



# RISTWATCH

RCVFD Quarterly Newsletter   P. O. Box 2, Bellvue, CO 80512   Issue No. 86   April, 2018

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## Letter from the President

### DEDICATION:

“SELF- SACRIFICING DEVOTION AND LOYALTY”

Behind every successful operation there are many hidden people responsible for its success. RCVFD is no different!

The officers of RCVFD, in addition to responding to approximately 80 fire and medical calls per year, put in a tremendous amount of volunteer time each and every month. Many of these duties involve filling out many reports for the department; working with other agencies in coordinating joint efforts; preparing training sessions to keep the First Responders and EMT personnel in top form; maintaining the trucks, radios and buildings; along with updating and improving our website and the Community Alerts.

The First Responders and EMT personnel, again, in addition to responding to emergency calls, donate an exceptional amount of time staying at the top of their game.

We as a Community are so lucky to have the many DEDICATED individuals who so generously give of their time, away from their families, to give all in this Community some peace of mind. They are there 24/7 and will be the first faces you see, whether you have a fire or medical emergency. They

don't do it for the pay or retirement plan, which there are none, it is all done because of their generous and helping nature for their fellow neighbors.

There are many other individuals, too many to name, who give so freely and generously of their time to benefit RCVFD, which in turn benefits our Community.

May 5, 2018 is Community Wildfire Preparedness Day, coordinated by Laurie Franklin, along with an open house at RCVFD Station #1 on Rist Canyon Road. The free information about wildfire mitigation and evacuation preparedness is a necessity, but is often overlooked. In addition to the wild fire information, the Tree Farmer Organization and National Forest Service will be there to inform you about a healthy forest. Children are welcome as there will be an activity for them, they can meet “Smokey” and there will be hamburgers and hot dogs for everyone! What a great chance to meet and thank our First Responders and EMT personnel.

This is also a new year and a great time to remind ourselves to donate to RCVFD in support of our great team of caring individuals. If they are needed, they will be there.

*Dale Snyder*  
President, RCVFD

# Chief's Report

I recently attended a regional meeting with fellow firefighters, law enforcement and emergency management personnel. We were discussing the state of disaster preparedness in our communities. As I listened to the conversation, I realized that our community is in better shape than most. First, we are mountain folk and are more self-reliant—we know that we cannot always run to the store if we are out of something. More importantly, for many of us who have lived in the canyon for a while, we have been through large scale events like fires, floods and blizzards. We understand how to get by without electricity and running water for days at a time.

With that said, there is probably always more that we can do to take care of our neighbors and ourselves if there is a large-scale event. Let's take blizzards for example. It was not too many years ago when we had a spring blizzard that dumped 54 inches of snow in less than two days. Pretty extreme even for here, but two to three feet of snow in the springtime is fairly common. In those cases, your snow removal capabilities may be overwhelmed. If we get an emergency call in those situations, chances are that RCVFD responders are snowed in as well, and may not be able to get to you (at least not in a timely manner). Assuming the county-maintained roads are open, emergency responders may be able to make it up from town, but if your driveway or side road is not cleared they cannot reach you. In addition, if it is a large-scale event, they may be overwhelmed with calls. So, in these cases we need to be able to shelter in place and ride it out—sometimes for many days. Make sure your pantry is well stocked and that you have an adequate supply of necessary medications for your family and any pets or livestock. Also, you need to have a way to heat your house when the electricity is down. If you can be safe and cozy, staying put is usually your best option.

Besides blizzards, in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) we live with the risk of fires. This fire season is not starting out well—we have been dry most of the winter. As you know,

a few good spring snows could bring us back to higher moisture levels, but we need to be prepared if that doesn't happen. As we head into wildland fire season, remember a few things:

- Make an evacuation list of everything you need to take if you are asked to leave. Post it in a place where anyone in your family can find it. Trust me, taking a few minutes to think it out ahead of time will avoid a lot of panic if the evacuation call comes.
- Complete those fire mitigation projects you have been working on. For more information on preparedness go to [rcvfd.org](http://rcvfd.org) (click on the Emergency Preparedness tab).
- If you would like to learn more and talk to your neighbors who are RCVFD responders, come to the Community Wildfire Community Preparedness Day on Saturday, May 5<sup>th</sup> from 10AM to 2PM at Station 1 (11835 Rist Canyon Rd).

In the case of potential medical emergencies, it is always good to have training to help improve the chances of those around you in a medical emergency. Watch for announcements of any training opportunities for community members either on the website [[rcvfd.org](http://rcvfd.org)] or through community alerts (sign up for those on the website as well).



## What is a Red Flag Warning?

*Red Flag Warning* is a term used by fire weather forecasters to call attention to conditions that may result in extreme fire danger.

This typically means weather conditions that include high temperatures, low humidity and high winds. When you hear we are under a Red Flag Warning, be particularly careful with anything that could provide an ignition source.

*Continued on next page . . .*

## Chief's Report, cont'd.

Finally, I would like to let you know all the agencies that back up RCVFD.

- Larimer County Emergency Services (LCES)
- Poudre Fire Authority
- Mutual Aid with other surrounding Volunteer Fire Departments
- Poudre Valley Ambulance
- Thompson Valley Ambulance
- Air Link (air ambulance)
- Larimer County Search & Rescue
- Larimer County Dive Team

Therefore, while RCVFD is the initial response agency, we rarely have a call where there is not at least one agency (sometimes many) that provide mutual aid. For example, at a recent MVA a truck left the road, rolled and landed on a frozen pond. Thompson Valley was the responding ambulance, Air Link was launched but couldn't land due to high winds, PFA was dispatched to help with extrication of the patient, and Larimer County Dive Team was dispatched in case the truck broke through the ice. We are always grateful for the mutual aid we receive from these agencies and want you to be aware of all the systems that must be in place to provide emergency services in our area.

As always, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at [chief@rcvfd.org](mailto:chief@rcvfd.org)

*Carol Dollard*

*Chief, RCVFD*

### Please help us help you!



We recently had a call where arrival was delayed because homes in the area did not have address numbers clearly posted. Note that this was in the middle of the day, yet response was delayed by several crucial minutes as the correct home was located. We have GPS equipment on some (not all) of our trucks, but those are not 100% reliable. The problem gets a lot worse in the middle of the night or in bad weather.

Please take the time to post numbers clearly. The best spot is where your driveway takes off from the named road, but a second set on your house is even better. RCVFD offers nice reflective signs, and they're only \$15! Order yours by calling Louise Creager at (970) 217-6843.

We cannot help you if we cannot find you.....

## Special Request from the Chief

This special request is a little different, it is for an ongoing job to help the RCVFD. We sometimes get behind on administrative duties for the department. We must submit reports every time we go on a call; enter and maintain records; and we must maintain records for our trucks and equipment so we can be reimbursed if we go on a mutual aid call in another district, etc. While not overwhelming tasks, it is problematic for responders because when there are more calls (taking more of our time) there is more associated reporting. Typically, this job would be a few hours a month, but it does require working in software that is only reasonably user friendly. So, if you are good with computers, have a knack for attention to detail, and want to help the RCVFD and your community please contact me at [chief@rcvfd.org](mailto:chief@rcvfd.org).

# THANK YOU

Volunteers of the Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department



*Dennis*



*Noreen*



*L.J.*



*Jen*

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## Treasurer's Report

How important are you to RCVFD? The answer is fairly easy to answer. YOU are very important to RCVFD! Without YOU there would be no RCVFD. YOU are RCVFD. As a donation based fire department each one of us plays an important role in providing the emergency response for fire and medical calls. You may have already received your annual drive letter asking for your support. Please put RCVFD in your budget plan.

At our annual meeting last fall the RCVFD Bylaws were updated and with the update a new position of Assistant Treasurer was added to the Board of Directors. If you would like to serve your community and are proficient in QuickBooks, please call 970/419-0397 for more information.

*Richard Lund  
Treasurer, RCVFD*



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The Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department is looking for an Assistant Treasurer. This person needs to be proficient in QuickBooks. If interested, please call Richard Lund at 419-0397.





# Grow With Us

## Upcoming Sales & Events

**April 6-8:**

Perennial Palooza Sale

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For more information, contact:  
Laurie Franklin, RCVFD  
970-416-0436  
info@rcvfd.org

**Bellvue, CO, Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department  
participates in national  
Wildfire Community Preparedness Day**

***Local communities join effort to reduce wildfire risk across the country on May 5, 2018***



May 5, 2018 - Residents living in high-risk wildfire areas who want to take action steps to increase their safety but are unsure about how to start can now find the information, and the inspiration, they need to organize and accomplish wildfire risk reduction projects in their community. Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department is teaming up with the [National Fire Protection Association \(NFPA\)](#) and [State Farm®](#) for the fifth annual [Wildfire Community Preparedness Day](#) event on May 5, 2018, which helps communities prepare for and work together to reduce their risk of wildfire damage.

Preparedness Day is a call to action that gives people of all ages a chance to plan and participate in a risk reduction or wildfire preparedness activity that makes their community a safer place to live.

“Continued drought, hotter temperatures and beetle-kill trees are major contributors to the increased wildfire activity we are experiencing in Colorado,” says Laurie Franklin, firefighter with the RCVFD. “That’s why the RCVFD has organized our Fifth Annual Wildfire Community Preparedness Day and are committed to working together with NFPA and State Farm to make our community safer from the threat of wildfire. We believe Preparedness Day is a great way to raise awareness of this important issue. ”

The Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department will be hosting an “Open Firehouse” during Preparedness Day to promote wildfire awareness and safety. The activities include:

- “Open Firehouse at Station 1” 11835 Rist Canyon Road, Bellvue, CO - enjoy burgers & brats and kids can check out our trucks, spray the fire hose and put out fires with the elite firefighting force of the Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department!
- Learn about wildfire preparedness for people, pets and property with the Colorado State Forest Service, Colorado Tree Farmers, Colorado Department of Wildlife, and emergency preparedness specialists. WIN a fire resistant plant from Fort Collins Nursery and meet Smokey Bear!
- See a Firewise building and landscaping display and learn how to help our community achieve a Firewise community designation.

Through these educational, individual and group activities, residents of Rist Canyon can learn more about the importance of wildfire preparedness and planning, and the power of prevention.







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### **RCVFD Monthly Meeting Schedule:**

Meetings at Firehouse #1 on Rist Canyon Rd.

Operations – 1<sup>st</sup> Wed. @ 7:00 PM

Fire Training – 2<sup>nd</sup> Wed. @ 7:00 PM

Board Meeting – 3<sup>rd</sup> Wed. @ 7:00 PM

Medical Training – 4<sup>th</sup> Wed. @ 7:00 PM



**Look what happens when you cut too many trees . . .**

*Reprinted with permission from the Tree Farmer Alert, Sept. 7, 2017. Submitted by Steve Goodroad.*



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Photo: Black-capped chickadee by [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service](#)



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**Rist Canyon Area references for standby generator installations can be provided.**

# Electric Chainsaws: Toys or Serious Forestry Tools?

In 2011, I moved into a brand new sustainable home in Redstone Canyon above Horsetooth Reservoir. My home is super insulated and heated by a solar hot water radiant floor system. I am connected to the Poudre REA electric grid but produce 10-15 % more electricity through solar photovoltaic collectors than I actually use.

Redstone Canyon has a very active forest wildfire mitigation program with individual homeowners actively cutting on their own property and also joining together every winter to cut strategically along roadways in the canyon. In these common areas, we provide the sweat equity ("burn calories, not trees!") and we have been able to obtain Colorado State Forest Service grants to have slash that we drag to the roads chipped and sprayed back on the land.

In the Spring of 2011, one of the areas that we mitigated was an area along a community roadway just below my new house. Without that mitigation effort, I have no doubt that the High Park fire would have destroyed my home. As a wildlife and forest ecologist, I have not just a professional but a personal interest in wildfire mitigation and in selecting the best tools to use.

I have used gas powered chainsaws for years but have always disliked their disadvantages including having to keep gas on hand; having to pull-start them, especially on cliffs or in deep snow; and adjusting engines, especially in freezing temperatures! Twenty years ago, I tried out battery powered chainsaws then on the market and found them to be "toys," at least from the perspective of serious woods work. Electric cord chainsaws were better but totally impractical for forest work.

In 2011, however, I noticed that Stihl had developed a lithium battery powered chainsaw and I decided to try out a 12-inch blade, 36-volt model after much kidding from fellow sawyers and I was amazed at its performance. The chain is narrower than a gas equivalent and the saw was well designed to take advantage of the greater torque of its electric motor. The weight of the chainsaw was 7 pounds without battery or 10.8 pounds with battery and the run time with intensive cutting was 38 minutes. For those who need to favor their backs with less chainsaw weight, there is a nifty battery belt that holds the

battery and a cord from the belt then plugs into the saw. The saw has been a pleasure to use because of its weight and rapid cutting ability. Another benefit has been noise reduction to the sound level of a sewing machine. Because the saw is either on or off and is simply started with a switch, it is also a joy to use on cliffs and steep hillsides. Chains are very easy to replace and the electric motor is self-contained and does not require tune-ups.

A side benefit is to be able to make fun of your fellow sawyers using gas chainsaws by asking them what that rope is hanging off their chainsaws. The lithium ion batteries are capable of being recharged in less than 30 minutes. I was pleased enough with the saw that I invested in four batteries allowing me at least half a day of active cutting without recharging. I have been very pleased with Stihl because they maintain good dealerships with repair shops. Maintenance involves cleaning which is easy for the operator to do and purchase of chain sprockets that are easily replaced at Stihl shops. Although batteries are not inexpensive, they show no evidence of reduction of power or run time after six years of heavy use. Without gas engine maintenance and the cost of gasoline and tune-ups, I estimate the overall cost of running and maintaining the saw equals that of a gas-powered saw by the third year and then falls after that.

There is another major advantage because Stihl also makes trimmers, blowers, pole saws and even lawn mowers that run on the same battery system of 32 volts. At this point, I have a 14-inch chainsaw, a pole saw that can extend 12 feet, two trimmers, and a blower all using the same batteries. All have been excellent investments.

*Continued on next page . . .*



## Electric Chainsaws, cont'd.

I decided last year to convert to all electric tools for wild fire mitigation because of the number of excellent lithium battery powered options. I needed a bigger chainsaw and was able to find an 80 volt 18-inch saw made by Green Works. They also make an 80 volt trimmer, using the same battery, that is excellent for heavy brush cutting as well as an 80 volt yard mower also using the same battery and recharger. I have been very pleased with these tools.

The 18 inch chainsaw is large and powerful enough to cut any trees on my property. I have also been able to convert a Polaris Ranger ATV to electric power with lithium batteries similar to a model that the Special Forces is using in Afghanistan. It is powerful enough to clear driveways with a snow blade and is an outstanding work vehicle with 1-wheel, 2-wheel, and 4-wheel drive choices and quiet enough for outstanding wildlife observation. In addition, the lithium batteries are estimated to be good for about 6,000 recharges.

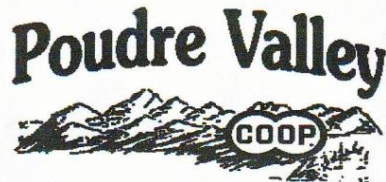
Although I am connected to the electric grid, I have battery back-up and emergency circuits. Thus, I have full use of my lithium powered tools and

vehicle under emergency conditions. These tools and the vehicle seem to require much less maintenance and I am very pleased from safety, financial, and environmental perspectives not to be using gasoline to power them. I like to say that my energy supplier is 93 million miles away and has been a reliable supplier for the last 4.5 billion years!

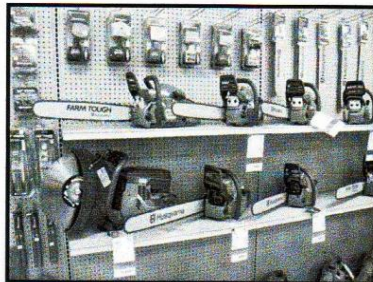
I have had good luck with Stihl and Green Works but there are now an ever-increasing number of lithium battery powered tools available. As with any choices these days, I advise careful review of the quality and power of the tools available. It is also important to make sure that you have access to a local shop where parts and repairs can be made. Best wishes and go electric!

*By John H. Fitch*

*Proud Owner of a Sustainable Home on 38 acres in  
Redstone Canyon,  
Larimer County Affiliate Professor, Warner College  
of Natural Resources,  
Colorado State University*



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# 2018 RCVFD Mountain Festival

Fun, Friends, and Funds Festival! A great team has formed to organize the 2018 Rist Canyon Festival to raise money for the Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department (RCVFD). It will be held **Saturday, September 8, 2018 (not Labor Day weekend)**. Some of the leaders and activities are listed below, and we can use more help. We also need folks to assist their neighbors with setup on Friday, September 7, and breakdown on Sunday, September 9 (any amount of time you can spare is appreciated). Please contact H.J. Siegel (Festival Coordinator) to volunteer for activities, setup and breakdown, or if you have any questions ([HJ@computer.org](mailto:HJ@computer.org)). We need the help of our community (you), please.

## List of Festival Leaders

**Bake Sale:** Lisa Diederich

**Board of Directors Booth:** Dale Snyder

**Book Sale:** Carolyn Stanley

**Corporate Sponsors:** Taylor Bradley Hubbard

**Craft/Vendor Booths:** Jill Smith, Cherie

DeLapp Brandhorst

**Entertainment:** Sandy Deraney-Reilly

**Facilities:** Richard Lund

**Farm Animals:** Coreen Rairdon

**Festival Coordinator:** H.J. Siegel

**Firefighter Display Booth:** Juana Jackson

**Food Trucks:** Bridget Tisthammer

**Ice Cream:** Shane Downing

**Kids' Events:** Trisha Johnston

**Lunch with a Firefighter:** Juana Jackson

**Plant Sale:** Ann Nichols

**Publicity:** Leisa Taylor

**RCVFD Supporter T-Shirts:** Susan Miley, Eve Ege

**Silent Auction:** Janet Siegel

**Treasurer:** Richard Lund



*(From left to right)*  
Juana Jackson, Cherie Bradhorst, Eve Ege, Susan Miley, Taylor Hubbard, Bridget Tisthammer, Trisha Johnston, Carolyn Stanley and Janet Siegel enjoy the view from H.J. and Janet Siegel's home during a break in our second festival get-together.

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## RCVFD News and Notes

The upper Buckhorn needs more first responders.  
I would volunteer but I can no longer run up a hill with 50' of hose under each arm.

Contact RCVFD if you can leap over the now-standing Kinnikinnick with a Shovel in your hand to cut more fire-line.

*Don Diemer,  
up the Buckhorn without a paddle or a shovel  
Upper Buckhorn Area Rep*

The Whale Rock community would like to thank the first responders of RCVFD for their efforts to aid a Whale Rock resident in critical need. Nice job folks!

*Brian Finley,  
Whale Rock Area Rep*

I am pleased to be the new RCVFD Area Representative for Davis Ranch. We are currently exploring options for the annual Fall Festival, intended to generate funds for the Volunteer Fire Dept. Plans are not finalized, so feel free to contact me if you would like to participate in the planning process, or have suggestions. Volunteers are always welcome at varying levels of time commitment. If you know of musicians who might be willing to donate their time for our cause, please let me know. You can contact me through the RCVFD web site by clicking on my link. Thanks, I look forward to hearing from you and serving our community.

*Sandy Deraney Reilly  
Davis Ranch Area Rep*

• • • • •  
• Spring is here! I know that  
• the warmer weather,  
• although temporary, has  
• gotten me in the mood to  
• plant. Did you know that  
• some of the easiest  
• vegetables to start indoors  
• and transplant later are  
• broccoli, cabbage, Brussel  
• sprouts, lettuce and  
• tomatoes? Happy planting  
• everyone!  
• • • • •

*Jill Smith  
Stove Prairie Area Rep*

Happy Spring folks! Your firefighters are always here for you. But prevention is best! It's a good time to have your chimneys cleaned, and change those smoke and carbon monoxide detector batteries. Great protection for you and your family. Why not plan to change them today! Cheers —

*Louise Creager  
Stratton Park Area Rep*



**"When you are  
dissatisfied and would  
like to go back  
to youth, think of  
Algebra."**

- Will Rogers

Continued on next page . . .



## RCVFD News and Notes, cont'd.

### WATCH FOR YOUR NEIGHBORS AND WILDLIFE!

As you travel through our canyon, please watch out for our residents and wildlife. On the stretch of Rist Canyon Road next to our home (1/2 mile up the Canyon from RCVFD Station One), residents can be challenged entering and exiting their drive onto the main road, while deer and other animals frequently cross from the hillside on the south to the open areas to the north of the road, and back again. We've recently seen two deer killed, in two separate incidents, in the recent past; while I don't know about the drivers, the vehicles involved in these incidents were damaged, as well.

With the re-striping of Rist Canyon Road, there are now even fewer passing lanes than before; now, the first passing lane as you come "up" the canyon, is now in this same area. For those traveling down Rist Canyon Road from the west, it is effectively a "blind curve" immediately before this same stretch of road; the folks that live on the hillside on the south side of the road—as well as the animals that cross—are frequently at risk of being involved in a potential collision.

Please be considerate of our community and its wildlife in your travels so that you can return home to your family safely and without injury or damage, and others can, as well!



If you live in Rist Canyon, and have any questions related to either the Fire Department or our Donation drive, please send me a note through the RCVFD web site. Just click on the "Contact" link for me. Also, if you live here and know of a newcomer to the Canyon, let me know that, as well, so that I can contact them as our Rist Canyon Area Representative, and welcome them to our community. Thanks!

*Jeff Varberry*  
Rist Canyon Area Rep

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\$1 per line for a 4" wide ad. No businesses, please.

Business ads, classified ads, community news and photos can be submitted to the Editor at [ristwatch@rcvfd.org](mailto:ristwatch@rcvfd.org).



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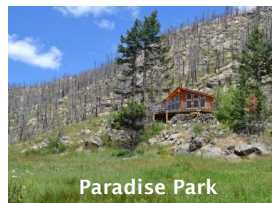
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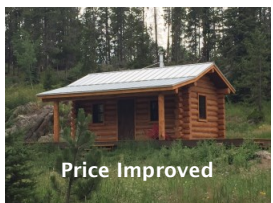
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## Comeback for Humpback Chub

The humpback chub is making a comeback! A recent 5-year status review indicates this unique Colorado River fish could soon be downlisted from an endangered to a threatened species. This would mark a conservation success for the native freshwater fish, which has been protected since 1967 (predating the Endangered Species Act of 1973). The largest population, found in the Colorado and Little Colorado Rivers in the Grand Canyon of Arizona, appears to be stable at about 12,000 adults. There are five populations in total, each persisting without hatchery stocking.

Improvements in water management, nonnative fish control, and collaborative conservation efforts with state, tribal, federal, and private partners are all attributed to helping the humpback chub, ensuring it continues to endure for future generations.

*Reprinted with permission from "Peaks to Prairies" a weekly newsletter issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Mar. 23, 2018.*



*Photo: Humpback chub by Travis Francis/USFWS*

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Go to [www.coloradogives.org/](http://www.coloradogives.org/)  
Under "Find a Nonprofit"  
Enter: Rist Canyon VFD  
In the Rist Canyon VFD window,  
click on "Donate".

RCVFD provides wildland and structural fire protection as well as medical emergency services to over 110 square miles of northern Colorado Front Range. Please help us continue this important service to not only residents but also visitors and guests to this area. Your support is invaluable to maintain the safety in this area. Please consider a donation of any size.



### Neighborhood Rewards Program

Buy a preloaded \$5 gift card by calling Bridget at 484-6724. At the King Soopers checkout counter, load the card with the desired amount of money. Use the card to purchase anything at King Soopers—food, prescriptions, gas and other items. RCVFD receives 5% of all purchases using the preloaded gift card! Cards also available at BOD meetings on 3rd Wednesdays at Station 1, and at the Mountain Festival.



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

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