

Pine Brook Press

A quarterly journal for, about, and by Pine Brook Hills residents | Summer 2023

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Community Calendar

HOA MEMBERSHIP MEETING

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

See website: www.pinebrookhills.org

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 for the next meeting or contact 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 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 male broad-tailed hummingbird.

On the cover: Poppy by Jean Vieux

A Word From the President

By Kevin Smith



This issue I would like to spend some time on community safety as this is a subject that affects all of us. We are fortunate to have an outstanding Fire Department that takes care of us in emergencies. We also have a great Fire Mitigation team and community efforts to proactively improve the community preparations for wildfires (I am specifically

thinking of the Firewise program). In addition to these efforts, there are many ways we can all contribute to the overall safety of the community.

Road safety comes immediately to mind. Our streets are used extensively by pedestrians, bikers, people walking their dogs and vehicles performing road and utility maintenance. When driving it is important to be considerate of these users and be on the lookout for them – especially when going around tight corners. One never knows when a stopped vehicle or pedestrian may be in the road ahead of you. Another topic for road safety is vehicle speed. One complaint I hear frequently is how fast people travel on the roads. Many of the speeders are people who do not live in the community, so it is important that we set a good example and adhere to the speed limits. This will make the roads safer for all of us.

Being friendly with your neighbors and checking in on them, especially in times of emergency, is something we can all do to make our neighborhood a safer and more welcoming place.

A recent area of concern is an increase in the number of burglaries. There have been reports of unidentified suspicious persons going through cars and taking valuables (and garage door openers). These appear to be crimes of opportunity – meaning the perpetrators seem to be going after unlocked cars which are easy for them to open and remove valuables. Be sure and lock your cars if they are left out overnight (this is also good practice to reduce the chance that bears may get into your car). And promptly report any suspicious late-night activity to the Sheriff's office.

There has not been any indication that car break-ins are due to short-term rentals, but it is one of the reasons that Pine Brook Hills has a minimum 30-day rental period. Longer rental periods allow neighbors to become familiar with the renters and have less concern that the renters may be causing problems. I have received more calls and emails about short-term rentals as the number of burglaries has increased. Please adhere to the 30-day minimum stay if you are going to rent your property.

And, importantly, take time to get to know your neighbors. We can all use help from time-to-time. Being friendly with your neighbors and checking in on them, especially in times of emergency, is something we can all do to make our neighborhood a safer and more welcoming place.

In this issue of Pine Brook Press I would like to recognize Rob Mohr and Natasha Bodorff for their work as co-chairs of the Architectural Review Committee (ARC). The ARC is one of the most important roles in Pine Brook Hills. They review all building applications to ensure consistency and adherence to PBH standards. This requires a great deal of time reviewing the plans, meeting with the homeowner and the builders and giving advice based on their extensive knowledge of Boulder County requirements and previous construction projects. Their work has been a great benefit to the community. A big Thank You to Natasha and Rob for their ARC efforts.

The PBH Ice Cream Social is scheduled for August 20. I am not sure when you are reading this. If it is before August 20, please come join your neighbors for ice cream, music by the local Foggy Tops band, and conversation. If after, I hope you had a great time!

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Fire Side Chat

By John Benson

Happy summer to all of you. I trust that all of you are having a good summer and enjoying the moisture that we have been getting. We certainly know the weeds and grasses are enjoying the big drink of water we have been getting by Mother Nature. I can tell you this is certainly unusual to have such green foliage this time of year. I have not seen it this green around here since I have been here.

I want to thank everyone for taking the time to weed whack around their hydrants. I especially want to thank Deputy Chief Bob Olliver for taking his nights and weekends to go around and chop down the grass and weeds around the hydrants. This was a lot of time spent, to ensure efficient and expedient hydrant hookups.

A little birdy told me, that fall is just around the corner, hard to believe. Now is the time to start thinking about what you need to do for colder temperatures that will be coming our way in the future.

1. Start the process of finding a reputable furnace or heating company to come in and change filters and check to make sure that your gas-fired appliances are in good working order and free of carbon monoxide.
2. If you have wood burning appliances, now is a good time to hire a chimney sweep to clean the flue and piping. It is also a good idea to have the flue pipe scoped to make sure there are not cracks or separation of your pipes.
3. Make sure you have a spark arrestor on the top to prevent embers from escaping.
4. Start making plans for winter tires. Don't wait until we have ice and snow on the roads.

Yes, we have weeks to go before we get into these upcoming seasons, but we all know that time flies by quickly.

In the meantime, we still want to be vigilant regarding the abundant vegetation on the ground. We will at some point see the foliage start to turn brown and really cure out. Please make sure of the following:

1. Please make sure that you are not parking in the tall grasses.
2. Please remove any combustible materials for areas that you know you are needing some welding done on.
3. Please tell your friends, family and contractors to park vehicles in areas that are not inhabited with tall grasses and weeds.
4. Please tell your contractors and whoever else may be smoking to keep their cigarette butts off of the ground.

We do not want to see any surprises that will cause a fire in the district.

I also want to thank everyone who has called in to our dispatch center to report smoke. We would rather respond to a thousand calls for smoke and have nothing found, than to have one not reported, which causes a fire. We have been very lucky so far this year with all the lightning, because we have moisture on the ground. If no moisture was present, we would be in big trouble with all the lightning strikes.

If you have not already registered with www.bocoalert.org please do so and get your communications registered, so we can reach you in the event of a major incident. Again, if you are having problems, I will be more than happy to walk you through the steps and get you registered. I can even come to your home and help you.

Until next time, stay vigilant, enjoy the summer we have left and most of all be safe out there.

Pine Brook Water Updates

By Andrew Churnside

PERSONNEL

As many may already know, a change in leadership has come to the water district. With Bob de Haas transitioning into a part-time support role, Andrew Churnside is now officially the Manager of the Pine Brook Hills Water District.

Andrew has been with the water district for 7 years and has seamlessly stepped in to continue right where Bob left off – eyeing further innovations to safeguard community health and improve the customer experience. Also stepping into a new position as an operator at the Water District is Daniel Bergman, formerly of the Boulder Mountain Fire Mitigation Crew. Both Andrew and Daniel continue to serve in volunteer positions on the Fire Department while maintaining their commitment to the water district.



Daniel Bergman

electronically, access their account online to view current and historical usage, pay bills, and even set up auto-pay. These changes have been regularly requested, and we are pleased that we have found a vendor who can offer us a quality product at a cost that is affordable for a system of our size.

GIS MAPPING

Working alongside Boulder Land Consultants we have started the process of updating the district mapping using GPS/GIS technology. This includes the location of each individual meter pit as well as all hydrants and valves. Replacing our hand-drawn paper maps with highly accurate electronic maps will expedite our ability to serve the district by reducing the amount of time required to locate these resources in an emergency, especially when they are beneath several feet of snow.

PFAS

The water district continues to carefully monitor proposed regulations regarding PFAS. We have changed our water transfer procedure to try to keep water flushing out of the reservoir to see if we can reduce the PFAS that seems to be originating from septic systems within our watershed. Early test results show a decrease in the presence of these substances in both our raw water and treated water. We will continue to sample quarterly to look for seasonal trends and gather further data. For more information on this topic please visit www.pinebrookwater.com.

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

The Pine Brook Water District is beginning the process of stepping into the 21st century with regard to our billing and customer experience! While details are still being ironed out, members of the community will soon be able to receive bills



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Architectural Review Committee: Fences

By Rob Mohr and Natasha Bodorff

It is time once again to review the neighborhood guidelines concerning fences. The subject of fences is one of the more controversial topics with which the ARC becomes involved. We have heard from some PBH residents that fences should not be allowed, that they detract from the feeling of wide open spaces that many of us like about PBH, and that they interfere with the safe movement of wildlife. One of the duties of the ARC is to find ways to permit lot owners to build what the 2010 Pine Brook Hills Covenants allow, while at the same time being sensitive to neighborhood sentiment and making sure that structures are acceptable to the community.

To be clear, when we say “fence” we are referring to “a barrier, railing, or other upright structure, typically of wood or wire, enclosing an area of ground to mark a boundary, or control access”. A fence, of course, can come in all kinds of designs and materials. As the Covenants state, any structure in PBH should be “in harmony with the natural terrain and character of the neighborhood.” Structures in PBH, such as wood fences

should be “stained or left in a natural state so as to preserve the natural color,” as the Covenants state. Chain link fences are usually not approved. An exception could be for a small dog run in an area that is not visible to the neighborhood at large.

Of course, every lot is different and the ARC reviews every application for a fence on a case by case basis.

If you are thinking of building a fence on your lot, or plan any sort of exterior remodeling, the ARC will be happy to discuss your options with you. Also, it is always good policy to talk with your neighbors first and get their feedback on your plans, in case they have any concerns that you can address with perhaps a simple change in the location or appearance of your fence.

If you are thinking of putting up a fence, here are some photos of fences that, in our experience, go well in the neighborhood.



NCB fence



Wild Horse fence



PB Road 1 fence



PB Road 2 fence



Snyder fence

Auxiliary Update

by Susan Schiff

CELEBRATION BBQ

On July 29, 2023 the Auxiliary hosted a BBQ for the over 100 district families who contribute volunteer time as responders, board members and auxiliary. The BBQ was held at Camp Paul Hummel. Thanks to them for allowing us to have the event at the camp. Games and hiking were available for everyone to enjoy. Chief Benson spoke briefly about his pride in the Fire Department and his appreciation for the efforts of the Auxiliary. The Auxiliary will be hosting a celebration dinner in December, and we hope all our members and firefighters will be able to join us.

BOULDER MOUNTAIN HANDMADE

Auxiliary volunteers are starting to prepare for Boulder Mountain Handmade Market. The event will be held on November 11-12, 2023, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Elks Lodge, 3975 28th St., Boulder. All district residents are invited to spend some time this summer helping make the event a success. Crafts, artwork and baked goods that you would like to donate for sale are welcome. Regardless of skill and interests, there's something for everyone; and it's a great way to support our fire department. You do not have to be a member of the Auxiliary to donate. For more information please visit www.bouldermountainhandmade.com.

NEW RESIDENT WELCOME

The Spring New Resident Welcome will be held this Fall by Zoom, date and time to be announced. Fire Chief John Benson will present an introduction to BMFPD and how residents get service in medical, vehicle accident, or fire incidents. He will share critical information for staying safe in mountain communities in a 45-minute presentation, followed by time for questions and answers. Residents who are new (or newer) to the district will be invited to attend.

BMFPD AUXILIARY

Interested in what the BMFPD Auxiliary does? The next quarterly membership meeting is scheduled for October 15 at 3:00 PM at BMFPD Fire Station 2, 40 Overlook Lane. All residents are welcome. Join in and learn more about how to support the Fire Department. Details about the organization can be found on the Auxiliary's website: www.bouldermountainfireauxiliary.org.



LIVE MUSIC



APPEARING AT THE
PBH ICE CREAM SOCIAL

PBH Community Center
Sunday August 20, 2:00 - 4:00

Robert de Haas and the Pine Brook Water District

By Robert de Haas

I was born in Canada in 1955. My family moved to Rochester, New York in 1960 and became U. S. citizens in 1965. The family moved to Pine Brook Hills in 1966. I lived in Pine Brook Hills until 1976 when I joined the Rifle Police Dept. I came back to PBH in 1988 to work for the Pine Brook Water District.

I married my wife, Kathy, in 1989. We have 3 daughters and 3 grandchildren. Currently Kathy and I live in Longmont, mostly retired and learning to enjoy it! Just like any parent we sometimes do extraordinary things to help the kids out; I once flew to Bangkok, Thailand to rescue one of my daughters from a medical emergency. Kathy has been very supportive through the trials and tribulations of my being the manager of the District. Without her support I am not sure I could have lasted this long!

The first part of the Pine Brook water system was installed in 1964. There were only about 40 homes (compared to 417 homes now). The water system used to depend on a few volunteer residents, several home owners, (including Mel Beauprez, now president of the Board of Directors, Boyd Jones, Trudy Lay-de Haas, and myself) repainted a tank in 1972. We must have done a decent job, as that paint has lasted well for over 40 years.

The de Haas family has had a lot of involvement with the District. My father, Thijs de Haas and Trudy Lay-de Haas served on the Board of Directors of the District for many years. Around 1978-1980 the District (which was strictly served by wells at that time) hired Trudy Lay-de Haas to be its full time leader. Trudy had various helpers over the years including me.



Early on, there was no one to ensure that the contractors were adhering to proper water system construction standards. Their many shortcuts have “haunted” the District ever since. Most of the water main breaks are due to improper installation of the water mains. Before I could even drive, I helped repair water main breaks and install new service lines. It used to take days to find and repair water main breaks and then weeks to get back to normal. Now we typically have the repairs done and everything running as normal within less than 24 hours.

From 1976 to 1986 I served on the Rifle Police Department becoming the Sergeant in 1979. I dealt with all the normal issues: over 500 bar fights, domestic disputes, drug raids (sometimes with the DEA,) and all sorts of traffic issues. I was shot during one domestic dispute. I took two rounds from a



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12-gauge shotgun. Getting to the hospital was like a movie scene. Exciting to say the least.

Then in late 1986 the District lost their second employee and they asked if I would be interested in the job. I became a full-time employee as of January 1, 1987. There have been a lot of changes since then. The world of drinking water and the regulations have changed drastically. The District continues to be recognized as well run by the State of Colorado.

So, what are some of the biggest accomplishments over all these years?

1. We started better utilization of the surface water to provide better quality and more reliable source of water.
2. We put in the first true surface water treatment plant, in Sunshine Canyon in 1989.
3. In 1998 we installed the second micro/ultra membrane filtration plant in the state. It has served us very well ever since.
4. 2002 saw the worst drought that anyone could remember. We managed this successfully. While residents didn't have a lot of water, the District never ran out of water (whew!).
5. The 2002 drought made me think about how to provide a more reliable supply of water. The dam idea was born that year. The dam aids in wildland firefighting, helps reduce the impacts of possible flood flows, and is an improvement for the environments along both Two Mile Creek and Four Mile Creek (the source of our raw surface water). It took longer to develop the plans, get the permits (even from Boulder County,) do the required studies, etc. than to build the dam. But by June 2006 the dam was built and being filled. A new treatment plant to go with it was operational by October of that same year. It took barely over 3 ½ years from "idea" to completion! We were awarded the Best Dam of the Year by the American Society of Dam Engineers. The dam has been in existence for 17 years and is still serving the community better than ever expected. Pretty good for a small system.
6. In 2010 our reservoir was used extensively by helicopters to get water for use on the Four Mile Canyon Fire, which aided in keeping the fire out of our area. In 2013 there was the flood, and the dam reduced the peak flows down Two Mile Creek. Without the dam there could have been more deaths, much more road destruction. One of the engineers

from the City of Boulder agreed that it probably saved them millions of dollars in other damages that could have occurred.

7. As result of the fire and flood, the District has made several improvements to its treatment train, which have resulted in a better and more reliable treatment system, in some ways better than many bigger entities.
8. Just over 7 years ago life finally caught up with me and I had some heart issues. At this point I knew we had to add another person to the team, training them to take over from me when I retired. We hired Andrew Churnside in December 2016. What a great decision! He has spearheaded many improvements, readily embraces new technology, and motivated a new monitoring system that allows the employees to monitor tank levels and performance remotely.
9. As of June of 2023 I have retired from full time work. I now work part-time as needed, but Andrew is now the boss! It's fun working for him. Currently we are working on improving fire flows through two pump houses to improve the capability of the Boulder Mountain Fire Dept.
10. Unfortunately, Shawn Beauprez, who worked for me for 28 years, had to leave this year due to family needs back in Minnesota. He was replaced by Daniel Bergman who shows that he has the interest, the ability, and the intelligence to learn quickly what we do.

The Board of Directors (including J. Kirk Hendricks, Mel Beauprez, Art Markey , Rick Waters, Bob Loveman, and our two newest members, Sarah Wahlert and Kevin Smith) has supported my visions for the betterment of the community over my 37 years. It continues to do the same with Andrew.

The fire department and the water district cooperate in many ways. Fire Chief John Benson has not only been a great partner but a good friend. He took me to the hospital when I found out I was going to need open heart surgery! We have worked extensively together through the flood and fires, and I am sure that we won't forget each other.

This community has been very supportive of our work, which makes it one of the premiere mountain communities in the area. At this point I would like to thank current and former members of PBH for their support and trust that has allowed this District and community to become what it is today!

Ponderosa Pine Cones

by Carron Meaney

Ponderosa pines are the most common tree in Pine Brook Hills and in the Southwest. Look closely at the cones: some are female seed cones, looking like proper woody cones, and some are smaller male pollen cones whose pollen covers everything in spring and early summer from the kitchen counter to puddles of water!



▲ FEMALE PINE CONES.

Cones are produced in large numbers every 3 or 4 years.

▲ MALE PINE CONES.

These male cones will release their yellow pollen. Note new twig growth behind the pollen cones.



◀ BOTH MALE AND FEMALE CONES ON THE SAME TREE.

Note the female cones at the top, male cones at the bottom of the tree.

Both male and female cones occur on the same tree, with female cones typically (but not always!) higher up and male cones lower down in the tree. This is thought to facilitate pollination, as the wind blows pollen from male to female cones.

The black tufted-eared squirrels, or Abert's squirrels, feed exclusively on Ponderosa pines. They select specific trees that are tasty to them and avoid others. Red crossbill birds use their crossed bills to open pine cones and feed on the seeds. Crossbills move around to where there is a good cone crop. They follow the 3 to 4-year cycle of cone production, becoming abundant at times, and then disappearing in search of abundant cones.



▲ **FEMALE PINE CONES.**

The purple objects are the earliest beginning of female cones, just pollinated and starting to grow into woody cones.



▲ **NEW TWIGS.**

These are new twigs and will not become cones.



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Furry and Feathered Neighbors



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Brett Kingstone, Ross Kronman, and Susan Schiff.



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Construction Photo by Mark Johnson