



# P O U D R E T R A I L S

Poudre Wilderness Volunteers Newsletter

SPRING 2011

## Activities to Remember:

### Leave No Trace Train the Trainer

**Course.** The tentative plan is to hold this training the weekend before the PWV spring training weekend. The purpose is to improve and gain confidence in your LNT skills, allowing you to feel comfortable passing the LNT principles on to others you meet on the trail when patrolling as a PWV'er. This is also an opportunity to learn backpacking and camping skills from other experienced backpackers. If you lack the proper equipment, plan on taking part anyway. We can work out any equipment needs at the planning meeting. The training is limited to a total of 10. For more information, contact: Garin VanDeMark at 970.226.2051

### Adopt-A-Trail on the North Fork trail.

PWV has adopted the North Fork trail with the purpose of performing basic trail maintenance including such things as clearing the trail of small downed trees, cleaning and repairing erosion control structures such as water bars and grade dips, and the construction and/or repair of other needed trail features. Below are the dates that have been tentatively set aside for this work. If you are interested in helping with this effort and are not already on the A-A-T list, please send an e-mail to: AAH@poudrewildernessvolunteers.com or call Garin VanDeMark at 970.226.2051 mentioning your interest in helping with the North Fork trail work. The tentative summer plans are that on June 11 & 12 we will replace the deck on the first bridge. Then we hope to begin work on major trail improvement projects closer to the park boundary and using our stock folks to help haul in tools and our camping supplies. These tentative dates are July 9 & 10, August 20 & 21, and September 10 & 11.

## Get Ready for Spring Training



*Cub Scout Camp view of the lake.*

Spring Training is the biggest event of our PWV calendar. A lot of time, planning and money (our largest expense of the year), goes into this most important undertaking.

The planning begins in January and continues until the event, with last-minute preparations.

Training this year will be at the Ben Delatour Scout Ranch in Red Feather Lakes. Directions will be provided later.

Spring training begins on Friday, May 20 with check-in from 3:00-6:00 pm., and ends Sunday, May 22 at about 1pm.

The purpose of ST is to train our new recruits, often referred to as "newbies," and also to provide some interesting training programs for our returning members.

The returning members are often involved in the training and other activities such as registration, food preparation, scenarios on the training trail, entertainment, and a variety of supportive activities.

After check-in, those who want to camp can set up, and after that, enjoy a pot luck dinner provided by the returning members-dessert provided by the board of directors, whom you will probably meet sometime during the weekend. The newbies will also meet with their group leaders, referred to as Animal Group Leaders as the groups are named after animals-Antelope, Badger, Coyote, etc.

Saturday is the crux of the weekend, with the groups hiking a training trail with their leaders.

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# KIDS IN NATURE PROGRAM

Today's children are tomorrow's stewards of wilderness, thus PWV Kids in Nature program was established in 2007 to foster environmental awareness, respect, and land stewardship in kids through fun, educational programs and direct experiences. KIN volunteers strive to educate kids about natural processes and instill a sense of wonder and appreciation of nature.

To date, 49 children aged seven through eleven have had a chance to experience a hike with the 20 PWV members who plan and conduct this program. The group is targeting kids who do not normally get out in nature and has worked with Boys and Girls Clubs of Ft. Collins and Partners Mentoring Youth as well as with a local Brownie troop.

Each hike begins with a trailhead safety talk and reminders about rules and procedures, a discussion of potential hazards that might be encountered along the trail, and an introduction to **Leave No Trace**.

The group has designed a Young Gulch Trail Guide for the kids. The guide allows the leader to offer an opportunistic and flexible "curriculum." The PWV volunteers try to respond to the kids' interests and enthusiasms without imposing a particular set of learning tasks. The focus is on ensuring a safe, fun, and

educational experience, in that order.

The Guide includes a description and topographic map of the trail, lists 10 educational themes and has 12 pages of color photos and descriptive texts of animals and plants known to occur along the trail, a dichotomous key to selected trees found in the area, a listing of additional plants and animals likely to occur in the area, and a listing of the 7 LNT principles. The Guide is given to the kids to take home to share with family and friends.

Along with the guide, the leaders have four pre-planned activities meant to encourage the children to have fun and to reinforce important nature skills. These include a map and compass exercise, a get to know a tree while blindfolded activity, an LNT "dance," and a listen to nature activity.

Typically, the hike starts at about 9:30 when the PWV leaders meet the kids and their parent or guardians at the trailhead. PWV provides the children with nametags, neck pouches for the trail guides, bandanas and



*Kids In Nature volunteers share some of the wonders of nature found along the trail.*

a snack. They hike for about two hours, have lunch and conduct some of the activities, then turn back to the trailhead.

For many of the kids, this hike has been their first time in nature. The response on the part of the adults and the children has been very positive. Most of the children have learned to

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*Poudre Wilderness Volunteers is fortunate to have support from our community, especially many of the businesses who support many of our activities through donations of money and equipment.*

*For our newsletter, we approached local businesses for graphic design and printing funds. Thru their generosity, we were able to produce this newsletter with no cost to PWV.*

## SPONSORS

Our sincere thanks to the following newsletter sponsors:

- Sandy Cochran Design
- REI
- JAX
- Poudre Feed

## A REVIEW OF LNT "LEAVE NO TRACE" OUTDOOR ETHICS

With a new hiking and riding season ahead of us, a quick review of our LNT - Outdoor Ethics code seems worthy of space here....

- PLAN AHEAD AND PREPARE
- TRAVEL AND CAMP ON DURABLE SURFACES
- DISPOSE OF WASTE PROPERLY
- LEAVE WHAT YOU FIND
- MINIMIZE CAMPFIRE IMPACTS
- RESPECT WILDLIFE
- BE CONSIDERATE OF OTHER VISITORS

For more information and materials, [WWW.LNT.ORG](http://WWW.LNT.ORG)

Be sure that you have a supply of the LNT plastic cards with you to handout to trail users who would like more information.

## Safety on the Trail...preparing for the Hiking Season *By Mary Ann Baak*

It's ironic that I'm writing this article since I'm lying here with a heating pad on my back because I neglected two elements of safety at the gym last week. Safety isn't just keeping an eye on your six, fighter pilot lingo for what's coming up behind you, though that is paramount. Safety is also about staying injury free.

It's preseason right now, and this is the time to keep the body active so you have the strength, stamina, and flexibility, come hiking-season, to get yourself on the trail and out again without personal damage. It's important to prepare the body for the hiking season by staying physically active, whether at the gym or elsewhere. At least a couple of times each week, use the treadmill or elliptical machine and weights, or walk the streets and winter trails. Whenever you're participating in activities, ensure you focus on your form, and stretch the muscles afterward. Being mindful of form keeps you from pulling or straining muscles, and stretching afterward keeps the muscles from seizing up thus reducing your agility. Strength and agility are both very important at keeping you upright and safe on the trail.

Other things to do preseason include preparing your equipment. Ensure you are carrying a well-fitted pack and only carry an amount of weight that will not strain your back or neck. At both Jax and REI, you can have a pack fitted to you; and, at Jax, they have weight-bags so you can see what a certain amount of weight will feel like. Furthermore, if you plan to get new boots for the season, this is the time to purchase them, and then wear them doing things other than hiking. This breaks them in, thus reducing the possibility of blisters and foot fatigue when you're 5-miles into a 12-mile hike. Do make sure you hike with boots or other footwear designed for hiking, rather than tennis shoes or sandals. The two latter forms of footwear don't provide enough support for your arches or ankles, and sandals allow rocks and sticks which can cut and damage your feet. Boots, whether they're over or below the ankle, are the safest bet for your feet.

While you're out buying new boots, look at hiking sticks, too. They don't have to be expensive ones, just something to support you while you trek through the mountains. Danger lurks around every bend while hiking, and the most dangerous thing

out there is you. Little mistakes in judgment can cause great pain or catastrophe. Rocks reach up to trip hikers who are not paying attention, and then other rocks poke out to gouge the knees when the hiker hits the ground. So, keep your eyes peeled for those pesky rocks, and use hiking sticks to help you keep your balance. Hiking sticks also help keep other pests away. The increased vibration from the ends hitting the ground as you walk will give a louder signal to snakes so they exit the trail before you approach. If perchance you see a predator, where you're the prey, waving your stick in the air will make you appear larger, and less of an easy target. Hiking downhill with sticks also lessens the impact on your knees, and therefore reduces injury and pain.

Preparing for the hiking season is an important part of safety on the trail. This is the time to prepare the body to be strong, resilient, and supple enough to handle the trails ahead. Similarly, there is no time like the present to ensure you have the right equipment and that it is "broken in" enough to give you many hours of enjoyable trail-time.

### The "Education and Affiliation Meeting" program

A Poudre Wilderness Volunteer program administered by member Bob Hansen can help you learn more about our area and not only help keep you and others safe, but can enrich your hiking experience through education.

The "Education and Affiliation Meeting" program Bob runs is dedicated to keeping all of us involved through various speakers and events that enhance our knowledge while at the same time keeping us in communication with each other...a vital part of the PWV life!

Under the PWV parent program called "Members In Reach," Bob arranges for various speakers to give presentations on topics of interest to our new members.

These valuable free events take place during our "off" season (non-hiking, non-riding) and convene the 2nd Monday of every month in the meeting room

at Mulligan's Pub, located at 2439 S. College Ave. (near K-Mart). From 6:00-6:30 P.M. you can relax and renew associations with other members during a brief "social time"; then settle in for a one- to two-hour presentation.

Bob notifies all PWV members with an email prior to the first of the month.

He is hoping for YOUR input for upcoming speakers and events, so if you have any suggestions or "connections" to someone willing to be a presenter (maybe YOU?), please contact Bob at his email or phone number below. He also would like you to RSVP if you plan to come to an event, but please don't feel that no RSVP means you cannot attend....we love the camaraderie! Guests are always welcome!

Contact Bob Hansen at 970-495-1129 or bhansen@frii.com

## Spring Tips for Stock Patrols and their Partners *By Deb Cheuvront*

As I read Mary Ann's article "Preparing for the Hiking Season", I thought that this would be a good time to remind those of us with equine partners that Spring conditioning and preparation is as important for our horses as it is for us.

Those last few days of January and 60 degree temperatures was all it took to get me and some of my riding pals to hit the trails at Lory State Park and Bobcat Ridge. Bobcat Ridge was day two of riding for our horses after over 3 months of hanging out in the barn and eating hay (and their riders being in the house, stuffed from the holidays). At Bobcat Ridge, our mares were huffing and puffing as we climbed to the ridges, so we stopped frequently to allow them to catch their breath before moving on out. We finished with two very tired, sweaty horses, so we made sure to rub them down and cool them off before putting them in the trailer.

If you're like many people (and horses), your activities have been reduced over the winter. The holidays, the cold, poor footing on trails, all can contribute to us getting out of shape over the winter. None of us would go out and run a race after such a long period of inactivity, so why would we expect this of our horses?

Here are a number of factors to consider before hitting the trails:

- Spring checkup by your veterinarian. This is a good time to have your vet out to check your horse's overall health. Identifying any health issues or potential issues is best done now before you start riding.
- An important thing to keep in mind while conditioning your horse is that there are multiple systems that have to be conditioned, and they work together. The cardiovascular



PWV volunteer Betsy Mosehauer contacts riders on trail.

system needs to be conditioned so oxygen can be delivered to working muscles. However, the respiratory system needs to be conditioned so adequate oxygen can be taken in for the cardiovascular system to deliver, and to expel the waste gas carbon dioxide. The horse's thermal regulatory system also has to be conditioned so that the horse can cool himself, both through sweating and through taking large breaths of cooler air and expelling large breaths of warmer air. Muscles, joints, tendons, ligaments, and even bones also need time to condition, or the risk of injury is greatly increased, especially with the added weight of the rider. Skeletal conditioning occurs very slowly, so it's important to be especially careful on hard, uneven, deep, or slick footing to help protect your horse from injury.

- Start out slowly by taking your horse out for some short rides at a walk, preferably in mostly flat areas. A half hour daily is a great way to begin. Make sure to increase your horse's feed if he's already a little ribby, but you don't want him to

pack pounds on quickly, either. After about a week, start increasing the length of your ride, add a little trotting or gaiting, and add in a few small hills. Always start with a warm-up period and end with a cool-down period to help prevent damage to muscles, ligaments, and tendons. The warm-up and cool-down becomes ever more critical as your riding intensity increases.

- Some things to look out for while conditioning your horse is profuse sweating, heart rate over 150 beats per minute, or your horse panting or "blowing". If any of these happen, stop and rest your horse.
- Continue to gradually work your horse (and you) up to the length and difficulty of your normal rides, adding in more trotting or gaiting, perhaps some loping, and increasing the steepness of the terrain as is appropriate for your conditioning needs.
- One other special consideration that bears mentioning is high altitude riding - remember, adjustment to and working in higher elevations affects your horse the same as it does you.

***Volunteers are the only human beings on the face of the earth who reflect this nation's compassion, unselfish caring, patience, and just plain loving one another.***

***-- Erma Bombeck***

## Spring Training *By Jan Creager...Continued from Page 1*

The trail contains various teaching scenarios put on by our "actor's guild," or role players. This year, in our new venue, the trail is only one mile as opposed to four miles in the past. The scenarios are based on information you will learn by reading your field guide, which you will receive on Kick -Off Night. There will also be an animal group Jeopardy with prizes, and it is very competitive, (but fun), so study up! This year, we have added a Jeopardy for returning members as well, so they need to get back into their guide and brush up!

Saturday dinner this year will be prepared by Pam Allen- a wonderful cook, wife of Fred Allen- a past chairman of PWV, and on the Advisory Board at present. After dinner we will have time to unwind, relax and get to know one another better.

On Sunday, there will be a few more training sessions such as first aid and noxious weeds. In the past, PWV has taken in the very important role of identifying, reporting, and even helping control the spread of noxious weeds in our wilderness and around the trails we patrol.

The final activity on Sunday is

graduation, where the newbies receive their certificate of completion, and their uniform shirts. Pictures will be taken of each group, and they will all receive a copy. The pics will also be published in our post Spring Training newsletter.

Graduation should be over around 1pm, at which time folks break camp, clean up, and head home, hopefully with a glow of anticipation for the upcoming summer. As a ten year returning member this summer, I can only tell the new members that this has become one of the more rewarding things I have ever done!



*Cub Scout Dining Pavilion*



*Cub Scout Campsites*

*The mission of Poudre Wilderness Volunteers is to assist the Canyon Lakes Ranger District of the United States Forest Service in managing and protecting wilderness and backcountry areas within its jurisdiction. To achieve this mission, Poudre Wilderness Volunteers recruits, trains, equips and fields citizen volunteers to serve as wilderness rangers and hosts for the purpose of educating the public, and provides other appropriate support to these wild areas.*

## **KIDS PROGRAM** *Continued from page 2*

identify poison ivy and prickly pear, to read and understand the signs at the trailhead, and to be polite to other hikers. They were introduced to LNT principles and had some "wow" experiences with nature, such as seeing a garter snake in a stream.

Barb Benjamin, the committee chair of the Kids in Nature program would love to see more PWV folks get involved with the hikes. They hope to expand the program to include more children and more hikes. To do these things requires more volunteers both to lead hikes and to provide support for the kids. They want to maintain a 2 kids/1 adult ratio so all questions can be answered and kids are kept safe at all times.

Next year the group hopes to schedule hikes earlier and post them on the PWV scheduling site. Since participation in these KIN hikes now counts as one the six required hikes of the seasons, perhaps some of our members will consider a fun day with kids to be an attractive alternative to their normal hiking schedule.

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