



RISTWATCH

RCVFD Quarterly Newsletter P. O. Box 2, Bellvue, CO 80512 Issue No. 102 April 2022

Letter from the President

Happy Spring!



After what seems to have been one of the coldest winters in memory it is refreshing to be getting some warm, dry weather. While the moisture we've received since New Year's Eve has been welcome, come on, Mother Nature, do we really need to have virtually no moisture followed by weekly snowfalls? Can we smooth out the extremes?

But seriously, SNOTELL tells us that our part of Colorado is at 99% of normal Snow Water Equivalent. NOAA's current long-range forecasts are predicting normal precipitation for the year. We know what that means, a wet spring followed by a dry summer, meaning lots of grass that will dry out by mid-summer to provide fuel for wildfires.

This is a long-winded way of saying, please take your defensible space seriously. We know that grass adjacent to buildings is a significant danger when a fire gets going. Fortunately, grass is relatively easy to keep in check compared to forest. Keep those mowers and weed eaters handy! Look for more information on defensible space elsewhere in this edition.

The other thing to think about is vehicle safety. We are moving into our wettest season of the year, meaning we could get some of those wet, heavy spring snowstorms. Be prepared to stay home if the weather turns bad, or even stay in town if that makes more sense for your situation. While our volunteers will respond in case of a motor vehicle accident, they would really rather not see anyone under those conditions.

Continued on next page

Letter from the President, cont'd.

I continue to learn this new position. One thing I have learned is that our volunteers are amazing. The passion they bring to our department is what makes all of this work. Thank those EMSs, firefighters and other volunteers when you see one!

Neil Faber



RCVFD Monthly Meeting Schedule

Ops, Fire and Medical Trainings are at Firehouse #1 at 11835 Rist Canyon Road. Board meetings are temporarily either on Zoom or at Firehouse #1. A Community Alert with location is sent to the community on the 1st of each month. To sign up for Community Alerts, visit RCVFD.org.

Operations —1st Wednesdays (6-7 PM)

Fire Training—2nd Wednesdays (7-9:30 PM)

Board Meeting—3rd Wednesdays (6-8 PM)**

Medical Training—4th Wednesdays (6-9:30 PM)

**The RCVFD Board meets at 6 pm on the third Wednesday of each month, usually at Fire Station 1, 11835 Rist Canyon Road, and when necessary, on Zoom. All Rist Canyon area residents are welcome to attend.

Around the first of each month, RCVFD sends out a Community Alert with the deadline to request a copy of the agenda. If you would like to receive the agenda, please email your name, email address and phone number to the RCVFD Board Secretary at secretary@rcvfd.org. Please note that the agenda will arrive one to two days before the scheduled meeting.

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Norman Hollis Miller

SEPTEMBER 8, 1935 – JANUARY 29, 2022

Norman Hollis Miller, known to many as simply Stormin' Norman, died unexpectedly on January 29, 2022 at the age of 86, from injuries sustained in a tragic accident at his home in Fort Collins, CO.

To know Norm meant different things to each person who was fortunate enough to cross his path, and thereby become a forever friend.

Norm was born in Brattleboro, Vermont on September 8, 1935, to Mary and Hollis Miller. He grew up in Springfield, Vermont, graduating from Springfield High School in 1953. He served in the US Army from 1954 through 1956 in Germany as a Map Draftsman. In 1957, Norm and his best friend Roger Clayton left Vermont for big city life in California, but only made it as far west as Denver before deciding it seemed like a nice place to stay for a while. Norm met his future wife Joan Miller (Grim) in 1959 through connections in the Royal Coach Sports Car Club. They married in Globeville, CO, on October 6, 1962. In 1967 they moved to Fort Collins where Norm worked for Ed Carroll Volkswagen Porsche in various positions through 1981. He worked for several other local dealerships before opening Stormin' Norman's Bug Shop where he lived out his true passion of repairing and restoring Volkswagens, Porsches, and other classic cars.

Norm was active in the Rocky Mountain 356 Porsche Club, where he enjoyed driving in rallies, participating in car shows and the camaraderie of car talk with great friends. He was an expert mechanic, and many sought his help and advice, which he gave to all.

Continued on next page



Norm

He was also a motorcycle enthusiast, going on road trips with Joan and many friends over the years. He still met with a group of riders every Saturday morning at Verns Café in Bellvue, to talk about all things two wheeled.

Norm was a proud fireman and EMT with the Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department from 2004 through 2020. He fought during High Park and Cameron Peak wildfires in recent years, and kept the department's firetrucks and equipment repaired and ready for action whenever the next call came.

He was an Amateur Ham Radio Operator, talking with people around the world long before the evolution of social media. His handle was KØKUN, and he still regularly communicated across the radio waves and made new friends and kept in touch with old ones.

Norm loved music and often had a harmonica in his pocket, could pick a tune on the banjo and was a long-time member of the Valentine City Barbershop Chorus, where he sang bass in the chorus and in many Quartets over the years.

Whether he was known to you as a pilot, a ski patrol member, a race car driver, an expert mechanic, motorcycle rider, a firefighter, a Porsche enthusiast, a Fort Collins City Councilman, a singer, a salesman, or just a dear friend, his accomplishments and adventures in life were beyond what can be captured in words. To say he lived life to the fullest is an understatement, and he did it all with his signature pipe in his mouth.

Norm was preceded in death by his beloved brother Donald and his sister Sue.



He is survived by his wife Joan, daughter Lynn Miller and grandchildren Avery, Hayden and Chloe; daughter Diane Davis (Mike) and grandchildren Megan, Melissa, Maia and Nadia; and his sister Kathy Converse (Randy) of Madison, Wisconsin; and many nieces and nephews.

Due to ongoing Covid and travel concerns, a celebration of Norm's life will be held June 5, 2022 at the Anheuser Busch Biergarten Event Center in Fort Collins, Colorado from 1:00 - 5:00 in the afternoon. We look forward to everyone's best Stormin' Norman stories.

Chief's Report



I will probably cause a large snowstorm to happen by uttering these words, but it seems that the 2022 Mud Season is already in full swing.

Snowpacks across Larimer County are at 100% of normal, which quite frankly is a pleasant surprise to those of us in Rist Canyon, where it seemed to be a below-average winter for moisture. To help residents in high-risk areas like Moody Hill, we are working with Larimer County to get sandbags delivered to assist in water management during the spring runoff.

Outside training opportunities for Rist Canyon firefighters this spring will include hands-on rescue training, school bus extrication and chainsaw certification. Rescue training is more than just ropes: it also includes patient stabilization and packaging for extraction from a wilderness environment. A fair number of calls are OHV accidents, and those can be tough to access and extract the patient from. School bus extrication takes the difficulty and safety concerns of single-passenger vehicle extraction and multiplies it: a large vehicle that is much harder to stabilize, containing many more patients who are in greater danger of increased injury. We hope never to use this skill, of course, but having it will make us more effective. Lastly, the use of chainsaws in a wildland fire are absolutely vital for clearing snags and other large fuels while making a fire break, accessing an area with an apparatus, or protecting firefighters working in the area. While many use chainsaws frequently in Rist Canyon, there are special considerations for using them in a wildland fire. Consequently, a certification is required in any inter-agency fire.

On the in-house side of things, we do a wildland refresher training and fitness test—known as the dreaded Pack Test—every spring to renew our red card certifications. This annual

certification gives each of our firefighters the right to work on an inter-agency fire. Often this means that during quiet periods for us, we can provide assistance to other departments by sending personnel and engines. Occasionally, we are the recipient of that assistance, and of course in 2020 there was mutual aid crisscrossing the entire Larimer County volunteer department network, as Cameron Peak threatened most of the response areas at various times. The paperwork of all of these efforts is much simpler when firefighters are carrying red cards, and it also provides a baseline evaluation of our people to help us determine areas for further training throughout the summer.

Finally, it is with great sadness that I must announce that Norm Miller has passed away. Norm was a member of the RCVFD family for many years, and a ubiquitous presence at Station One, serving us in more ways than we can count. His family will be holding a Celebration of Life on the afternoon of June 5 at the Anheuser Busch Biergarten Event Center in Fort Collins from 1:00-5:00. Also, see elsewhere in this Ristwatch for more details about Norm and how much he meant to us and our whole community.

Sincerely,
Jeff Elsner, Chief
Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department
P.O. Box 2
Bellvue, CO 80512
[*chief@rcvfd.org*](mailto:chief@rcvfd.org)



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*Wildlife around Rist Canyon:
moose photo by Erica Michel;
deer photo by Louise Creager;
Steller's jay photo by Karen Salaz*



Letter from the Vice President

Dear Rist Canyon Neighbors:

I am glad to have the opportunity to reach out to you all through the Ristwatch newsletter each quarter. For this Ristwatch issue, I want to recognize some of the folks who make Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department (RCVFD) possible.

The Ristwatch editor, Bridget Tisthammer, does an outstanding job putting these newsletters together and gathering sponsors. Her efforts at “herding cats” to collect the material and then cleaning up the submissions and organizing the layout for the entire newsletter demonstrate her editorial expertise, dedication, persistence, kindness and patience.

The Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department is a wonderful collection of volunteer firefighters, emergency medical responders (EMRs) and emergency medical technicians (EMTs) who participate in extensive training to care for our community. They are the ones alerted when you call 911, 24/7, for fire, medical and motor vehicle emergencies. Chief Jeff Elsner, Medical Officer Mark Neuroth, and Training Officer Phil Benstein (in conjunction with the other RCVFD Officers) ensure the RCVFD first responders are educated and prepared to take care of you, my Rist Canyon neighbors. Please let me know if you want information about joining our team of responders.

In addition, there are volunteer support personnel to maintain the RCVFD trucks, gear, records, fire house facilities, etc. To highlight two of these folks, Jeff Brack is responsible for the care and feeding of our trucks, and Gretchen Long orders, distributes and guards our expensive specialized firefighting gear. If you wish to explore helping RCVFD in a support position, please contact me.

The RCVFD Board of Directors ensures that the fire department has the money it needs to function effectively, and handles administrative issues (e.g., budgeting, insurance, paying bills). Neil Faber has been the President since January 2022 and does an excellent job leading the group. Richard Lund has been the Treasurer (and other positions on the Board) since prehistoric times and is responsible for RCVFD budgeting, bill paying, tracking the status of our savings, etc. Leisa Taylor is the Board Secretary and prepares the minutes. The Board has representatives from different areas throughout Rist Canyon. The Board is a group committed to the success of RCVFD, and are elected each year at the RCVFD Annual Community Meeting. The monthly Board meetings are open to the community. Please let me know if you want information about attending a Board meeting or participating as a Board member.

Please consider joining in to be part of the RCVFD activities. Thanks,



H. J. Siegel
Vice President of the RCVFD Board of Directors
Email: HJ@computer.org



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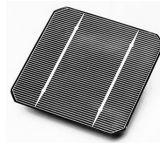
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Treasurer's Notes

I am proud to be a resident in a community that stands alone as a non-tax funded fire department. We can be enormously proud that our fire department stands on its own as self-funded.

Who is the RCVFD?

It is YOU!

How is this accomplished? There are several ways how this can be accomplished. Working together as a community by volunteering. Volunteering to serve as an area representative for the area you live in, working to make our mountain festival fundraiser an enormous success. Another way is local and federal grants. Grant writing has been positive in helping the fire department prepare for the future of RCVFD. The community annual drive envelopes are still the major income that supports our fire department. This is where we as individuals can support the fire department. When you receive your letter with the donation envelope, I ask you for your support. There are 1,206 households on the RCVFD mailing list. Even a small donation can be effective. Your volunteer fire and medical personnel are there serving you 24/7. I am proud to be there for them 24/7 also. Thanks!

Richard Lund
RCVFD Treasurer



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The Ristwatch reserves the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any article or ad at any time. We base this decision on our responsibility to our readers. We will not knowingly print any article or ad that is misleading or untruthful. Articles submitted to the Ristwatch are a representation of the author and not necessarily an endorsement by the RCVFD.

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- Providing wildlife habitat to support a wide variety of species

Join us today to help in our fight to preserve and protect the foundational rural lifestyle in Larimer County.

Contact us at larimercountyfarmbureau@outlook.com, or on Facebook at Larimer County Farm Bureau.

Together we can do this!



Meet Your 2022 RCVFD Operations Officers



Jeff Elsner, Fire Chief, 2nd VP

Previous to becoming our Chief, Jeff worked for the forest service as a hot shot and on an engine crew. Jeff has been a firefighter for RCVFD since 2005 and an EMT since 2011. Jeff owns JNC contractors where he works as an exterior trim

carpenter. Jeff and his wife, Carol, have two sons and three grandkids in California. In his spare time, Jeff rides motorcycles and camps. He also owns a backhoe front loader that he uses to do side work and help out mountain people. He is a member of the Rocky Mountain Tool Association where he shares his love of old hand planes and antique woodworking tools.



Carol Dollard, Asst. Chief

Carol Dollard is currently serving as the Assistant Fire Chief of the Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department. She joined RCVFD shortly after moving to the canyon in 1983 and has been an

active firefighter since then. She lives at the top of the canyon on Ford Hill Road with a beautiful view of the south end of the Stove Prairie Valley. She raised her family there and still loves living on the hill with her husband, Harry. She has two daughters and four grandkids who live nearby in Fort Collins. She loves hiking with her dog and is teaching her grandkids to love hiking too. To keep in shape and help clear her mind, she has been a martial artist for three decades. Her "day job" is an Energy Engineer for Facilities Management at Colorado State University.



Jesse Caplecha, Captain

At press time, Jesse was on a month-long rafting trip in the Grand Canyon, which is probably a pretty good introduction!



Mark Neuroth, Medical Officer

Mark and his wife, Cheryl, moved to Bellvue from Pine Junction, Colorado about three years ago. Mark is a carpenter by trade, and built custom homes for 40 years. Now he enjoys hunting, fishing, camping and hiking with his dog, Nugget, when he isn't out on medical calls.



Terry Shetler, Lieutenant

Terry and his wife, Bonnie, have lived in Stove Prairie since 1976, and started his career at Woodward Governor. Nowadays, Terry and Bonnie love to travel.

They have travelled around the world and camped all over the West. Terry also likes hiking, biking and operating his ham radio.



Mark McCracken, Lieutenant

Mark and his wife Diane moved into the community in 2012, right after the High Park Fire. He has been a firefighter with RCVFD ever since, and now serves as Public Information Officer. Mark has worked in the intersection of technology and finance since 1994, and enjoys skiing, hiking, camping and motorcycling.

Continued on next page

2022 RCVFD Operations Officers, cont'd.



Juana Jackson, Lieutenant

Juana was born in Chicago and moved to Mexico when she was about nine months old. She is one of 12 siblings and believe it or

not, they all get along most of the time. In 2000 she came back to live in the US. She is married to Tim Jackson, and they have two kids, Jade, 17 and Joey, 13. Juana joined the RCVFD in 2016, with no experience, only her willingness to help our community. Juana states, "Slowly over the years I have been gaining experience and trying to learn how to be a better RCVFD responder. Of course there is always room for improvement. I love my community and I'm always happy to see everyone at our Mountain Festival."



Nick Barton, Lieutenant

Nick moved to Laporte from Illinois about eight years ago. His residential construction company, NJB Contracting, keeps him busy, along with his two and a half year old twins! When he has time, Nick likes to play frisbee golf, fish and camp.

*Photo of bald eagle at Watson Lake in Bellvue,
courtesy of Erica Michel*

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Mountain Festival News



Bake Sale Tent

Please Donate Baked Goods for the Mountain Festival

Please consider donating baked goods for the RCVFD Mountain Festival. It is a terrific way to get the entire family involved in supporting our firefighters and EMS. PIES are the best-selling item, and we sell it by the slice or whole pie. Cookies, bars, brownies, cinnamon rolls and breads are popular items too. Items that do not require refrigeration are best for the sale. Please package items in sellable amounts (e.g., 1/2 dozen cookies, 1 dozen cookies).

Also list high allergen ingredients such as nuts, dairy or soy. Thank you for supporting our incredible RCVFD that keeps us safe. If you have any questions or would like to volunteer some time at the bake sale tent, please feel free to contact me anytime.

Patti Clutter
Bake Sale Chair
858-248-6328, clutterp28@gmail.com

Book Tent Update

We are receiving books at Station 1 and also at Pleasant Valley church. We are also picking up books from Elder Paul that belonged to his wife. We will be working on trying to receive books from Book Lovers and the Old Fire House Books.

Carolyn Stanley
Book Tent Chair
cloud9sewing@gmail.com



*Coming together in support of our
firefighters and our community*

PREPARATIONS ARE UNDERWAY FOR THE 2022 RCVFD MOUNTAIN FESTIVAL! HERE ARE VARIOUS WAYS YOU CAN HELP:

Sponsorships: Do you own or support a business that would be interested in becoming a festival sponsor? Wide range of levels available to accommodate every business that wants to support RCVFD! Contact Taylor, taylor@thecreativehubLR.com

Silent Auction: Do you have or know of a business interested in donating an item? Connect with Silent Auction coordinator Janet, equiphile@gmail.com, to make sure we don't contact the same businesses multiple times!

Book Bees: The Book Bees will soon begin sorting donated books. Are you available to help? If you have books to donate, please put them in the donation bin located at Fire Station No. 1. Contact Carolyn with any questions, Cloud9Sewing@gmail.com

Bake Sale: Now is the time to start experimenting with new recipes and perfecting old ones to fill our bake sale tables! Contact Patti & James, clutterp28@gmail.com

Booths: Are you or someone you know interested in becoming a vendor? Contact Debbi, DebandLyle007@gmail.com

If you're interested in having a free educational/not-for-profit booth, contact Trisha, tajohnmt@outlook.com

Kids Area: This is a family-friendly event, and we are always looking for great activities to fill our kids area! Contact Trisha, tajohnmt@outlook.com

Plant Sale: Are your indoor plants out of control? Now is a great time to root the extras and get them ready for the plant sale! And while you're doing your garden spring cleaning, save your divisions and pot them up! Contact Kimberley, kimberley.carr@kiewit.com

Volunteers in every capacity are critical in making the festival a success. You can make a difference by helping now, or before, during or after the festival, and we would love to hear from you!
Contact HJ, HJ@computer.org



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Home Fire Mitigation:

An Investment Opportunity You Can't Afford to Miss

Preserving and growing your home investment means different things to different people. Living in the mountains, one of the most important investments is ensuring your home is properly mitigated against, and prepared for, fire danger. Nothing can guarantee your home will survive in the event of a wildfire. There are proven precautionary steps, however, you must take to provide your investment with the best possible chance of surviving without firefighter intervention.

The starting point is evaluating your HIZ – Home Ignition Zone. There are critical zone-based considerations in determining how best to prepare your home. These take into consideration distance, flammable materials in and around the home, construction materials and design, forest canopy density, and utilization of a science-based approach for balanced natural surroundings.

Zone I, 0-5 feet from home, is the Ember Aware Zone. Prepare for embers from a mile or more in this zone. Maintaining this zone will reduce the chance that fire will ignite near your home and lead to a direct flame contact exposure.

1. Install hard surfaces in this zone (such as a concrete walkway) or use noncombustible mulch products (such as rock mulch).
2. Regularly water your lawn and plants to prevent dry vegetation in this area.
3. Remove dead plant material from plants.
4. Remove plants adjacent to combustible siding and foundation vents, as well as plants under or next to windows and under-eave vents or in interior corners.
5. Remove pine cones and needles near building, gutters and on/under decking.
6. Do not store combustibles under the deck or under stairs leading to the deck.
7. Complete the *20 Common Area Checklist Ember Ignition*: roofs, roof openings, roof debris, skylights, spark arrester, windows, vents, rain gutters, siding and trim,



woodpiles, patio furniture, decks, porch and deck accessories, flowerboxes, eaves, flowerbeds, vehicles, garage door, garbage cans and recycling bins and fences.

Zone II, 5–30-foot perimeter area. You don't need to remove all plants and trees in this zone. Removal of low branches and correct spacing is important.

1. Remove all dead and dying plant material, including that hidden deep in shrubs and trees.
2. Clear vegetation from under and around large stationary propane tanks.
3. It is okay to use organic mulch such as wood chips in this zone, as long as it is no more than three inches deep.
4. Mow annual grasses and weeds to a two to four inch height. Consider mowing around wildflowers!
5. Limb up trees six feet or more from the ground. Eleven feet is even better, but not more than 1/3 of a tree's height (to maintain tree health).
6. Choose which trees and shrubs you especially want to save for shade, wildlife value, visual appeal, etc. (See below for help in choosing.) Remove enough of the trees and shrubs between those specimens to break up a path for fire—both horizontal and vertical.
7. Create a "scattered" landscape – lots of space between trees and shrubs in the first 30 feet, still some space but not quite as much out to 100 feet (200 feet if your

Home Fire Mitigation, cont'd.

property is steep). Tree placement should be planned to ensure the mature trees are not closer than ten feet to the edge of the structure.

8. Keep shrubs away from the area under trees so they don't become "ladder fuels" bringing fire to trees overhead. Flames from a shrub can reach three to four times the height of the shrub.
9. Prune limbs and branches to a minimum height of six feet off the ground. Eleven feet is even better. For shorter trees, pruning should not exceed 1/3 of the tree height.

Zone 3 >30-foot perimeter area. Maintaining plants in this zone will help slow down and reduce the energy of the wildfire, slowing its advance to your building. Tree and brush spacing should force any fire in the tops of the trees, brush or shrubs to drop to the ground. The rate of spread and flame length of a wildfire is affected by slope. A steeper slope will result in a faster-moving fire with longer flame lengths.

1. Remove dead plant material and tree branches from vegetation on a regular maintenance schedule.
2. Create islands or groupings of vegetation.
3. Remove lower tree branches.
4. Maintain trees with a minimum horizontal spacing of ten feet between crown edges.

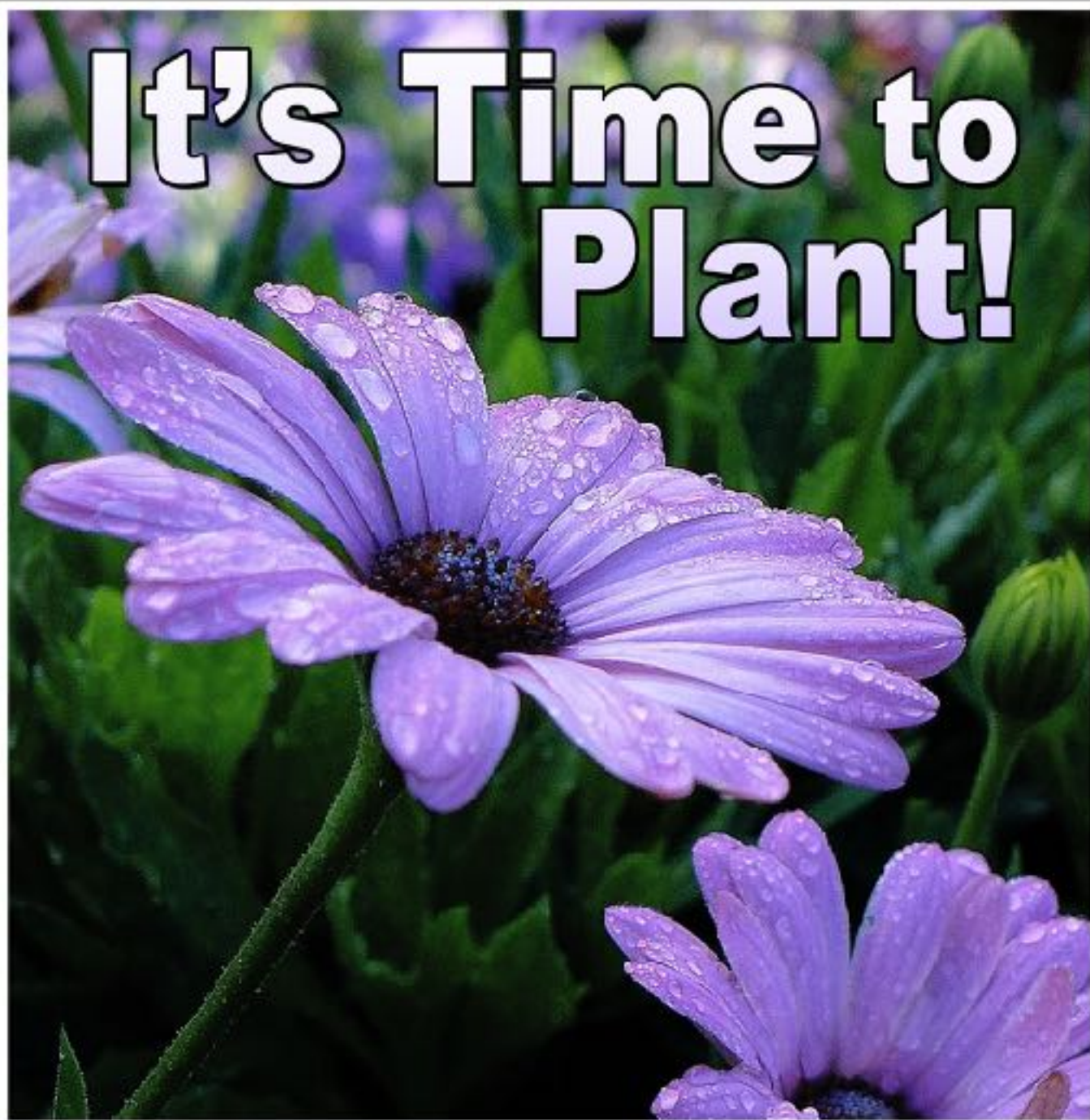
This basic information puts you on the path to helping ensure you provide your home with the best chance of survival during a wildfire. There are no guarantees, but there are proven ways to help protect you and your investment. The Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department website is a valuable source of a wide variety of information available at [Wildfire Home](https://www.rcvfd.org/emergency-preparedness/wildfire-home) (<https://www.rcvfd.org/emergency-preparedness/wildfire-home>). This information is in no way meant to replace an in-person home evaluation. It is a starting point into the principles and concepts that a home evaluation from a certified mitigation specialist would present. In Larimer County, you can contact Larimer County Emergency Services for more information about their program.

*Karen Salaz
Rist Canyon Resident*

Methods Used to Improve All HIZ Zones

- **Clear** - Clear pine needles, pine cones, dead plants and weeds next to house so embers will not have anything to ignite.
- **Store Away** - Furniture cushions, decorations, potted plants and door mats.
- **Screen and Seal** - Use a 1/8 inch screen for eave vents, good quality caulk and at least 1/2 inch plywood to seal basement vents and other ground level openings. Walk around the entire house. Address rotting or decaying wood items.
- **Rake** - Rake pine needles or organic mulch within the five foot zone away from the house.
- **Trim** - Trim branches on trees and large shrubs that stick into the five foot zone.
- **Remove** - Remove wood piles, rotting stumps, logs, bark, vehicles, gas cans and other combustibles within the 30 foot zone.
- **Close** - If an evacuation is ordered, close all windows and doors. Block off pet doors, close garage door.
- **Water and Fill** - If time allows, water around the house and leave hoses attached. Fill buckets and garbage containers with water.

It's Time to Plant!



Plants • Supplies • Gifts • Tools • Fertilizer • Seeds

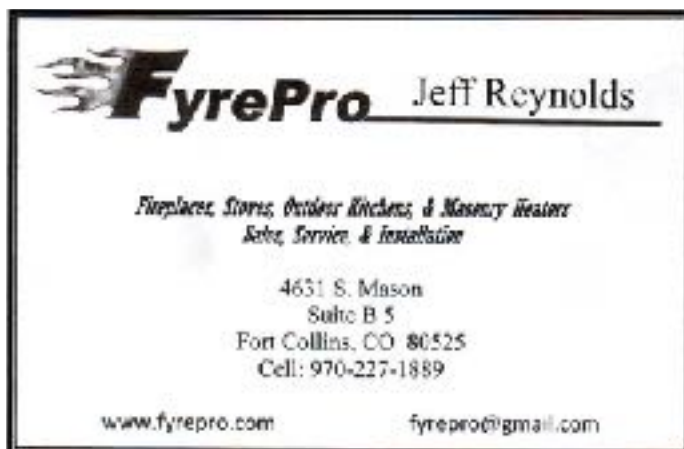
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Here's My Card



Dark-eyed junco and pine siskins finding some seed in the snow, courtesy of Louise Creager

Notes from Your Area Representatives

From the Upper Buckhorn:

Not too much going on in the upper Buckhorn over winter. Things soften and quiet down with the snow and colder temperatures. Neighbors have been reporting on moose, elk, deer, coyote and mountain lion activity in the area recently.

*Erica Michel
Upper Buckhorn Area Rep.*

From Davis Ranch:

As I had back surgery on February 10th, I have not been out and about much. Things are quiet here. We have had several neighbors burning slash and this is good. Just remember to get a permit for this.

*Carolyn Stanley
Davis Ranch Area Rep.*

From Stratton Park:

How about a Rebate? Ahhh Spring—Always a glorious time when the birds are getting nests ready for their chicks, that familiar sound of bucks in their rutt and so many other familiar critters working on getting ready for their new families. We too must be thinking of our own families and homes. It's a good time to spruce up your home, maybe get new appliances, freshen up your light bulbs with LED types to save on energy or maybe you purchased one of those exciting electric cars and need an EV charger? Why not get a rebate for these and add to your wallet after the purchase? Thank you Poudre Valley REA! Not only appliances and light bulbs, but smart thermostats,

whole house fans, water heaters; and don't miss the Outdoor Power Equipment section, which not only includes those exhilarating electric bicycles but also electric snow blowers, electric ride behind and riding mowers and more! Well worth your time to check them out. Purchase must be within the last 90 days with receipt. Some items require more information, so read the full instructions. Check out the Poudre Valley REA website at <https://pvrea.coop/rebates>. Happy Spring Shopping!

*Louise Creager
Stratton Park Area Rep.*



The fire stations provided lots of plowing fun this winter. Thanks to Ruben Arrieta in his 1988 American made Jeep Comanche, John Benshoof, Larry Monesson and Terry Shetler, who got out there in the cold to keep our stations emergency-ready. Norm Miller also plowed for years when he was in the canyon.



Your Local Real Estate News!
Buckhorn ~ Stove Prairie ~ Rist Canyon
And Beyond



SOLD!

- ★ Almost 5 acres
- ★ Inspiring Views
- ★ Total Solar
- ★ 2 Bedrooms & 1 Bath
- ★ Lots of Wildlife



Stratton Park Views

- ★ Recently SOLD 35+ Acres
- ★ Views of Grey Rock
- ★ Community Neighborhood
- ★ Easy access to National Forest



Lots 8 & 9 – Stratton Park

- ★ 35+ Acres
- ★ Community Neighborhood
- ★ Easy Access to National Forest
- ★ Potential for Owner Carry
- ★ 45 Minutes to Town

2021 Market Update

WOW! 2021 was a phenomenal year in our area for Real Estate. More and more buyers are coming to our area for the Colorado Experience. They are looking for space, quiet, and the exceptional mountain views that we offer. Add to this recreational opportunities, and mostly Few HOA's. It seems our area has it all. Here is a snapshot of the sales in the RCVFD Area of over 110 square miles. If you would like a more expansive view of what is selling in your neck of the woods, or other areas in Colorado, feel free to contact me any time.

17 Homes with min 2.32 acres, max 54 acres. Lowest price \$175,000 – Highest \$1,000,000, WOW!
 8 Land only with min 18.77 acres, max 160 acres. Lowest price \$220,000 – Highest \$750,000

Prices have soared not only in the Fort Collins and surrounding areas, but in our area as well. Feel free to contact me for a comprehensive, complimentary market analysis from your trusted advisor.

YOUR NEIGHBOR SINCE 1989

BUYERS ARE LOOKING- Thinking of selling?
 Call today for your complimentary market analysis.
 Contact me personally.

I am always happy to help you! Cheers!

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Louise Creager

ABR,GRI,REO,CNE,SFR

Military and Senior Specialist

Broker Associate

Moving you forward!

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LOUISECREAGER@GMAIL.COM



Notes from Stove Prairie School — Spring 2022

Dear Neighbors,

It's been a few years since we have submitted to the Ristwatch news from our wonderful Stove Prairie Elementary School, so we thought it was time to start that tradition up again! We are still the small community school that we have always been, but we continue to grow and adapt for our amazing students and staff.

The 2021-2022 school year has been special in many ways, but the highlight of our year has been being together every day in our classrooms. Our students have been able to attend school in person throughout this entire school year and are very happy to be here!

One of our favorite school and community traditions (and our only large yearly fundraiser for our students) is the annual Stove Prairie Winter Festival, held traditionally on the first Saturday in December. We were unable to have the festival in 2020, but in 2021 (The 125th Anniversary Celebration for Stove Prairie Elementary) we made some adjustments to make it work! One of those significant adjustments was moving the festival to October and changing a Winter event into an Autumn event!

It was a wonderful day with a great turnout and amazing weather. We received such good feedback from families, staff, attendees, community members and vendors that we have decided to hold this fun event in the Autumn again this upcoming school year. We will announce a date for the 2022 festival soon. Thank you to everyone who stopped by, participated and made it such a success in 2021!

Jacki Lawson



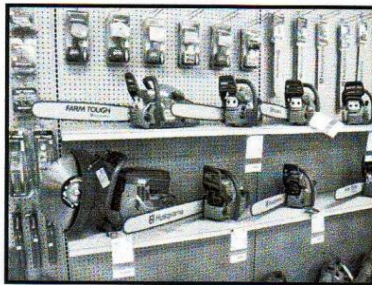
Boundary lines for Stove Prairie Elementary School. Call the school office at 970/488-6575 to schedule a tour for your new student!



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Thinking of selling? Sellers I am
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Call Us Today and I will go to work for you!

Thinking about Buying Land in Bellvue? I can be Your Buyer's Agent and Represent
your interests; AND have Seller pay all commissions in most cases, Plus credit you
\$250 at closing for any house.

Readers' Nook

Looking for some new reading material? Check out Ellison Carter's review of *My Side of the Mountain* by Jean Craighead George:

Twelve-year-old Sam Gribbley decides to run away from home in May 1959. He doesn't dislike his large family, and he doesn't even particularly dislike New York City, where he lives with his parents and eight brothers and sisters, but he dislikes his dependency on urban infrastructure (e.g., electricity, steam, oil, coal, machines, rails). He believes he can build a life for himself in the Catskill Mountains on wild land belonging to his family.

Sam's journal recordings on birch bark paper reveal how he relies on a small cast of characters to meet his needs. A local woodsman teaches him how to make fire his first night alone in the woods. An English professor treats Sam to good reads and reed music. When local hunters kill deer, unknown to them, Sam poaches several fallen deer for food and for making clothes. Sam also keeps company with Frightful (a falcon), The Baron (a weasel) and Jessie Coon James (a racoon), among other creatures.

Over time, Sam builds a home in the trunk of a giant hemlock tree, makes clothes and tools for himself, learns to fish in the stream and trap small animals and deer, as well as gather plants and supplies to season, preserve and cook his own food. Though he often seeks to remain concealed, Sam is attuned to people passing through. Periodically, Sam entertains visitors, including the English professor, a musician and even his own father. Local reporters eventually learn of the "wild boy" living on the mountain and show up on the scene to investigate. Nearly a year after his departure, Sam's family joins him, leading them to make a big decision of their own.

Readers with an affinity for independent and self-sufficient living, an appreciation for playing and living outdoors and an awareness of the accompanying challenges are likely to enjoy Sam's story. *My Side of the Mountain* appeals to classic traits of rugged individualism: the urge to escape modern society, a sense of calm and peace that can come from being outdoors, the embrace of solitude, the acquisition and honing of skills needed for survival. As a nod to this ethos, Sam is nicknamed "Thoreau" by the English professor who visits Sam several times in his hemlock tree home. At times, Sam seems to feel connected and related to the creatures whose company he keeps. At other times, his words sound like that of an outsider, who will never be completely wild. Readers of the Ristwatch may find elements of themselves in these pages.

This book shines when detailing Sam's activities, such as the way he makes flour from acorns, sews his deer hide clothes and rabbit fur underwear with pride, documents his thoughts and activities on birch bark paper, cleans in the icy cold pool beside his hemlock tree home. Where the book falls short is in its portrayal of a young boy. Sam rarely sounds like a boy; more often he sounds like an adult living in the woods to escape the 'problems of progress'. And the adults he meets sound like mouthpieces for the morality of 20th Century naturalists. However, these shortcomings seem consistent with when the book was written (1959) and, in that way, serve as a time capsule for thought on urban/wilderness dichotomies of that era. This book was for me, on the whole, an engaging adventure, start to finish.

Perhaps its greatest achievement lies in drawing the reader's attention to awe:

Little bubbles of air snapped as these voiceless animals of the earth came to the surface.

That got me to smiling. I was glad to know this about earthworms. I don't know why but this seemed like one of the nicest things I had learned in the woods—that earthworms, lowly, confined to the darkness of the earth, could make just a little stir in the world.

Jean Craighead George (1919–2012) was the author of more than 100 books for young people, including the **Newbery Award–winning** *Julie of the Wolves* and the **Newbery Honor–winning** *My Side of the Mountain*, which was the first in a trilogy that also includes *On the Far Side of the Mountain*, and *Frightful's Mountain*.

Three Easy Ways to Help the RCVFD



Spread the Word!

One of our biggest fundraisers is the King Soopers Rewards Card. If everyone in the Rist Canyon area used this program, it could make a HUGE difference in our fundraising. This generous program gives the RCVFD 5% of all of your purchases at King Soopers. This includes groceries, toiletries, supplies, clothing, gas and even prescriptions.

The process only takes a few minutes. If you don't already have a free King Soopers Rewards Card, request one from your cashier or the service desk. Once that's done, jump on your computer and go to www.kingsoopers.com/communityrewards. Click on the link to enroll. Set up an account, or sign in if you already have one. Then click on Community Rewards from the list on the left. Use the "Find an Organization" box to enter our NPO number, **YP687** and click Search. It will verify that you have selected the RCVFD. Click "Enroll" and you're done! **Always scan your Rewards Card when shopping.** As a Rewards member, you'll save money and earn points towards gas discounts; and the RCVFD will receive 5% of your purchases. If you have any questions about the King Soopers Rewards Program, contact them at 800/576-4377. **And thank you for telling your neighbors to sign up, too!**

You can donate through Colorado Gives any time of the year! Please Spread the WORD to family and friends!



It's easy—just post this link:

<http://coloradogives.org/RistCanyonVolunteerFireDepartment>
to Facebook and ask them to donate! Your fire department thanks you!



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smile.amazon.com is the same Amazon you know, but it donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the charitable organization of your choice.

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2022 Annual Drive Budget \$102,666 - Donations YTD \$6,706

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Thanks to everyone!

Your support is especially important during this trying time.

THANK YOU!!

If we missed you, please call 970/419-0397.

Be sure to go online to RCVFD.org and open the online version of the Ristwatch to see this incredible sunrise photo by Louise Creager and all of our nature photos in living color!





Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department
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