



RISTWATCH

RCVFD Quarterly Newsletter P. O. Box 2, Bellvue, CO 80512 Issue No. 105 January 2023



Letter from the President

As this year of 2022 draws to a close, ending in the holiday season, we traditionally express thanks. So here goes. I

have seen this fire department in many facets that I had never enjoyed before. I have seen the dedication that goes into every responder's credentials as a firefighter and EMT. Thank you for that dedication. I have seen the officers work hard to make every minute of training time meaningful. Thank you for using our responders' time efficiently. I have seen the thoughtfulness and seriousness that the Board puts into making sure that this department is well funded. Thank you for making sure our responders do not have to go without. I have seen the thousands of hours that our fire department members and volunteers put into the department. Thank you for showing that you care. I have seen this department come together when one of our own is in need. Thank you for making this a community we can all depend upon. I have seen the generosity of our members. Thank you for giving.

We had to bid a sad goodbye to Norm, Tom and Ed, who helped create the great department we now enjoy. We are richer for having known you and poorer for having lost you.

But it is also time to look forward to the promise of the coming year. I look forward to our officers bringing the new recruits along. Learn from those who have been there, they have much to teach. I look forward to getting a station in the Buckhorn. We owe better response to that community. I look forward to meeting the new volunteers who always seem to appear when another volunteer must depart. Your willingness to step in is warmly appreciated. Most of all, I look forward to seeing this community continue giving and helping in this changing world.

To our entire community, members, volunteers, responders, officers and fellow board members, thank you for all you do to make this little patch of the mountains a loving community.

Neil Faber
President - 2023

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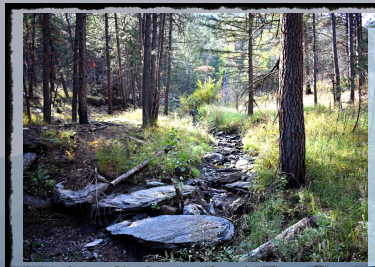
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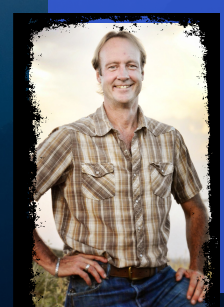
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Chief's Report

At the end of 2022, we received 73 calls, which is about average. Most of these calls were medical, but we also had a few propane leaks and even rescued a horse that had fallen through the ice on a pond. We were able to utilize our new gas detectors, which were purchased with donations and grants. Thank you for your generous support in helping us obtain these vital tools.

We are currently forming a grant-writing committee, led by our president, Neil Faber. Several firefighters and board members, as well as grant writer Sue James, are also participating. If you have experience in grant writing and would like to join the committee, please reach out to me or President Faber.

It has been a particularly cold winter in Northern Colorado, with temperatures regularly dropping below freezing, especially at our elevation. With such frigid weather, it is important for residents who heat their homes with firewood to ensure that their chimneys are well-maintained to reduce the likelihood of a chimney fire. One excellent tool for minimizing the damage done by a chimney fire is a Chimfex.

These are chemical sticks that look like road flares, and when ignited and placed into a closed firebox, they will extinguish a chimney fire in just a few seconds. The fire department has these available for residents free of charge: email officers@rcvfd.org if you would like one, and we will get one to you.

Lastly, we are actively looking for some land in the Buckhorn area to put a station so that we can improve our coverage and capability in this area. The station would primarily be a garage for housing two to three fire trucks, as well as a small utility and storage area for extra equipment and gear. The big requirement is that it needs to have electricity—there are quite a few battery-powered accessories on fire trucks that need to stay charged without draining the vehicle battery, so being able to plug the truck in is key. If you or someone you know has some land we could purchase, take as a donation or just use with your permission, please get in touch with me at chief@rcvfd.org and we can discuss options.

Sincerely,
Jeff Elsner, Chief
Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department
P.O. Box 2, Bellvue, CO 80512
chief@rcvfd.org



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**AND
MORE!**

Meet Your 2023 RCVFD Board of Directors

Neil Faber, President

Neil and Debbie Faber have lived in Davis Ranch since 2007. They have four children and seven grandchildren. Their zoo currently consists of dogs, cats, fish and lizards. Neil's company engineers electrical power systems for large industrial clients while Debbie's company creates costumes for live theater productions. They both have a long history of serving on volunteer boards and are proud to be given the chance to help the RCVFD in its vital mission.

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.

Richard Lund, Treasurer

Richard has lived in Rist Canyon since 1991 and has been a volunteer for the RCVFD since 1994, serving as Board Member, President and currently Treasurer.

Leisa Taylor, Secretary

Leisa, who hails from Texas, is the Outreach Coordinator for the Global Village Museum in Fort Collins. In her former lives, she has been a newspaper editor, TV videographer and defense attorney. Leisa enjoys walking, solving Crostic puzzles and watching tennis. She lives in Davis Ranch with two excellent mouser cats.

H. J. Siegel, Vice President

H.J. joined the RCVFD Board in 2018. He has been a RCVFD Firefighter since he moved to Colorado in 2001, was certified as an EMR in 2009 and has been Coordinator of the RCVFD Mountain Festival since 2018. H.J. was a Professor at Purdue University from 1976 to 2001, a Professor at CSU from 2001 to 2017 (now a "Professor Emeritus") and the first Director of the university-wide CSU Information Science and Technology Center from 2002 to 2013. He lives in Davis Ranch with his wife Janet, two dogs and three horses.

Diane McCarthy, Assistant Treasurer

Diane and her husband, Mark McCracken, moved here from Chicago in 2012 as the High Park Fire was winding down. Mark has now been a firefighter with the RCVFD for over ten years. Diane has graduate degrees in urban planning and biology from University of Illinois, and she recently retired from CSU, where she managed grant proposals for the Biology Department. Now she fills her time with reading, doing crosswords, knitting, playing with the dogs and tending to her 100+ houseplants.

Bridget Tisthammer, Ristwatch Editor

Bridget and Thom moved to Rist Canyon in 1989. They raised two children here, who went to Stove Prairie school. She has been the Ristwatch Editor since 2015. Bridget works at Fort Collins Nursery during the growing season and volunteers as a Larimer County Master Gardener.

Area Representatives

Dean Yoder, Lower Buckhorn

Dean retired in the spring of 2017 from the Denver Fire Department. Due to a job injury he finished the last 7 1/2 years in the subdivision of Fire Prevention. He became a Level III National Fire Protection Association inspector, inspecting fire alarm and suppression systems; conducted evacuation classes for both office



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2023 RCVFD Board of Directors, cont'd.

and residential buildings; signed off newly installed systems according to Denver Fire Codes; and inspected businesses that handled hazardous materials and flammable processes.

In his earlier years he worked in several different firehouses in southeast Denver. Training included EMT-B and structure and automobile fires.

In 1977, Dean started an electrical career in light industrial and commercial building construction. In 1987 he became a master electrician and began his business as a contractor, which he ran on his days off from DFD. Dean built the log home in the Buckhorn Canyon in which they now live in 2005. His family moved into the home permanently in June 2021.

Erica Michel, Upper Buckhorn

Erica's family has been in the upper Buckhorn area for 5 1/2 years now, but have been making memories in the area for over 40 years. She and her husband, Brian, have two children and three dogs. You will see Erica in her Wrangler waving as she drives by, usually with all the dogs on their way to the next adventure. In her free time she enjoys hiking, kayaking, photography, crafting and spending time with family. Her family loves spending time in the Buckhorn enjoying all the mountains have to offer.

Carolyn Stanley, Davis Ranch

Carolyn and her husband, Randy, moved here from Virginia and into their home on October 31st, 1984. They have enjoyed their mountain home. She started her sewing business, Cloud 9 Sewing, in May of 1990 and works out of her shop on the property. In 2017, she was elected by Joan Miller to be the chair for the book tent and has since become known as "Queen Bee".

Idris Hamid, Rist Canyon

Idris and his wife, Muminah, have lived in Rist Canyon for about 20 years, where they have raised their children, who attended Stove Prairie School. Idris is a Professor of Philosophy at CSU. After completing a Masters degree in Physics, he received his PhD in philosophy from University at Buffalo, State University of New York.

Tim Stratman, Stove Prairie

Tim and Jenn had their fourth anniversary of living in Colorado this year, and absolutely love it here. They have added a dog, so they now have two. Hiking (rarely), fishing (rarely) and work (always) seem to be Tim's current hobbies. Hopefully snowshoeing will be added to the list. Tim works for an architectural millwork company in Longmont. The commute allows him to enjoy the mountains much more than he could have imagined.

Louise Creager, Stratton Park

Louise moved to the Rist Canyon area in 1989. Her children attended Stove Prairie, and she has been involved with RCVFD in many capacities: Vice President, Mountain Festival Coordinator; founder and Chair of the Firefighter Silent Auction, originator of the fire department's 501(c)3 non-profit status; Chair of the Fine Art Auction and Stratton Park Area Representative since 2009.

Roger Dev, Whale Rock

Roger and his wife, Marolyn, moved to Fort Collins from New Hampshire in 2010. They purchased a property in the Whale Rock neighborhood in 2012—right after the High Park Fire. They spent several years cleaning up the property and planting trees (nearly 3,000 so far). They moved up to the "Canyon" full time in 2016, and were joined by Marolyn's mother, Dorothy, who is now 99 years old and enjoying mountain life. Their dog, Luna, is the self-appointed neighborhood gatekeeper, and requires everyone to check in with her before they can pass—apologies to neighbors.



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Letter From the Vice President

Support our Firefighters and Community by Helping the 2023 Mountain Festival

Preparations already are well underway for the RCVFD September 9, 2023, Mountain Festival. Here's how you can help now and who to contact:

- Do you know a business or person who may be interested in becoming a Festival sponsor? Sponsorship levels range from \$50 up. Tony Pavlantos, pavlantostony@gmail.com
- The Silent Auction is one of our biggest activities of the year. Do you know a business or individual interested in donating items? Janet Siegel, equuphile@gmail.com
- Can you help sort books for the Book Sale? If you have books to donate, please put them in the donation bin at Fire Station No. 1. Carolyn Stanley, cloud9sewing@gmail.com
- Are your plants out of control? Now is a great time to separate and root the extras, getting them ready for the popular annual Plant Sale. Kimberley Carr, Kimberley.Carr@kiewit.com
- Are you or someone you know interested in having a Craft/Vendor Booth to sell your wares? Debbie Benson, ebandyle007@gmail.com
- This definitely is a family event, so we are always looking for fun attractions, activities and educational opportunities for the kids. Trish Johnston, tajohnmt@gmail.com
- Now is the time to start experimenting with recipes to create baked goods to donate for the Bake Sale. Patty Clutter, clutterp28@gmail.com
- We are looking for a volunteer to join the Friends of the Festival to co-chair the 2023 Ice Cream Booth and become the chair in 2024. Bridget Tisthammer, ristwatch@rcvfd.org

H. J. Siegel
Mountain Festival Coordinator and
RCVFD Board Vice President



Photo courtesy of the Jackson Family

Attendees of the January 8, 2023 "Friend of the Festival" leadership gathering.

Back row: Molly McLean, Phil Jensen, Shannon Phelps, Sandy Deraney-Reilly, Brett Carr, Diane McCarthy, H.J. Siegel, Kathy Cox, Tony Pavlantos.

Front row: Karen Salaz, Jocelyn Wolf, Pam Thomas, Carolyn Stanley, Janet Siegel, Kimberley Carr, Debbie Faber, Juana Jackson, Trish Johnston, Patti Clutter, James Clutter, Debbie Benson.

(Neil Faber arrived after photo due to truck failure.)

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Notes from Stove Prairie School

Winter 2023

Stove Prairie Elementary School Notes

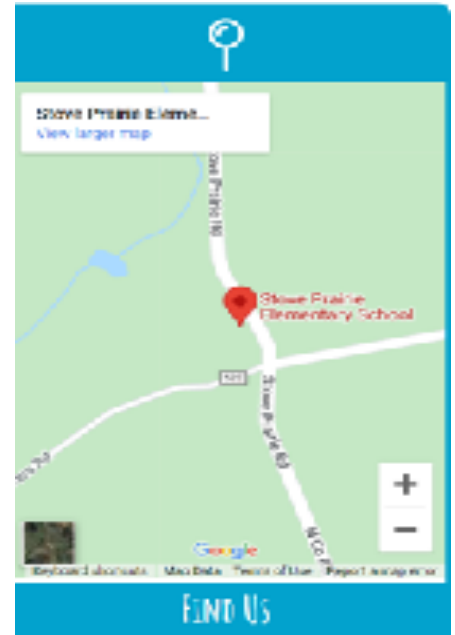
Submitted by Jacki Lawson, Stove Prairie PTO

Stove Prairie Elementary School

“The Little School At The End Of The Rainbow”

3891 Stove Prairie Road, Bellvue, CO 80512

Office Phone: 970/488-6575



Dear Neighbors,

Happy New Year, 2023 from Stove Prairie Elementary School! We look forward to a great 2nd semester with lots of special activities planned for our wonderful students.

Visit our Facebook Page to see all the fun!

[https://www.facebook.com/
StovePrairieElementary](https://www.facebook.com/StovePrairieElementary)

Jacki Lawson

Stove Prairie Elementary PTO

Call the Stove Prairie Elementary School Office to schedule a tour for your new student.

Office Phone: 970/488-6575

Stove Prairie kids posing with their favorite mascot this time of year.





Larimer County Farm Bureau

Here to serve the needs of Larimer County farmers, ranchers, landowners, and residents to preserve and protect a rural way of life.

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- Providing ag education programs in schools, FFA, and 4-H
- Protecting the interests of water users
- Promoting understanding as urban growth expands into agricultural areas
- Collaborating to develop clean, cost-effective energy sources
- Monitoring local, state, and national legislation to prevent negative impacts on agriculture and private property rights
- 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.

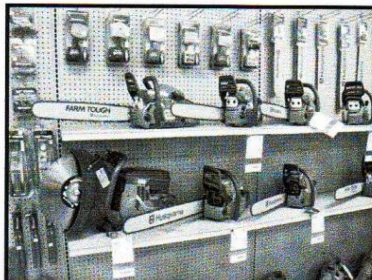
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Notes from Your Area Representatives

Hello everyone. I hope the new year is being kind. Things have been hectic since the holidays. I've been working quite a bit so I haven't been home much. Things have been quiet so I will take no news as good news. I encourage everyone to enjoy the views we have.

Take it Easy!
Tim Stratman
Stove Prairie Area Rep

Community Alert

Package Thefts

Larimer County Sheriff Department reports that there have been many cases of mail and package thefts in the Buckhorn and Stove Prairie areas. Neighborhood Facebook groups are reporting possible theft of Davis Ranch mail also. LCSO has a person of interest, so they are asking that residents report any suspected theft so that they can build as strong a case as possible. Report any suspicious activity to 970/498-7000, but as always dial 911 in case of emergency.

It seems to be a winter like we had when I first moved to Rist Canyon. Snow, cold, snow and more cold. Feeding the birds is still a daily ritual, but the birds seem to be waiting for me every morning. Their sing-song greeting is almost as melodious as in springtime. The moisture is truly a welcome relief to the drought of the last few years.

We must still be diligent with our homes to keep them safe from fire. If you use candles or a hurricane lamp for ambiance or light during a power outage, be sure to keep them in the middle of a table, away from the walls, drapes and anything else where an accidental fall could start a fire. If you have a fireplace, pellet stove or wood stove, you should consider having a Chimfex at your disposal. In case of a chimney fire, they may tamp the fire down, or even extinguish it. If you need to use one, call 911, and have your family exit the house for extra safety. Don't forget a fire extinguisher for added precaution in case of fire. You should have at least two on your property—one in the garage/shop and at least one in your home. They are available at your local hardware store. When you purchase these items, familiarize yourself and your family with them so you are ready to use them in case you need them. Check the Kidde website for more information about choosing the right fire extinguisher for your home, as well as maintenance. www.kidde.com/home-safety. Wishing you a warm, cozy winter.

Louise Creager
Stratton Park Area Rep



A cat and a buck walked into a bar...

Photo courtesy of Louise Creager

Notes from Your Area Representatives, cont'd.

As the new year arrived winter has taken hold of the Upper Buckhorn. The roads have held up well with the conditions of winter. Other than that all seems to be well and quiet in the wilderness.

Major and Lucy say happy holidays!

Erica Michel
Upper Buckhorn Area Rep



Photo of Major and Lucy courtesy of Erica Michael.

I have had several inquiries about the Helicopter insurance. If there are others who would like the information, I am happy to email this to you.

My husband gave me two new bird feeders for Christmas and I added a different feed to one of them. We are now seeing evening grosbeaks and are thrilled to see them back at our home.

Please have a safe and warm winter.

Carolyn Stanley
Davis Ranch Area Rep.
970/221-2024

A flock of evening grosbeaks visiting Louise's feeder. Photo courtesy of Louise Creager.



Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department Rescues Horse from Icy Waters

BELLVUE, CO – On Monday, Dec. 26, 2022, Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department personnel spent five hours rescuing a horse from an ice-covered pond. “When we arrived, the horse was neck deep in frigid water with her head resting on the ice at the edge of the opening,” says RCVFD Assistant Chief Carol Dollard. “We do not know how long she had been there. The initial focus was to safely get her out of the pond.”

The majority of the pond was covered in two feet of ice; however, the one corner was thinner where the horse had broken through. The first step was to use chainsaws cutting the ice to make it safe to pull the horse onto something solid.



With the help of many neighbors, the responders were able to place straps around the horse's body and poles under her to safely pull her out of the frigid water with a tractor. Once freed, she was very stiff, cold and unable to move.

The next several hours were spent trying to warm up the horse enough to move. Several veterinarians and EMTs were on scene providing first class

care. Finally, she was able to get up, stand on her own and eventually walk to her stall to start eating. “This is not the ending I expected when I saw her pulled from the ice stiff and cold,” adds Dollard.

Ultimately the rescue required tools, tractors, blankets and lots of horse expertise from the community that seemed to appear out of nowhere to help,” continues Dollard. “Many thanks to everyone for their support and the dedicated, skilled personnel giving a happy ending to a potentially tragic situation.”

Mutual aid in helping rescue the horse was provided by the Larimer County Sheriff's Department, Larimer County Sheriff's Office Dive Rescue Team, Larimer County Emergency Services, CSU Veterinary Training Hospital: large animal, and Poudre Fire Authority Rescue IV. Nick and Val, owners of Vern's Place restaurant, donated lunch.

Karen Salaz
Ristwatch Contributor



Photos courtesy of Carol Dollard and Jim Terrell.



Your Annual Year End Report 2022

Real Estate Activity in 2022 | Buckhorn - Rist Canyon - Stove Prairie Areas

Current Active Listing as of December 21, 2022		
Land	7	from \$197,900 to \$999,800
Residential	5	from \$525,000 to \$1,900,000
Sold through December 21, 2022		
Land	19	from \$32,000 to \$410,000
Residential	11	from \$385,000 to \$1,900,000

NOTE: Information prior to date of printing deemed reliable from IRES, LLC.

For current information on activity or for a professional evaluation of your home or property contact me anytime.

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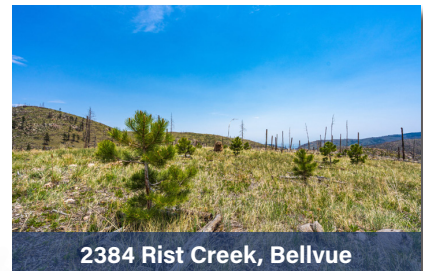
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You can donate through Colorado Gives any time of the year! Please Spread the WORD to family and friends!



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Early Fort Collins Newspapers and 1911 History Book Expose a Tale of Ruthlessness and Politics

The humble beginnings of what now is known as Rist Canyon Road was a primitive wagon trail beginning at the base of the canyon near Bellvue. George Rist opened the route to access his sawmill located about four miles up the canyon back in 1864. The trail followed a path historically used by Utes, who found the granite-lined narrows of Poudre Canyon much more difficult to navigate. (Poudre Canyon Road did not open until 1923.)

Rist's original sawmill was located at what came to be known as "Devil's Hole" or "Devil's Gate." As the number of lumber-productive trees ran low in that area, the wagon trail eventually was extended farther up the canyon, allowing the sawmill access to new stands of trees. Rist is said to have removed many hundred thousand feet of lumber, much of which was hauled to Cheyenne and marketed.¹

Other settlers began to migrate to the canyon also looking to make a living selling lumber, prospecting or later ranching. The two-rut road; however, was wrought with problems as it ran along the creek bed, washing out during nearly every major weather event. In 1868 Joseph Mason, an enterprising gentleman whose brother Augustine Mason at the time owned the bridge over the Poudre River just east of Bellvue, purchased the road for \$75.² Maintenance and upkeep quickly become burdensome.



Devil's Gate—A familiar landmark in lower Rist Canyon.

Newcomers Exploit Opportunity

Jacob Flowers and his family arrived in Fort Collins in the spring of 1873 and purchased the Joseph Mason farm in Pleasant Valley (the area surrounding Bellvue). In 1880 he laid out and platted the town of Bellvue.³ Seeing an opportunity, Flowers, now a Bellvue businessman, also designed and proceeded to build a road to connect Rist Canyon Road to North Park. It was said that this 65 mile route would be significantly shorter than any other option at the time, thus was highly anticipated by lumbermen and cattlemen to the west wanting to more easily get their products to markets on the Front Range.

Work began on the first leg of the road to Stove Prairie and by July 14, 1881, The *Fort Collins Courier* announced that Flowers had reported the road was in good condition up to Rist's mill site and more than \$200 in labor had been invested.⁴

The Flowers Toll Road Company subsequently was incorporated by Jacob Flowers, W. L. Clayton, Charles. E. Pennock, B.F. Flowers, Charles Baker and James C. Evans. The company was formed specifically to connect Rist Canyon Road to North Park. The exact date of the incorporation is not entirely clear as to whether it was during the building of the initial four mile section or after that to extend the road to North Park. Also, the precise date of when the "toll gate" was installed is not clear except that as early as October 1881, enraged residents were vocal in their complaints

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A Tale of Ruthlessness, cont'd.

about the toll. They demanded the county commissioners order Jacob Flowers to remove his gate, although this accomplished nothing. The demands then were taken to the street and voiced in newspapers, and public and private meetings ensued.

Flowers was unforgiving in his requirement that everyone pay the toll. He expected a return for the time, money and labor he had invested in building and maintaining the four miles of road. He was quoted as saying, "If you cannot pay your toll, you must not travel the road."

Unfortunately for those using the road, this was the only route in and out for provisions and transporting their goods to sell. It also was no secret that the area was home to many who lived hand to mouth, living off what they could eke off the land. Recollections of the price of the toll ranged from 50 cents to \$1.25 per passage.



One event described Rist lumberman Tim Lemoine's experience. He was heading to Fort Collins with a load of wood as he had run out of food. When he approached the gate, he had no money for provisions, let alone the toll. The event is described in a letter to the *Fort Collins Courier* submitted by H.J.M. Mattis on December 11, 1882:

The gate was locked against him, and he requested it opened. "Pay your toll," demanded Zach Thomas, who had charge of the gate at the time. "I have no money," protested Lemoine. "Then you cannot go through." Lemoine had hitherto paid his toll regularly, but now his necessity knew no law nor obstruction. "Well," said he, "I'll have to do what I think best." and he threw off his coat. Thomas got scared and ran into the house. Lemoine took his axe and chopped the gate down. Reflecting on what he had done, he remarked that "he made his living by chopping wood and always considered that what he chopped belonged to himself." So he loaded the gate on his wagon and hauled it into Collins and sold it to Flowers' lawyer. He was arrested one night, after dark, at his home and brought to Collins for trial at nine o'clock the next morning before his friends could come to his assistance.

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A Tale of Ruthlessness, cont'd.

Excerpts from a second incident Mr. Mattis also related reveals a clever friend's actions to outmaneuver Flower's scheme to enforce a toll regardless of the situation.

An honest man, my neighbor, took his little \$65 team of mules and hauled a load of firewood to Collins to get a little flour and meat. It was a small load, but the team cost him his whole summer's earnings at the stone quarries, where he was finally discharged because he would not discharge his family and board with the company. He could not sell his wood, and returned moneyless and despondent towards his little log cabin where his wife lay sick in confinement, and with only a three-year-old boy to wait on her. He came to the gate and was locked out. He begged to go through; "His wife was sick and night was approaching." "No, he could not; the gate keeper had trusted him until night, and now he must pay or stay out." "He could not sell his wood." "It made no difference; he would have to pay his toll." And thus was he badgered and held back from his suffering and worrying wife. But a friend had anticipated his difficulty and remained in Collins until he had gone ahead. Driving up behind he proffered his own toll and demanded to be let through the gate. Now this infamous toll road is not wide enough to admit of one team's passing another except at rare intervals, where nature herself has provided short turnouts, no turnout has ever been made at the toll gate itself. In order to let the toll-payer through, the gate was opened and my neighbor must per force of necessity go on to make room for travel.

The controversy and tempers continued to escalate. Throughout the controversy the county and county commissioners claimed they never laid out Rist Canyon Road, whereas Flowers counter claimed the commissioners had abandoned it. Many maintained the board of county commissioners were entirely to blame for the debacle. In particular board chairman Commissioner Bristol, a friend of Flowers (both of whom were Republicans), was at the center of the controversy. Lawsuits also were filed in the courts.

Abrupt End to "Flower's Toll Road" Scheme

As early as September 29, 1881, in an apparently forgotten *Fort Collins Courier* editorial, frustration was expressed in a toll being charged on the county-owned road:

"Before the county spends any more money for building a court house the roads and bridges should be put in better condition." This is a good enough suggestion, but, I would call the attention of the Express to the Rist Canon road, which has been a public road for eighteen years; the county money spent in its repair, the public labor used in keeping it in traveling condition, which is not in the possession of a private party, to whom the farmers of the Poudre valley have to pay a tax in the shape of a toll of \$1.25 for every load of wood they haul out of the mountains for their use. Until our roads are secure to us as our property, I don't think it safe to improve them for the sole benefit of some favored member of the republican party.*



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A Tale of Ruthlessness, cont'd.

In early 1883, much to the chagrin of Mr. Flowers and Commissioner Bristol, a *Fort Collins Courier* newspaper reporter inadvertently stumbled upon minutes from a December 16, 1870, county commissioner's meeting while working on another story. At that meeting 30 local residents petitioned and were granted a request laying out Rist Canyon Road from Stove Prairie School, over Stove Prairie Hill*, down Rist Canyon and over Bingham Hill. Rist Canyon Road was designated a "public highway according to law" by the commissioners. Previously, Stove Prairie residents were required to access Fort Collins and beyond through Masonville.

On February 15, 1883 the paper ran an editorial, *The Calcium Light of Truth Exposes the Rottenness of the Toll Road Scheme*. In the end it called for the chairman of the board to be held responsible for the outrages "inflicted on the people by reason of the Rist Canon toll road."

A "personal mention" from the same issue included the following notice from S.R. Lyons, "To all parties who have an interest in the Rist canon road: I am authorized by Jacob Flowers to say if you will keep the road in as good condition as it is in, that he will relinquish his claim to said road."

The "Rist Canon Notes" in the March 8, 1883, *Fort Collins Courier* announced that the "long-suffered toll gate was thrown open last week."

¹ [History of Larimer County, Colorado: Watrous, Ansel, 1911: Cornell University Library internet archive.](#)

² [History of Larimer County, Colorado: Watrous, Ansel, 1911: Cornell University Library internet archive.](#)

³ [History of Larimer County, Colorado: Watrous, Ansel, 1911: Cornell University Library internet archive.](#)

⁴ *Fort Collins Courier*, July 14, 1881, Colorado Historic Newspapers online

*The present-day spelling of "canon" had not yet been adopted as of 1923; thus "canon" is used in original quotations.

*The present-day Ford Hill is referred to as "Stove Prairie Hill."

Karen Salaz
Ristwatch Contributor

Archived issues of the 1881-1923 the *Fort Collins Courier* and *Fort Collins Express* (early predecessors of the *Coloradoan*, available online at <https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>) were used to compile this sordid tale. A secondary source was *History of Larimer County, Colorado* by Ansel Watrous published in 1911 (available online through the Cornell University Library).

RCVFD Monthly Meeting Schedule

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)

Ops, Fire and Medical Trainings are at Firehouse #1 at 11835 Rist Canyon Road. Board meetings are held at Firehouse #1, or on Zoom if necessary. 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. To sign up for Community Alerts, visit RCVFD.org.

2022 Annual Drive: Budget \$102,666 - Donations YTD \$82,640

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