



BLACK FOREST TRAILS ASSOCIATION NEWS

President’s Corner



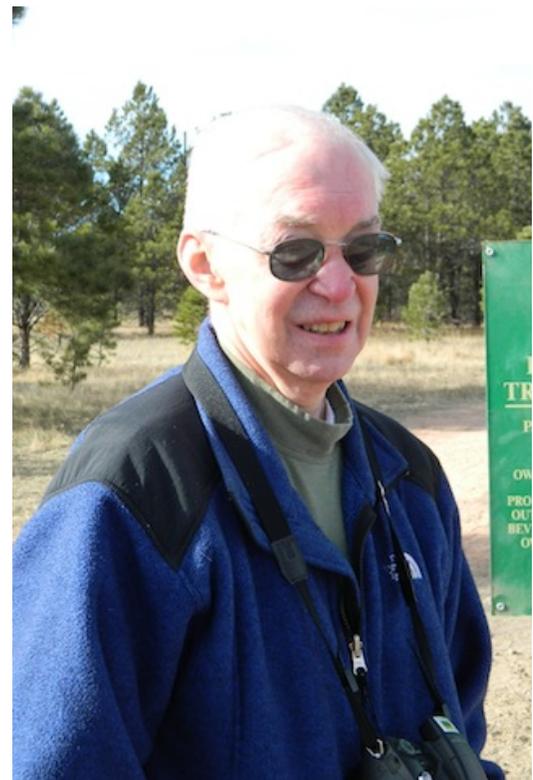
By Larry Fariss, BFTA President

The Black Forest Trail Association lost one of its biggest supporters on May 4th, 2014 when Hank Hoover passed away after a lengthy battle with cancer in the beloved home he built, in the forest he loved, with his wife Diane and children by his side. We won’t have another like him!

Hank was not only a long time member of the BFTA, but served as a board member for many years and President from 2008-12. When I succeeded Hank, he served as my mentor and guiding light as I navigated the offices of El Paso County Parks, Trails and Open Space Coalition and Colorado State Forestry. Hank was well known by these agencies and where ever I went, I played the “Hank” card frequently to open doors and smooth the way and attain our goals and plans on behalf of BFTA’s membership. In short, he was so well respected, that these agencies actually bent over backwards to help BFTA, making my job a snap.

Here are some of Hank’s accomplishments on our behalf:

- **Section 16 Toilet** – Hank spearheaded the donation drive and negotiation with the County that lead to funding and construction of one of the best toilet facilities in any El Paso County park.
- **Seedling Tree Program** – Hank worked with The Community Club and Colorado State Forest Service to bring thousands of seedlings to Black Forest. This was done at low cost to property owners.
- **Horse Trailer Parking** – Hank lobbied with the county to install expansive horse trailer parking lots in Section 16 and Black forest Regional Parks. There are no finer facilities in El Paso County.
- **Fire Mitigation** – Hank worked tirelessly to cleanup and



mitigate both Section 16 and BFRP. His efforts helped create the buffer that likely saved Section 16 during the Black Forest Fire.

- **Adopt A Park Program** – Hank encouraged the county to establish Friend Groups for each of the County Parks which now exist in nearly all our parks in the Black Forest region.

For these achievements, Hank was recognized as the El Paso County Parks Volunteer of the year in 2011. He is the only member of BFTA to have ever achieved this worthy level of recognition. Few members of our organization have done more than Hank to better our Black Forest Trails and Parks. In recognition of Hank, and his many achievements, the BFTA Board of Directors have approved a plan to dedicate the BFRP horse trailer parking lot in his name and establish a trailside bench near his favorite hiking spot in the same park. **HANK IS GONE, BUT HE WILL NEVER BE FORGOTTEN!**

Parks Department Equipment Trailer

By Nancy Reinhardt

The El Paso County Community Services Department has recently purchased and setup an equipment trailer with tools for trail work which will be made available to trail groups such as Black Forest Trails Association.

Black Forest Trails Association donated \$1000 towards the purchase of this trailer and equipment which the county will maintain and store at Fox Run Regional Park. It contains tools for fire mitigation, trail construction and repair and will be available for BFTA sponsored projects and work days. This will be a great asset for BFTA and Black Forest.

President Larry Fariss said "BFTA lost all of our tools in the fire and instead of merely replacing them, the BFTA Board elected to participate with El Paso County Parks to help create a portable, reusable equipment resource that benefits our entire community. I am very excited with this partnership and look forward to BFTA and El Paso County Parks working together on many projects in the next few years as Black Forest recovers fCounty Parks Advisory Board Retreat Held

BFTA's Best Friend... Trails and Open Space Coalition!



Trails and Open Space Coalition

By Larry Fariss

There is a great volunteer organization that benefits Black Forest parks and trails in so many ways with their time talent and treasure. They sponsor training for our members to maintain and clear our trails. They organize Friends Groups for each of our parks. They lobby with the county on our behalf to fund improvements that benefit Black Forest trails and parks. Bet you know who it is! Bet you think I am championing our very own Black Forest Trails Association.

You would not be wrong; BFTA does all these things and more. But in this case I am touting TOSC... the Trails and Open Space Coalition. This volunteer organization has become our single best partner and advocate in working with the county to maintain and improve the health of the county parks in Black Forest. In the past two years BFTA has worked closely with TOSC President Susan Davies and her organization to establish a joint voice on your behalf. A strong voice that lobbies for the needs of our trail users... safe trail surfaces, park mitigation, clean forest surroundings and adequate parking facilities.

Here are some of the results of that partnership:

- Friends Groups – Largely through TOSC efforts, we now have Friends Groups for Fox Run Regional Park, Homestead Park and Section 16. BFTA and TOSC are working hard to add Black Forest Regional Park to that list. TOSC helps new Friends Groups get off the ground in organization and operations resulting in setting goals with the county and improving facilities in their neighborhood park.
- Trail Crew Leader Training – Through TOSC, BFTA obtained slots for crew leader training that enables BFTA to take a lead position in trail maintenance and cleanup activities that benefit our trails and parks in Black Forest.
- BFRP Post Fire Cleanup – TOSC has championed and encouraged county efforts to cleanup Black Forest Regional Park and get all its facilities up and running by the end of 2014. Largely through their efforts, monthly cleanup days are on tap throughout the summer, the trails are all open for use, and soon the playground will be operational.

So you see, BFTA has a big brother that looks out for our interests, increases our visibility, and enhances our voice as we seek to support our member's interests. Consequently BFTA has recently signed on with TOSC as a partnership member of their organization. We also encourage every member of BFTA to also join TOSC, as both organizations are stronger if they have more membership. Experience has proven the county listens to those organizations with the biggest membership rolls. Help us help you get the best trail experience in El Paso County!

We encourage you to join TOSC at www.trailsandopenspaces.org and BFTA at www.blackforesttrails.org

Spruce Mountain Trail

By Andy Meng

If you haven't yet hiked the nearby Spruce Mountain Trail, you're in for a treat. This trail, only about a 20 minute drive from the Black Forest, is a great loop trail with scenic vistas, hiking through meadows and trees alike. Highlights

The Spruce Mountain Trail gently switchbacks up Spruce Mountain through a ponderosa pine and Douglas fir forest up to fabulous rocky overlooks and a loop around the fairly-flat, forested mountaintop. The first lookout offers breathtaking views of Greenland Open Space, surrounding buttes, Pikes Peak, the Palmer Divide, Carpenter Creek and thousands of acres of protected open space. There are plenty of opportunities to gaze off rocky lookouts, ridges and meadows from over 8 miles of trails. Bring your camera. For variety, descend on the service road, hike the loop to the west, and hike back along the Eagle Pass trail.

Trail Rating

There are 8.5 miles of trails, so extended or varied routes may be chosen. Staying low on the easy Eagle Pass Trail will take you along the edges of forests and meadows. Moderately easy hikes to the upper loop will take you on a gentle climb through shady forests to a wide and gentle trail that circles the top of the mountain. Small children have been known to hike it well, but keep an eye on them at the rocky lookouts! Ice and snow can build up on the shaded trails on the northern climb. The east end of the Service Road that Descends Spruce Mountain can be difficult, since it is steep and usually quite rutted. The western loop of the Eagle Pass Trail and the Service Road are moderately easy.

Trail Length

It is about 5.5 miles from Spruce Mountain Road parking lot, around the Upper Loop, and a roundtrip back. You can add on another couple of miles to include the meadows and beautifully forested Eagle Ridge on the west side of Eagle Pass Trail and the Service Road.



Trail Surface

Natural; some rock; gradual climb on north side with switchbacks. The upper (eastern) part of the Service Road is steep and often rutted.

Users

Hikers, horseback riders, mountain bikers, and pets on leash can use the trail.

Amenities

The parking lot accommodates cars and light trucks only. Sorry, there is no room for horse trailers here. Trailers may be parked at the large Spruce Meadows Trailhead along Noe Road to the northeast, adding a couple of miles in each direction to your ride. One port-a-potty is available. There is no water available at this site. Water is available at stock ponds along the Spruce Meadows Trail and at the nearby Greenland Open Space Trailhead.

Location

13415 Spruce Mountain Road, Larkspur, CO

From I-25, take the Greenland Exit (167) to the west and travel $\frac{1}{4}$ mile west on Greenland Road and $\frac{1}{2}$ mile south. Bypass the Greenland Trailhead and continue right on the main gravel road (Noe Road) over two sets of railroad tracks. (If you have a horse trailer or very large vehicle, park at the Spruce meadows parking lot on your left and take the 2-mile trail to Spruce Mountain.) Cars can continue another mile west to Spruce Mountain Road. Take a left and head south for about one mile to the parking area on your right. Remember, cars and light trucks only may park here.

Or, cars can take the Larkspur Exit and travel about six miles south along Spruce Mountain Road and the entrance will be on your right.

Black Forest Trails

By Andy Meng

The fire last year did major damage to both Black Forest Regional Park and to Section 16, but we're happy to announce that the trails in both parks are now fully open to hikers, bikers and riders.

If you haven't been on the Section 16 trail in awhile, I'd strongly urge you head out there to take a hike or a bike or horseback ride. The trail is a 4 mile loop through mostly forested rolling hills. The section is recovering very nicely after the fire, and the grasses and wildflowers are simply amazing. There is car and horse trailer parking on Burgess Rd. Just west of the Burgess / Vollmer intersection.

In May of this year, the County opened all the trails in the Black Forest Regional Park for hiking, biking and riding. There is still a significant amount of fire damage repair work going on in the park, so please heed all signs and warnings, and stay on the marked trails. The Pikes Peak Loop trail that is connected on the north end of BFRP that encircles Cathedral Pines is also open for hiking (and partially for horseback riding). You can park your car or trailer in the parking lot off Milam Rd. just north of Shoup.

Fox Run Park and Homestead Ranch Regional parks were not impacted by the fire and are open with normal hours.

We have some great trails in The Forest and we urge you to use and enjoy them.

Black Forest Together Chipper

Black Forest Together, the organization created after last year's fire to support fire victims, just acquired a new wood chipper courtesy of the American Red Cross. This chipper will provide BFT a tremendous capability as it works with home owners in assisting them with their mitigation projects or helping them clear their fire damaged property. For more information about Black Forest Together and their efforts, please visit www.blackforesttogether.com.



Please Support Our Sponsors

Our business sponsors are critical to our success. We urge you to buy from our local business sponsors.

If you're interested in sponsoring the BFTA, please JOIN NOW as a business / club sponsor.

**Exclusively Equine
Dentistry
and Chiropractic**



Serving the front range from
Colorado Springs to Parker

Dr. Grover and Katanga

Sandra Grover, DVM
719-495-1039
www.HorseVetDentist.com

Black Forest Jeweler

- Quality Repair
- Custom Designing
- Watch Batteries
- Jeweler on Premises
- Pottery and Candles



*Tues. & Wed. 10am-6pm
Thurs, Fri, Sat 10am-2pm*

*Don & Linda Spurr
719-495-8816
11425 Black Forest Road
www.blackforestjeweler.com*

*We Buy
Gold*

Unique & Affordable Gold and Sterling Silver on Display

Jim's Plumbing & Heating

9611 Curtis Road
Peyton, CO 80831
(719) 749-0110
(719) 648-0846 (mobile)

**SERVING BLACK FOREST AND THE
PIKES PEAK REGION FOR 20 YEARS**




Cheryl Pixley
Realtor®, ABR, CRS, CDPE

495-9295

www.BlackForestHomes.com



12440 Black Forest Road
Black Forest, CO 80908
(719) 495-3463

FEED • HAY • PET FOODS
HEALTH SUPPLIES • SADDLES • TACK
ROPING SUPPLIES • CONSIGNMENTS




R&R Coffee Cafe
11424 Black Forest Road, Black Forest, CO 80908
www.facebook.com/rnrcoffeecafe

BFTA Membership

By Andy Meng

As you can see from the articles above, the Black Forest Trails Association is actively involved in supporting and advocating the development and maintenance of multi-use trails in the Black Forest. In the short time I've been involved with the BFTA, I have seen its influence on issues that are small (cleaning trash and debris from Black Forest parks and trails), medium (raising funds for, and building a toilet in section 16), and large (helping clean up after the Black Forest fire of June 2013). By supporting BFTA with your annual membership, you help provide the funding and support for a whole range of issues that affect Black Forest trails and the lifestyle we all want to protect.

There are 4 tiers of BFTA membership:

- 1) Individual / family (\$15 per year),
- 2) Business / club (\$30 per year),
- 3) Donor (\$50 per year)
- 4) Lifetime (\$150 one time).

Membership runs from April 1 to March 31. We use PayPal, which is easy and secure, to accept online payments, or you can print out an application and mail your payment in via US Postal service – either option can be completed via our website at <http://www.blackforesttrails.org/joinrenew>

Did You Know?

- That your BFTA membership dues are tax deductible? Indeed they are since BFTA is a 501c3 non-profit .
- That the BFTA operates strictly through the efforts of volunteers? There are no paid positions on the BFTA. All funds are used to directly support the mission of the BFTA.



Black Forest Trails Association
P.O. Box 88041
Colorado Springs CO 80908

Did You Know?

By Andy Meng

That there are still 6 post-fire clean up opportunities in Black Forest Regional Park this summer? The County Community Services Department is coordinating these clean up days. The dates are July, 19 and 20, August 23 and 24, and September 13 and 14 from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. We urge all of you to volunteer to help clean up one of the favorite Black Forest Parks from the ravages of the 2013 fire.

