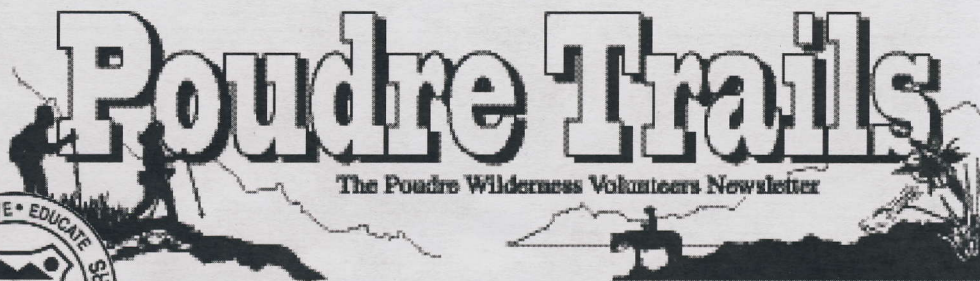
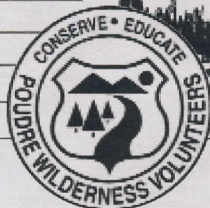


INSIDE

- 2 - RIDING FOR PWV
- 3 - PERSPECTIVES ON NEW WEST FEST
- 4 - 2008 PWV TRAIL CREW
- 6 - MEET A NEW PWV MEMBER
- 7 - KIDS IN NATURE
- 8 - MEET NEIL SHERROD

Volume 10, Issue 3



poudrewildernessvolunteers.com Fall 2008

Thanks to Our New West Fest 2008 Volunteers!

A Special thanks to our volunteers at New West Fest 2008.

(...Or, as Linda Knowlton fondly calls it: The "New Wet Fest" (for those Saturday volunteers))

Matt Fischer
Fred Allen
Lynda Lloyd
Jack Hicks
Kathy Westerkamp
Janet Cook
Bob Hansen
Sandy Erskine
Dave and Rosellen Lobree
Garin Vandemark
Chuck and Stacey Anderson
Linda Knowlton
John Gascoyne
Ken Thielen
Sharon Ruch
Gail Baker
Toni Farquhar
Jacques Rieux
Jan and Don Creager
Carlota Striffler

See Page 3 for perspectives on the New West Fest.

And the Winner is ...

Congratulations to **Matt Fischer** for being the first to correctly identify the weed as Dalmation Toadflax. Matt will receive a \$15 gift certificate to Jax.

A Message from Our Chair

By Fred Allen

As far as the past year is concerned, you all have accomplished a great deal. The Kids in Nature program is off to a very good start. The weed crew has tackled more projects than ever before. Our well-established trail crew removed a record number of trees from across the trails. The publication committee is hard at it. And most importantly, we were out there hiking and riding the trails, especially on holiday weekends interacting with the public. Thank you all for continuing the fine traditions for which PWV has become known.

Spring Training came off well with the help of more than half our entire membership. We tried a few new things this year and most likely will introduce a few different possibilities in future years. By doing so, PWV remains fresh while fulfilling the needs of the Canyon Lakes Ranger District.

In spite of nasty weather, New West Fest yielded many names of interested folks who may want to join us. With more recruiting events planned, we should be able to increase our numbers again next year. It is not that I am advocating that we become a much larger organization to just be a larger organization, but the need for our skills is quite apparent. More than 80 percent of our assigned trails are without a ranger on any given weekend. It is closer to 95 percent on weekdays. With statistics like these, one may think the situation is hopeless. Not so. PWV'ers have done a fantastic job of educating the public over the years.

I had the opportunity to instruct about 50 Boy Scout Leaders in the basics of Leave No Trace (LNT) earlier this summer. Several of us will be providing LNT instruction to hundreds of Scouts in September. I hope such partnerships will continue. Some of our members have given talks to other groups and at the campgrounds. We strive to get the message out in many different ways.

We have had one of our best years ever fund raising. For the first time we actively sought grants from various sources. Corporate donors have been generous even in a weak economy. Our trail guide sales have been very brisk this summer. Our financial condition is strong. As a result, when the Forest Service had to reallocate funds to fight fires, PWV was in the position to fund several local projects, which had already been planned.

Thank you for your support this past year and remember PWV is making a major direct contribution.

Now many of those whose lives we've touched are returning better prepared, walking more softly on the trails and respecting our fragile wilderness.

Unlike some other volunteer organizations, or wilderness friends groups, or non-profits, PWV has always had evolving leadership. Past board members and past chairs continue to provide invaluable service to this fine organization. I look forward to working for many years with future boards and future chairs whoever they may be.

Find out about Kids in Nature on Page 7



Riding for PWV

By Carole Wollam

To learn about trails and meet people are two reasons Nancy Flippin, an eight-year PWV veteran, joined PWV. For Cynthia Rizzo, a four-year Horse Patrol PWV member, it is the love of riding in the wilderness and the desire to lend assistance to the Forest Service to help keep the trails open.

Preparing for the riding season starts before the actual patrol season starts. Nancy begins to prepare her horse for the riding season in the Spring, doing short rides and working up to longer ones.

Horse Patrol training (the PWV Horse Challenge) is also in the Spring. This year's train-

ing was held at Lory State Park. Approximately six people attended the training ride this year. Returning members are encouraged to ride also as it is a good way to tune up a horse for the season. According to both Nancy and Cynthia, new members already should have conquered basic horsemanship. Basic horsemanship includes being in control of your horse -- very important. "In the PWV Horse Challenge we like to see how the riders and their horses react to common things seen on patrols," Nancy explains. "We give them a chance to meet a backpacker, a bike, llamas, a flapping tent, and a hiker with a (barking) dog. They must also cross a bridge, be comfortable with the rider using a radio, cross logs and meet other horses. Some horses will spook, but is the rider's ability to control the horse without being a danger to others or themselves that is important. We really stress safety. The new riders also have to do two mentor rides."

Cynthia's advice for those folks who might want to start doing horse patrols includes preparing for the test. "Find out what obstacles are going to be on the test ride and work with your horse so he/she will get used to them." During this year's training, most horses shied at the tent where Cynthia was stationed. A couple of horses had to be led past the tent. After



being led past a "scary" obstacle, a horse feels more confident and will usually pass the obstacle with a rider. Never feel that you absolutely have to stay on the horse's back. If you feel endangered, work the obstacle from the ground, and then get back on. Remember we are all about safety first for all involved.

A Purpose to Ride ...

By Nancy Flippin

Editor's Note: When asked about her favorite places to patrol, including what it is like to be a horse patrol member, here is Nancy's recollection of her favorite places and some experiences as a PWV volunteer.

I camp and ride quite a bit at Jack's Gulch, mainly because of the horse corrals. We see a lot of other stock people on the trails and horse camping in this area. It's always fun to see who is camping in the equestrian campground. We have met people from California, Oklahoma, North Carolina, Missouri, and of course a lot of Colorado

people. In the evenings, we meet and greet campers from the "other side" that bring the kids over to see the horses.

This year I want to report an armed and dangerous chipmunk at the campground. The knife I used to make my peanut butter sandwich was left on the table. OK, I was in a hurry to go on patrol and didn't take the time to clean and put it away. When we got back, I noticed the knife was gone. I found out another campsite had been feeding a chipmunk peanuts. We think that the alleged perpetrator found my knife and took off with

it after they took the peanuts away from him.

I also like to ride in the Rawahs. The Forest Service lets us use the corral at the old Stub Creek Ranger Station. It is much quieter than Jack's Gulch. The horses love it because they have a small pasture they can graze in. There are very limited camping amenities here, but it is close to the trails (two miles to Link and 17 miles to West Branch).

Training for returning members earlier in the Spring is also desirable, but according to Nancy, issues with weather have prevented it. "Every time we set a date it always rains or snows and we have had to cancel."

Preparing for the season is one thing. There is also the preparation for an actual patrol. To do an overnight trip with the horses, riders need to have certified weed free hay and/or horse feed, a way to contain their horses over night, about 10 to 15 gallons of water per day for each horse, all of their tack and, of course, all camping gear. Nancy's first aid kit contains supplies for both people and horses. In addition to the necessities for the horse, clothing for all types of weather, food, and water are on Cynthia's list.

The investment isn't just time, but money. To haul a trailer to the Rawahs takes over a half tank of gas or about \$60-75 round trip. According to Nancy, the trails in the Rawahs have the most need for stock riders. This is due to distance and time. A horse can usually cover more miles in a shorter amount of time than a hiker. Although as Nancy points out, there are a few exceptions. "Chuck Bell's patrol report logged an 18-mile day in the Rawahs this Summer. You go Chuck!!"

Nancy has encountered the most people on the West Branch trail. This year she encountered 63 people on the West Branch/Camp Lake trail. The north end of the Rawahs usually has fewer contacts, as more stock people or hunters use these trails, including the Link and McIntyre. The most people Cynthia has encountered on a trail ride is 20.

Both Nancy and Cynthia include the Rawahs as one of their favorite places to patrol. "The beauty, the challenge, and miles of trails" is Cynthia's list of reasons.

Continued on Page 7 - see Ride

Perspectives from the New West Fest Booth

Saturday morning...

by Matt Fischer

I spent most of the morning setting up the booth with Fred Allen. It was slow going in the pouring rain. No one stopped by until close to 10 a.m. -- most likely due to the weather. Because the setup took about one and one-half hours, I was only able to talk to a few people. Folks were happy to come in from the rain under our tent and talk.

Saturday afternoon...

by Bob Hansen

It was a dark and rainy day but hearty souls abounded, braving the rain to visit our booth to learn about us. Young people (at least younger than me), some my age, and some even older stopped to visit our booth. Visitors included those new to the area and long-time residents, some who have been hiking for years, and some who have just started. Some visitors mentioned they had met us on the trail and liked what they saw and heard. Others had no idea who we were, while others came by to acknowledge the hard work that we do...All of this in a couple of hours in less than ideal weather... Yea, it's nice to be acknowledged and to tell others our tale.

Sunday Morning...

by Linda Knowlton

"New "Wet" Fest 2008"

On the Saturday of New West Fest -- when it rained all day long -- I was feeling lucky that I had signed up for the first shift on Sunday. And I was rewarded with clearing skies Sunday morning. I fully expected that there would be almost no interest cards filled out the previous day, but was pleasantly surprised to learn that more than 50 people had stopped by the booth when the rain stopped in time for the Saturday evening music programs.

Ken Thielen had the booth all ready to go by the time I found it Sunday morning. And my shift partner, John Gascoyne, was already there. Fred Allen, always wanting to keep us happy, stopped by with some breakfast rolls.

In spite of the clearing weather, business was slow for the 9:30 to noon shift, so John and I had a lot of time to talk and share hiking stories. We got only about six cards filled out and sold three field guides. I consoled myself that Sunday mornings are always the slowest time at New West Fest -- and with the fact that the next two shifts would do much better. As our biggest single recruiting effort of the year, even though this was a wet one, I'm pretty sure we'll get some good volunteers out of this year's New West Fest for the 2009 season.

Sunday Afternoon...

by Toni L Farquhar

Once more, the New West Fest worked its magic as a recruiting tool for PWV. Even the monsoon failed to stop folks from getting out and stopping by our booth to show their interest in our volunteer program. More than 50 people filled out cards on Saturday and by the end of Sunday's festivities, we had collected more than 125 cards.

People of all ages showed an interest, with some of the college aged folks wanting to know how they could get involved immediately and some of the older generation considering getting involved upon retirement. People new to Ft. Collins were looking for a way to get to know the area and to become involved in the community.

Working the New West Fest is not only great outreach, but fun for those of PWV who man the booth; the people watching is incredible and you never know what kind of questions you'll get to field: can people own an island in the middle of the Poudre and stop people from fishing on its shores or in the waters around it? Hmmm. It's not covered in our manual!

Hopefully, the efforts of all of our volunteers will be rewarded with more recruits this coming season. If nothing else, many more people are aware of our organization and of our goals.

Some of the members of the PWV 2008 Trail Crew.

See Page 4 & 5 to find out more on PWV's 2008 Trail Crew



2008 Trail Crew Experiences

By Robert Blakely

Blue Lake

Large amounts of snowfall over this past winter combined with a cooler spring resulted in snow persisting later than usual in the high country. I remember getting out of the vehicle at Blue Lake trailhead in early June and noticing that the snowplow had deposited a fresh bank of snow around the perimeter of the parking lot. Ten inches of



snow had fallen a few days earlier in the area.

Looking into the trees, I noticed continuous large drifts and wondered if we could even follow the trail. None of us had snowshoes or skis, but being the first trail crew work day of the season, a "little" snow wasn't going to deter us.

In addition to my normal daypack, I grabbed my hardhat, an axe, Corona saw, and radio. Somehow Bob Manual, the Trail Crew Leader, always tricked me into carrying the radio.

Most PWV'ers are familiar with the three and one-half pound "brick" they should carry around on patrols. I don't mind the weight, but I always put up a mild protestation just to make Bob come up with creative ways to "trick" me into carrying it. It became one of our standing jokes.

Once in the trees, I found the trail easier to follow than I thought. Wet snow, then cold water trickled down from the tops of my boots. Occasionally the snow would be over knee-deep. Tony Schock, another Trail Crew member felt that if we could make it to where the trail became part of the old road, we would have a good chance at getting further in because the road is mostly south facing.

We found a few downed trees to remove and eventually made it to the old road. Tony was right. For the most part the road had only a minimal amount of snow on it.

Along the trail, occasional piles of branches

were evidence of Winter Trail Crew activity -- probably done by the Nordic Rangers, another Forest Service volunteer group. Looking 6 to 8 feet up, it could be seen where they were trimmed off nearby trees -- evidence of just how much snow had fallen in the area.

We made it to the area where the trail departs the road and angles up the hill, but none of us could actually find the trail. We tried several openings through the trees, but always got bogged down in waist-deep snow. We were never quite sure if it was actually the trail.

Some members of our crew came up with a unique solution. They continued on the road past the junction until they intercepted a creek they knew crossed the trail further up. They then followed the creek until they reached the bridge where the trail crossed. It was tough going. One member

sunk in the snow up to his chest near the bridge.

From here, the entire team worked on a cluster of trees that crossed the trail. For some reason otherwise healthy trees tend to fall in groups. I guess the violent conditions that bring them down also affect their neighbors.

Beyond the bridge, the snow was just too deep to consider going any further.

The next day, the crew split into two groups. Three of us, including myself, went up West Branch trail, while another team of three proceeded up the Rawah Trail. Both teams removed a combined total of approximately 70 trees before being stopped by deep snow approximately three miles up both trails. It was just a sampling of what was to come five weeks later when trail crew did the entire trail in a five-day backpack trip.

Jack's Gulch

Just before 7:45 am, I emerged from my tent and looked around. It's tough to get up much earlier after a few consecutive days of trail work. Jack's Gulch definitely has a different feel to it then during PWV training week-end. Golden Banner carpets large areas. Soon small children will be running about and adults reluctant to awaken will be making breakfast.

We are usually on the trail by 8:30am, carrying all the necessary tools for the expected day's work. My partner Jim Shaklee and I head up Beaver Creek Trail. He goes on ahead because he is more interested in tree removal, while I committed to removing brush and will catch up to him to assist if we encounter any large trees.

Removing brush is an essential part of trail maintenance. In low-lying areas near streams, fast growing shrubs and trees can quickly choke off a trail. However, removing brush is a lower priority than removing trees across the trail.

We use large, two-handled loppers that have enough leverage to trim a 2-inch tree or limb with ease. Even with this capability it is surprisingly tiring doing this all day. The amount of brush to cut and throw away from the trail is overwhelming in some areas. I remember thinking I really made a difference in restoring the six-foot wide corridor along large sections of Beaver Creek Trail, but after looking at it again coming down, I wondered if I actually accomplished anything.



Just below the Comanche Lake junction, I encountered Pam and Michelle, two fellow PWV'ers doing a patrol in the area. During a pleasant chat they informed me that they had run into Jim. He had decided to go up the Comanche Lake. Good thing they had found me, otherwise I never would have known where Jim had gone.

I caught up to Jim about two-thirds up the Comanche Lake trail. He was hard at work with his Corona saw on a 15-inch spruce across the trail. Older spruce can be surprisingly tough if they have the right amount of moisture in them. He had made considerable progress through the tree, but he had a long way to go and would still need to make a second cut to clear it from the trail.

I told him I would scout ahead to see



what else we had to do. It was getting late in the afternoon and our goal was to be back in camp at 5:00 pm. This goal, or rather rule, was one that our Trail Crew Leader Bob Manuel wanted us to adhere to. As Trail Crew Leader, one of his tasks is to keep the experience fun by ensuring members don't work too hard. I agree. Everyone worked very hard during the day, but I always looked forward to the evening time. I enjoyed being able to take my time while making dinner and swapping the day's and other stories with crew members around the campfire.

Upon returning, I told Jim that we need to come back to the same place tomorrow with a two-man saw to finish what he was doing and clear all the other downed trees I spotted. This included the largest tree across the trail I had seen to date. There were, however, some smaller trees we could remove before returning to camp.

The Forest Service two-man saw is about six feet long and requires, as its name implies, two people to operate. It consists of a lethal array of teeth, each as long as a little finger, which is kept in a thick canvas guard when not in use. It is simply amazing how effective it is at crosscutting large logs when the two-person team gets properly coordinated.

The usual way of carrying it is over the shoulder, holding the handle, with an arm outstretched in front. I didn't mind the

weight of the saw while carrying it, but the flexing and bouncing of it made me all too glad to trade it off with somebody after several miles.

Sawing large logs requires careful planning for reasons of safety and to avoid much more work later. Obviously the worst scenario would be to have a heavy log fall down on your legs and roll over top of you.

Additionally, the log could roll down and get stuck in the tread of the trail where it is too heavy to move and impossible to saw again because it is partially buried in the dirt. In such cases, re-routing the trail might be the only option. This is exactly what we were trying to avoid by cutting away the tree in the first place.

Often smaller logs are placed under the large log or in its expected roll path to ensure that it can be rolled away from the trail once it is cut away from the rest of the tree. Smaller logs used as levers are also a handy way to move the larger logs. Sometimes even the angle of the cut is important to help the log fall where you want it. You must constantly anticipate what will happen and have an escape path ready before the log breaks free.

The following day, with careful planning, and using the two-man saw, our four-man team was able to clear all the remaining trees on Comanche Lake trail.

The Rawah

Darn! Panniers are full. Being the new guy, and the slowest to make my sleeping bag and tent available I wasn't able to take advantage of having the horse carry some of my stuff. No problem, I've done this without help many times before.

We met Tony Schock at the Rawah trail-head. He graciously carried much of our trail crew equipment and whatever else fit on his two horses for this trip. Our plan was to spend five days clearing trees and other maintenance over Rawah North, Rawah South and West Branch trails. Other adjoining trails like Lost Lake, Camp Lake, Rainbow, and Sandbar would be worked on as time permitted.

The first three and one-half miles of Rawah North were uneventful. This was expected, since five weeks prior, Trail Crew

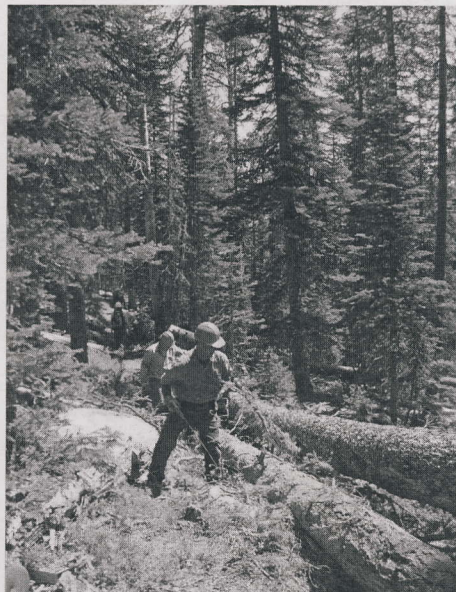
members had already removed approximately 40 trees up to this point. However, after four miles there was nothing but downed trees across the trail. All total there was over a hundred trees cleared in over two days up through Rawah Lakes 1 and 2. It was important to get this major trail cleared, but the additional time clearing the unexpected large numbers of trees on Rawah north prevented us from spending time on the additional side trails.

Nonetheless, work was done on Rawah North and South, West Branch, Camp Lake and part of Blue Lake during this trip. All total, 175 trees were cleared, many water bars were restored, and a new stream tributary eroding West Branch trail was re-diverted back to its established channel high up in a hillside.

Closing Thoughts

Safety, as always, was a priority and it paid off. None of the 13 active PWV Trail Crew members suffered any injuries during any of the 2008 trail crew outings. Forest Service procedures and regulations were followed, while safety equipment like hard hats, gloves, long sleeve shirts and sturdy boots are mandatory.

Trail Crew members also perform typical PWV roles while doing trail work including assisting and educating the public, while tallying usage statistics. Even though I heard it many times, I never got tired of the appreciation expressed by passers-by while performing trail work. I often pondered what motivates Trail Crew members. Is it the chance to work outdoors, the friendships established between members, the opportunity to serve an invaluable resource? I think all of these things motivate PWV members.



Thought You Might Like to Meet ...Carlota Striffler - A First-Year PWV Member

By Sharon Ruch

There have been many, many first-year PWV members over the years, but perhaps none with more enthusiasm than Carlota Striffler. From spring training, to adventures on the trails, to every member she has met, Carlota is bubbling over with complimentary words and positive energy. At the time we talked, in August, she had

already done eight hikes, with plans to do more.

When asked about any adventures she'd had on the trails, she recounted an incident on the Roaring Creek trail when – and this will be familiar to almost every PWV hiker – a couple from Florida came ill-prepared for our changeable weather. And of course the tourists also neglected to bring enough water. Carlota and her partner were able to provide sensible advice – “turn back and get to your car as soon as possible” – and extra water to hydrate the flagging couple. This encounter underscored the reason every potential PWV member must attend spring training. Carlota had nothing but praise for the spring training program, and especially the play-acting scenarios, which she felt had well prepared her for incidents on the trails.

She also helped dismantle an illegally built lean-to. A meeting with a mama moose

and her offspring made quite an impression. She's also aware, now, of how much good work the trail maintenance crews do. Initially, she was anxious about what sort of people she would be required to hike with. But she says everyone has been friendly, accommodating and helpful. She gives her mentors especially high marks.

Carlota is retired – sort of – from her profession of occupational therapist. Since retiring, she has returned to work occasionally in a temporary capacity. But she is really enjoying her free time, taking yoga classes and keeping physically fit. She's lived in the area for over 20 years but never had time to do all the outdoor exploration she wanted. Now that time has come, and she intends to make the most of it. And while she's at it, she'll continue to be an excellent example of what PWV is all about – an articulate, enthusiastic spokesperson for our wilderness.



More about Carlota

By Bill Dold

Editor's Note: I asked Bill Dold for a brief quote about Carlota to add to Sharon's article. Bill's response says it all: "Carole, I know you asked for a quote and I gave you three paragraphs. That's how impressed I was with Carlota."

Here are the three paragraphs from Bill:

Because most mentored hikes occur soon after training, I formed a knee-jerk impression that this mentor hike, having been scheduled for mid August, might be reflective of a newbie in need of extra attention. When I asked Carlota if she had been on other mentored hikes, she implied “more than one other.” My concern was not altered until we had traveled half way to the trailhead when I said, as I usually do when men-

toring, “Since much of what we do is based on LNT, please tell me the first principle.” I knew my knee-jerk was faulty when she not only knew the principle but also without hesitation continued on to detail how she had planned ahead and prepared. Because recall and planning does not always relate to on-trail personality and ability, I still reserved forming a secondary impression; however, her genuine curiosity and adroit questions were thus far impressive.

By the time we arrived at the trailhead, I felt compelled to ask if I could forego my usual mentoring and just take a routine patrol approach. Her response was typical of her mindset. She wanted to learn and asked that I mentor as usual, but after a couple contacts where we were obviously working

as a team with her leading the way, I knew this mentor was going to learn something on this hike. By the time we had lunch and were heading back toward the trailhead, I was trying to persuade her to become a mentor next year.

Over the years I've had the pleasure of mentoring dozens of volunteers, many of whom were topnotch and have gone on to do great and wonderful things with and for PWV. Carlota is one of those people with head and heart together in the right place. Her knowledge, capabilities, industriousness, and intentions are those to which recruits should aspire.

Kids in Nature End of Season Report

By Barbara Benjamin

It has been a very exciting and successful pilot season for Kids in Nature. Compared to last year, we tripled the number of kids we served, from 7 to 21, and we offered most of them their first opportunity to have fun in Nature.

We conducted 3 hikes with children from the Boys and Girls Club and Partners, which are organizations that serve disadvantaged or poverty level youth, as well as a hike for a Brownie troop from Greeley.



We definitely reached some kids

who do not routinely get out into nature.

As one participant said, when asked if she got outside much, her experience with being outside consisted of walking over to her friend's home to play.

Our primary goal has been to offer a fun first contact with being out in wilderness. Universally, the kids and the adults from the organizations reported that the kids had a good time. Plus, most of the kids learned to identify poison ivy and prickly pear cactus, to read the signs at the trailhead, to be polite to other hikers, were introduced to LNT principals, and had some "wow" experience with nature, such as seeing a water snake or identifying trees and flowers.

All the organizations we served this year want to have their kids participate again next year. And we've had interest shown from additional scouting groups who want to schedule hikes with us early next year.

Our biggest accomplish-

ment this year has been developing an organizational and material base for the project:

- We purchased and organized enough equipment to support the hikes and to make conducting a hike relatively easy and fun for all.
- We established an efficient procedure for planning and conducting the hikes including a checklist for KIN hike leaders.
- We developed a draft manual for training and held two trainings for volunteers.
- We had 5 returning volunteers and 6 new volunteers participate in at least one hike. We have another 4 who participated in the training but had conflicts on the hike days; so, we have a total of 15 trained volunteers ready for next year.

We've learned a lot from each experience and have gotten better with each hike. Next year, we're planning to make contacts with organizations and schedule hikes well in advance of the summer season. Also, we plan to offer volunteer trainings in early spring, so volunteers can plan ahead. Even if you're not interested in volunteering, we'd love to have anyone join us for a fun morning on the trail with kids.

Ride (Continued from Page 2)

Most hikers we encounter know little about horses so we do a lot of education on how to approach horses. We like to have the hikers speak so the horse can recognize they are people. Backpackers look like aliens to horses, but once they hear a human voice, you can feel the horse relax. We also have people that try to hide behind a tree or rock. For a horse, this is predator action and they may get very nervous. Again, I will ask the person step out and speak. We prefer that they stand on the downhill side. Again this is because if a predator attacks it is usually from the uphill side. If I encounter a group of people I will ask them to stand on one side of the horse instead of a circle around him. This is so if he spooks at something he has a way out and not over them.

Education on the trail is the same as hiking patrol. There are lots of dogs off leash. Most people will grab their dog to keep them away from the horses. Horses

can kick when threatened. I'm amazed how many dogs are afraid of horses. (Guess I have lived on the farm too long.) We do talk to other stock people about Leave No Trace camping and usage of certified weed free hay.

We do get an occasional comment about the "fiber" (poop) we leave on the trail. I think the bicyclists are the most vocal. It is harder for them to avoid it and it does tend to leave a brown streak up their back after they have run through a fresh pile. Unfortunately, I haven't been able to teach my horse to move off the trail first. The "meadow muffins" do tend to dry within the hour and eventually decompose into the trail in a short time. I like to think it helps to stabilize the soil. Some people think horses spread weeds. There have been multiple studies done by several universities. From what I have read, horse poop doesn't spread any more weeds than cars, birds, or cattle. I'm sure there will

be more studies done. We use certified weed free hay and encourage others to do so too.

Anytime that I am out riding in the mountains, it is a memorable event. Doing a patrol gives me a purpose to ride.



PWV Schedule of Events

OCTOBER 2008

- 16 PWV Board Meeting*
- 19 PWV End of Season Party at the Hilton

NOVEMBER 2008

- 20 PWV Board Meeting*

DECEMBER 2008

- 18 PWV Board Meeting*

*PWV Board Meetings are open to all members and are held at the USFS Office Building at 2150 Centre Ave., Building E, Fort Collins.

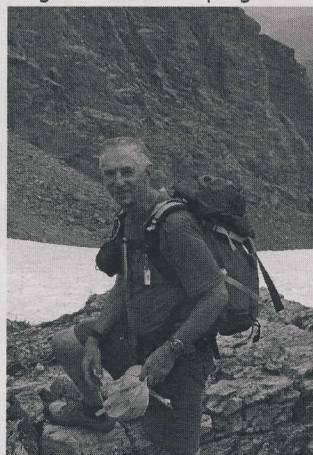


Canyon Lakes Ranger District
Arapaho-Roosevelt NF & Pawnee NG
2150 Centre Avenue, Building E
Fort Collins, CO 80526

Thought You Might Like to Meet...Neil Sherrod A Man for All Seasons

By Sharon Ruch

How many of us are willing to brave the chilly winds of winter, don layers of fleece, store water bottles near our body so they don't freeze, and go out hiking for PWV? Neil Sherrod was convinced there would be enough hardy souls to make a winter hiking program worthwhile, and he was right. He discovered there are definitely enough people out on the lower trails in the winter to make our mission of educating hikers effective. And he's been in charge of the winter program ever since.



Neil wasn't always such an experienced outdoorsman. Born in the city of New York, his only acquaintance with trees in those early days was when he would take the Staten Island ferry to a Boy Scout camp. Something about nature must have appealed to him, because he went on to get a degree in geology. Neil has lived in Colorado for 40 years now, so he's practically a native. When he retired, or maybe I should say semi-retired, since he still does consulting at times, he filled out a questionnaire from the Volunteers of America organization. Based on his answers, he was referred to PWV as one group he might be interested in. He gave us a try, and found a good fit.

It's lucky for us, since Neil has become a major fundraiser. He modestly attributes his success to our non-political, environmental agenda. People in this area, he said, are very

interested in keeping our wild places pristine, and donors are willing to support volunteer groups with that as a major goal. It doesn't hurt, he added, that PWV has become recognized nationwide as a success story, imitated by other groups in other areas who hope to make the same positive impact.

Neil doesn't just go out and get funds for PWV, though. He's been a group leader at Spring Training, is a mentor, and has been on the board for three years. He enjoys mentoring, and one of his goals is for new members to have fun on the trails. Yes, he said, we do have an important job to do, but that doesn't mean we can't enjoy ourselves while doing it. Our training program is excellent, he feels, and the time and effort to train people is considerable.

I asked his opinion about the different programs PWV has implemented in the past few years: Kids in Nature, the weed control project, highway cleanup, etc. Those things are fine, according to Neil, but he strongly emphasized they should not be allowed to divert time and energy from our original mission – to serve as wilderness rangers and hosts for the purpose of educating the public. There is no substitute for doing an actual hike, being out on the trails, and meeting and greeting people. Many hikers and riders he meets have heard of PWV, and recognize the contributions we make. He's noticed a definite difference in the condition of the trails, the cleanliness, and the willingness of the public to follow the Leave No Trace principles.

Neil is planning to be an active member of PWV for years to come. He relishes his role of keeping a sense of fun and pure enjoyment added into the mix of more serious objectives.

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