ????????