

# Pine Brook Press

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



**HOA MEETING: OCTOBER 25**  
7:00 PM | COMMUNITY CENTER

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# Community Calendar

## HOA MEMBERSHIP MEETING - TUESDAY, OCTOBER 25, 7PM

We will have a Potluck with the HOA providing the protein course (most likely barbecue). See website: [www.pinebrookhills.org](http://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 PM. Call 303-440-0235 for specifics.

### BOULDER MOUNTAIN FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT AUXILIARY

Meets quarterly on Sundays. Please check [www.bouldermountainfireauxiliary.org/calendar-1](http://www.bouldermountainfireauxiliary.org/calendar-1) for the next meeting or contact [aharsh@comcast.net](mailto:aharsh@comcast.net).

### PINE BROOK HILLS WATER BOARD

Meets the third Thursday of every month at 12:00 PM. Call the Water Office at 303-442-5394 for more information.

### ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

Meets the second Tuesday of every month at 7:00 PM by Zoom. Contact [arc@pinebrookhills.org](mailto:arc@pinebrookhills.org) for the link.



## SHARE YOUR PHOTOS!

Email your high resolution PBH images to [press@pinebrookhills.org](mailto:press@pinebrookhills.org)

Thanks to Susan Schiff for this photo of a mountain cottontail.

On the cover:  
Crystal Lake, Colorado  
by Gail Loveman

# A Word From the President

By Kevin Smith



I am happy to report that the annual Ice Cream Social was a big success. With live music by The Foggy Tops Bluegrass Band, viewing of fire equipment, and Rob Quinn explaining the new Firewise Program there was something for everyone. We had to scramble a bit when there was some precipitation, but quickly

the band moved into the fire station and was able to complete their performance hardly missing a beat. Many thanks to Kristen Gafric for organizing the Ice Cream Social, to Rob for his work on Firewise, and to Chief Benson and Bob Loveman for representing the Fire Department.

Recently there have been quite a few complaints from people in the neighborhood about covenant violations. This ranges from barking dogs, people using their homes as an Airbnb or VRBO, lighting that spills over into neighbors' windows, parking in the street blocking emergency equipment, and lack of adherence to the requirement for external changes to be approved by the Architectural Review Committee.

For people unfamiliar with the Covenants they can be found starting on page 7 of the most recent Pine Brook Hills Directory or online by going to [Pinebrookhills.org](http://Pinebrookhills.org) > HOA > HOA Documents. The link to the Covenants is on the panel on the right hand side. These Covenants were approved by a majority of Pine Brook Hills homeowners and certified on December 31, 2010. Reading through the covenants, one sees that they were passed to help form a "cohesive and unique neighborhood with similar properties" and the covenants would produce benefits to "each and every lot". This is reinforced on page 12 of the directory where it states that the purpose of covenants and standards "...is preservation and enhancement of the safety and beauty of our wonderful neighborhood."

The HOA Board and Committees is the primary vehicle for enforcing these standards to uphold the agreed upon regulations and preserving property values. We are all volunteers from the community and do our best to ensure the standards and covenants are applied uniformly and equitably over the whole neighborhood. We take our responsibility to the community seriously and work with people throughout PBH to help them understand the covenants and what options they may have if they have a problem with the covenants.

The HOA board does not want to act as the "police" for the covenants and ARC standards. We would much rather spend our time sponsoring community events and finding other ways to enhance housing values and making PBH a better place to live. In order to do this, we need the community to become aware of the Covenants and to follow them as closely as possible. If there are questions about the covenants, feel free to reach out to me. Touch bases with Rob Mohr or Natasha Bodorff for questions about the Architectural Guidelines.

Following are some areas with routine violations. Please read through the covenants to ensure you are aware of what is expected:

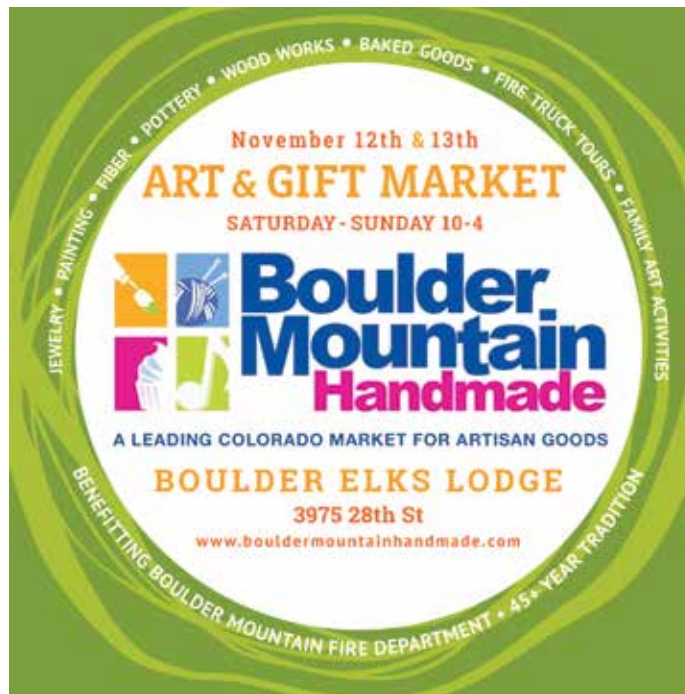
- One may rent or lease their property but must require at least a 30 day rental or lease period.
- External structural changes to your house or property must be approved by the ARC. The ARC has an online application process and many requests are "fast-tracked" and approved within a few days of application.
- Excessive noise (typically barking dogs) is not allowed. Please take steps to ensure that dogs are kept indoors while residents are away from home.

Some residents are not happy with certain aspects of the covenants. If you would like to see the covenants changed, there is a provision that allows for amendments. This is explained in Article 5.2 where it states that "This declaration may be amended at any time by written agreement of the owners of a majority of the lots to which these amended covenants apply." My suggestion for people who wish to change the covenants would be to join the HOA Board or become a Committee Lead. These roles have a great deal of influence in how the community is managed.

Thank you for adhering to the Covenants and making Pine Brook Hills a great place to live.

In keeping with the tradition of recognizing outstanding volunteers, I would like to recognize Jim Adams for his work as part of Beetle Busters and Forest Health. Jim has worked tirelessly for many years to rid PBH of harmful plants. Most people probably recognize Jim for his efforts to get rid of Myrtle Spurge. Jim has also worked to rid the neighborhood of Poison Hemlock and, more recently, Curly Dock. Jim works with multiple county, city, and volunteer agencies to get approval and help in removing this unwanted vegetation. Next time you see someone by the roadside looking menacingly at some plants make sure you thank Jim for all of his work.





## Boulder Mountain Handmade returns November 12 & 13

By Ann Blonston

### Long-running craft event is fire department fundraiser

According to legend, 48 years ago a group of Pine Brook Hills crafters got together to hold a low-key holiday sale. From that modest beginning, after many years operating as Mountain Expressions some aspects of today's Boulder Mountain Handmade would still be recognized by the event's founders.

After a two-year Covid hiatus, the 46th Boulder Mountain Handmade returns to Elks Lodge during Veterans Day weekend. What the long-ago founders would recognize as a community feel, a scrumptious old-fashioned bake sale, a special craft shop featuring donations by talented artists and crafters, and sociable volunteers.

Nancy Mohr, Pine Brook resident and artist wrangler, recruited 57 talented artisans and artisanal food vendors to fill Elks Lodge with goods that are welcomed by the event's many repeat customers. "We're very excited about the group of artists who are exhibiting at the market this year. Our team of jurors did a great job. Artists are glad to be back in front of our customers." Among the exhibitors is Pine Brook resident and customer favorite Amy Munding.

"One thing artists and customers remark upon is how friendly our market volunteers are and how they make it a fun place to shop," says Susan Schiff, who is Auxiliary President and Boulder Mountain Handmade's overall coordinator. "Even newcomers who have never been to our market are welcome as volunteers – to donate their own crafts, to donate baked goods, or to volunteer over the weekend. The main volunteer crew is made up of members of Boulder Mountain Fire Auxiliary, still, there are dozens of jobs to be filled, and it's a great way to make new neighborhood connections."

Prospective volunteers may contact Susan at [BMHart@bouldermountainfire.org](mailto:BMHart@bouldermountainfire.org).

Learn more about this year's group of exhibitors at [bouldermountainhandmade.com](http://bouldermountainhandmade.com)

# Neighbors Helping Neighbors

By Toni Erickson, Chair

Hello everyone, as you may know, I am the chairperson for Neighbors Helping Neighbors (NHN). We have many volunteers lined up and willing to help out. Realistically, what is probably happening is that families and actual next door or nearby neighbors are helping one another. And that is fantastic. I know that is true in many areas of our wonderful PBH, but if you have a need, please don't hesitate to contact us.

You can go to our website, [pinebrookhills.org](http://pinebrookhills.org) and find Neighbors Helping Neighbors in the bar just under the beautiful photo show by our web creator Peter King-Smith. There you will find lots of valuable resources and a description of some of the services we can provide.

One of the problems in our mountain community is that many services available downtown are not available up here. That is one reason why we have volunteers. We are on standby to be useful!

Keep in mind that NHN is not just for older folks. We want to help all ages and stages of life as we are able according to safety, legal, and availability aspects.

## TO REQUEST ASSISTANCE:

Email:

[pbh.neighborshelping@gmail.com](mailto:pbh.neighborshelping@gmail.com)

Or if you don't get a response right away, call or text

Toni Erickson at:

(c) 303-579-1573

(h) 303-447-0671

or Param Singh at:

(c) 720-635-4720

(h) 303-417-0373

**For this issue I thought I would focus on Aging in Place.** What that means is that older people have a desire to remain in their homes for as long as possible. In order to do so may require taking advantage of community resources and utilizing volunteers and others.

Here are few ideas:

### Healthcare

- 911 should be called for serious medical and other emergencies.
- Healthcare is probably the most important aspect of keeping you living at home. There are many home health agencies. If you have been hospitalized, some services will be given through insurance for a while.
- The Boulder County Area Agency on Aging, 303-441-1617, provides information and referral services to all county residents.

### Home and Yard Maintenance

- Contact Angie's List, now just called Angie.
- Look on Facebook.
- Next Door and Pine Brook news may have resources too.

### Groceries and Meals

- Many stores have on-line purchase services for either pick-up yourself outside or pay for delivery.
- Uber Eats and Door Dash may bring food from local eateries. I've seen some pizza delivery trucks up here as well.
- Meals on Wheels will assemble and freeze Bulk Meals which can be picked up once a week for a weeks worth of frozen meals when requested ahead.

### Transportation

- Of course, there is no bus service up here, but Uber and Lyft are available. There are also services that provide transportation to the airport.

### Socialization

- The Boulder County Community and Recreational centers offer wonderful programs and classes.
- Many things are on YouTube – art demos, writing classes, gardening ideas, and so much more. Just pick your topic and search. If you can't use your phone to access, call me or ask a friend to assist you.
- Invite people to a potluck and ask for help spiffing up your place if needed.

### Finances

- Hopefully your bank is helpful with online services. Many bills can be paid on line
- Ask us, family, or neighbors for help if you need deposits made, etc.

### Phones & Computers

- Some of us can help with phones and computers if you are having any trouble.

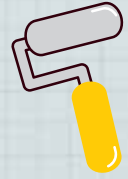
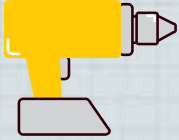
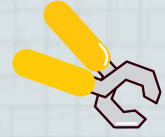
*Best wishes and enjoy our beautiful fall and winter!*

# ARE YOU PLANNING ONE OF THESE PROJECTS?

- New siding
- Exterior painting
- New roof
- Deck replacement
- Solar panels
- Fence
- House addition or new structure
- Anything on the house exterior

Don't forget to apply to the  
**Architectural Review Committee (ARC)** for approval

Apply at [pinebrookhills.org/hoa/architectural](http://pinebrookhills.org/hoa/architectural)  
or email [ARC@pinebrookhills.org](mailto:ARC@pinebrookhills.org)



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# Pine Brook Water Update

By Andrew Churnside & Robert de Haas

## Forever Chemicals and what you need to know.

**You may have seen the recent news reports concerning the EPA changing the health advisory level of perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS) from a combined level of 70 parts per trillion to .004 parts per trillion for PFOA and .02 parts per trillion (PPT), respectively. For context, 1 part per trillion is equivalent to 1 drop in 20 Olympic sized swimming pools or 40 drops in our entire reservoir.**

These “forever chemicals,” commonly referred to collectively as PFAS, are manufactured chemicals that have long been used in consumer products such as non-stick cookware, stain-resistant carpet, waterproof clothing, and some types of firefighting foam. Due to their carbon and fluorine structure, PFAS do not easily degrade in the environment and have been found throughout the world in water sources and bioaccumulated in fish and livestock. There is growing evidence that increased levels of PFAS may lead to high cholesterol, changes in liver enzymes, decreased infant birth weight, decreased vaccine response in children, high blood pressure in pregnant women (pre-eclampsia), and increased risk of testicular or kidney cancer.

Pine Brook Water District (the District) began sampling for PFAS in 2018 after reports about contamination of wells near fire stations in Boulder County were reported. That initial testing indicated a result of 3.9 PPT for PFOS and 2.7 PPT for PFOA which was well below the then-acceptable level of 70 PPT. Testing of our raw water sources seemed to indicate that our source water in Fourmile Canyon did not contain detectable levels, (Note: the current detectable level is 2 PPT) and raw water samples were similar to our finished water. What this seems to imply is that our primary source of contamination is from discharges from houses within Pine Brook Hills.

The District completed sampling on finished water in 2019 and 2020 with results all in a similar range. More sampling will be conducted this fall (2022) on our raw water in Fourmile, at the reservoir, as well as our finished water to gather more data about the consistency of the issue. The EPA is expected to issue either a formal Maximum Contaminant Level (enforceable maximum level) or Treatment Technique (enforceable procedure to follow) by the end of 2023. The District is currently investigating various treatment options to remove these chemicals, even while we are waiting for further test results.

### HOW CAN YOU HELP?

As noted, it seems that the PFAS are coming from the septic systems from houses in the watershed above the reservoir in Pine Brook. This makes its way into the ground water and eventually down to the reservoir. Even homes not above the reservoir may be contributing to other aquifers and waterways. Preventing PFAS containing materials from your septic systems could make a real impact on our future treatment needs. Shop smart!

- Avoid grease-resistant food packaging, such as microwavable popcorn bags.
- Replace non-stick cookware with safer alternatives, such as cast iron or stainless steel.
- Avoid purchasing products advertised as water-, grease-, and stain-resistant.

### IS MY WATER SAFE?

The EPA and the Colorado State Dept. of Health and Environment say/feel you do not need to stop drinking your water. You may choose to use a point of use treatment filter that is certified to lower the levels of PFAS or choose bottled water that has been treated with reverse osmosis filtration for drinking, cooking and preparing baby formula, especially if you are in a higher risk group (e.g., pregnant women). Note: bottled water is regulated by the FDA, not the EPA and not held to the same high standards as drinking water. If you have specific health concerns, talk to your doctor.

**Additional PFAS information can be found at [www.colorado.gov/cdphe/pfas](http://www.colorado.gov/cdphe/pfas)**



# Firewise Pine Brook Hills



There is no getting around it, we must live compatibly with nature, including wildfires, in Pine Brook Hills.

*Photo by Ralph Burns*

By Rob Quinn

When my wife Joyce and I moved to this beautiful foothills community in 1996, it felt like we had reached our dream. Twenty-six years later, we feel the same way, but that feeling is tempered by a better understanding of the risks where we live. There is no getting around it; we must live compatibly with nature, including wildfires, in Pine Brook Hills.

That is why the HOA Board decided last fall to create a Firewise Committee and to pursue becoming an approved site for the Firewise USA® program. That program is administered by the National Fire Protection Association, and co-sponsored by the US Forest Service and National Association of State Foresters. As part of the application process, Mike Palamara, head of BMFPD mitigation, and I conducted a Community Wildfire Risk Assessment and developed an initial three-year plan to address the areas of concern that we see for PBH (both documents are posted at the Firewise HOA webpage, see link below.) In July

2022, our application was approved by Firewise USA, and we are now a nationally recognized Firewise site.

We must recognize that in the wildland urban interface, wildfires can and will occur. However, we believe that with adequate planning and cooperation among the members of this community, wildfires could occur without disastrous loss of life or property. That is what the members of the Firewise Committee hope to facilitate.

Fire research by the US Forest Service shows that a majority of homes ignite in wildfires due to: (i) embers landing on the roof, in gutters, on or under decks and porches, or in vents or other openings in the home; and (ii) small surface fires from nearby trees, plants, grass that run the fire right up to the house siding. If we address these issues, we can greatly increase the odds of our homes surviving a wildfire.



# Auxiliary Update

By Susan Schiff

Hard to believe that Fall is almost here.

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 AM to 4:00 PM. 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 donor of baked goods. We look forward to seeing everyone.



Auxiliary members David and Cheryl Bailey and Ann Blonston hosted a kitchen shower for Station 2 at the Baileys' home on August 28, 2022. Approximately 40 members attended, and Chief Benson gave a tour of the new Station 2 barn. The official opening of Station 2 will be announced soon.

In addition to our fund-raising efforts, the Auxiliary will be hosting a series of educational events regarding safety and emergency preparedness. If you have specific topics that you would like to have addressed, please contact me at [aux.president@bouldermountainfire.org](mailto:aux.president@bouldermountainfire.org).

The Community Safety Store is stocked with important safety items including fire extinguishers, address signs, ash buckets and other items. There is also helpful safety information. <https://www.bouldermountainfireauxiliary.org/community-safety-store-1>.

A celebration dinner for Auxiliary members and our firefighters will be held at the Boulder Country Club on December 11, 2022.

**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 October 23, 2022, at 3:00 PM at Station 1 or Station 2 (final locale TBA).**

One of the key concepts that Firewise USA teaches is that a defensible space can be created by properly mitigating three home ignition zones around your home. The first zone, from your home exterior to 5 feet out, is essentially free of combustibles. The second and third zones, 5-30 feet and 30-100 feet, are mitigated with varying tree spacing, removal of fuels, and pruning.

We must recognize that in the wildland urban interface, wildfires can and will occur. However, we believe that with adequate planning and cooperation among the members of this community, wildfires could occur without disastrous loss of life or property. That is what the members of the Firewise Committee hope to facilitate.

We can provide resources for your mitigation efforts. Wildfire Partners offers detailed mitigation assessments and, upon successful mitigation, certification. We can refer you to qualified mitigation contractors (including BMFPD). Please check out our new webpage at <https://pinebrookhills.org/hoa/firewise/>. It will contain resources about fire-resistant roofing, gutters, and siding, as well as do-it-yourself mitigation techniques. We ask that you record your mitigation hours and mitigation expenses at the webpage (anonymously). These hours and expenses all go towards our required annual mitigation investment to maintain our good standing with Firewise USA.

I am excited that we are undertaking this concerted effort to improve the fire resistance of our special neighborhood. Please get involved with us in this effort. Our success at this will require us to work with our neighbors. "We must all hang together, or most assuredly we shall all hang separately." attrib. Benjamin Franklin, 1776.

**If you would like to volunteer for the Firewise Committee or have any suggestions for the Committee, please contact me at [Firewise@PineBrookHills.org](mailto:Firewise@PineBrookHills.org). Thanks.**

# Good Bugs Like Bad Weeds

By Jim Adams

Support for good pollinators, butterflies and bees, can be provided by bad weeds.  
Invasive thistle flowers attract many good bugs.



Aphrodite Fritillary Butterfly on invasive Musk Thistle.



Skipper Butterfly on invasive Bull Thistle.



Leafcutter Bee on invasive Bull Thistle.



Black-notched Bumblebee on invasive Bull Thistle.



Yellow Swallowtail Butterfly on native Wavyleaf Thistle.



Invasive Musk, Bull, and Canada Thistles compete with our native Wavyleaf Thistle (shown above). All of their flowers attract good pollinators. The Bumble Flower Beetle eats all kinds of thistle seedheads. While it suppresses prolific invasives it can obliterate our less abundant native. See more about how we can control thistles at <https://bit.ly/3St16mM> or scan this QR code with your smartphone camera.





# Thank You From the Treasurer

Many residents consider charitable donations during the last few months of the year. The Pine Brook Hills Community Fund is a 501c3 tax exempt organization that supports the safety of the District, including wildfire mitigation and maintenance of the Memorial Garden. Contributions (checks, PayPal, or stock donations) are tax deductible. More information: <https://pinebrookhills.org/CommunityFund/index.html>,

Bob Loveman, Treasurer,  
PB HOA and PBH Community Fund, [Rloveman47@gmail.com](mailto:Rloveman47@gmail.com), 303-926-0204



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## Plant Swap News & "Gardens of PBH" Video

By Donna Waters

The 2nd Annual Boulder Plant Swap, held in my driveway in mid-May, drew a smaller number of gardeners this year, but there were lots of plants, including a wide variety of tomatoes and peppers. Leftover plants were taken to another community plant swap in Denver, and all found a home. Many of us were looking forward to a native plant swap that was to take place a few weeks later at the Boulder Public Library. Unfortunately, it had to be cancelled at the last moment, due to the CO Dept. of Agriculture's decision to require the library to obtain a nursery license and register each participant under that license. Fortunately, after receiving feedback from the community, the CDA reconsidered their interpretation of the Nursery Act and did not interfere with the plant swaps planned for later that June.

Those swaps drew record numbers, with nearly 200 attendees at the Denver Native Plant Swap.

I'm currently working on a series of "Gardens of PBH" YouTube videos that will showcase what grows well in our neighborhood. These will include home gardens, as well as the 2013 Memorial Garden and, possibly, a few small farms in PBH.

If you would like to include your garden, it's not too late! We can use photos or video that you already have. Please contact me through the PBH forum or directory for information on how to submit media and with any other questions you may have.



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# In Memory of Ben Gray

By Evie Gray



Martin Bennett "Ben" Gray was born in Akron, OH, and raised in Mansfield, OH. He earned a B.S.E.E. degree from Ohio University and an M.S. degree in Electrical Engineering from the University of Rochester.

He was a Senior Engineer with General Dynamics Corporation in Rochester, NY, where he specialized in digital telephony engineering, and held

four patents. In 1971, he joined the U.S. Department of Commerce Institute for Telecommunication Sciences in Boulder, and later became Assistant Director of the Boulder Lab's Office of Telecommunications Policy. In that capacity, he was instrumental in developing the policy that fostered the advancement of push-button and cellular telephone features and services. Ben was a Senior Fellow in the IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers).

In 1972 Ben moved with his wife and son and daughter to Pine Brook Hills on Wild Horse Circle in a home designed by his son, then 15 years old.

Ben served four years as President of the Board of Directors of the Pine Brook Hills Water Department where, during PBH's "thirsty years" (before the de Haas Dam was built) he chaired meetings without any notes, using perfect memory recall. And, like many others in Pine Brook, he occasionally wielded a shovel to dig up broken pipes or leaking water mains. He even drafted his visiting brother-in-law to help.

On vacations, Ben enjoyed travel with family, especially trips through Greece, Egypt, and Hawaii. Ben reveled in Pine Brook's magnificent scenery and wild life. He always waved to the deer, and they usually looked puzzled. Ben was a dedicated mountain hiker, a champ at ping-pong, an excellent cyclist, and a jogger around Wild Horse Circle. When asked, "How do you navigate around the Circle when you jog at night after dark?" He replied, "I use the one-foot-in-the-ditch method."

Ben died at home in November 2021 after a 20-plus-year battle with Parkinson's disease.

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303.447.2282





# Photos by Pine Brook Hills Residents



Lake Isabelle by Richard Franklin

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