



BLACK FOREST TRAILS ASSOCIATION NEWS

President's Corner

BFTA Board Dedicated Trail Blazers!

By Larry Fariss, President



Happy Holidays! 'Tis the season to be grateful. Black Forest is blessed with many volunteer based organizations that are all staffed by our service oriented friends and neighbors. Our BFTA is blessed with a Board that takes a back seat to no one in this regard! I am so grateful to each of them and would like to dedicate this issue of the President's Corner to honor current members of your hard working Black Forest Trails Association Board. I have served as your president for the past five years and have had a firsthand seat watching these wonderful people give of their time and

talents to better our Black Forest community. Let's get to know each of them a little bit better:

Vice President – Administration: Cheryl Pixley

Cheryl Pixley and her husband, Terry ("Pix"), have lived in Black Forest for 20 years and enjoy riding horseback on the miles of non-motorized, multi-use trails. She is a real estate broker and a member of BFTA since 1999. Cheryl has served as Vice President – Administration for many years.

Vice President – Government: Carolyn Brown

Carolyn Brown has lived in Black Forest since 1978 and has used the trails all that time as a horseback rider, runner, bike rider, and a hiker. She is a retired medical technologist and mobile blood drive coordinator who has been a member of the BFTA for many years and a board member for the last two years. She is also heavily involved in the BF Community Club and the Slash and Mulch (SAMCOM) site.

Treasurer: Andy Meng

Andy Meng and his wife Joan have lived in the Black Forest since 2013 and are frequent and ardent hikers and bikers of the various trails and parks in Black Forest. Andy was a Naval Flight Officer until he and Joan founded Infront Webworks in 1994. After selling the company, Andy continued as a consultant while Joan works at Edith Wolford Elementary. Andy has been on the BFTA Board since 2012.

Secretary: Steve Eckmann

Steve and his wife Monika have lived in Black Forest for 25 years and are frequent users of local trails. They have been BFTA members since 2010. Steve has been the BFTA Secretary since 2012, and in real life he is a System Engineer.

Board Member: Nancy Reinhardt

Nancy has lived in the Black Forest area since 1989 and use the trails by walking and riding her horse. She thinks Black Forest is a great place to live and would like to see the current trails preserved and future trails developed. She has been involved with Black Forest trails association since 1995 and a board member for 10+ years.

Board Member: Barbara Remy

Barb is retired and a longtime resident of Black Forest. She is a passionate volunteer for trails and open space and has served on the El Paso County Parks Advisory Board. Involved with BFTA since its inception, she recently stepped down from a long stint as BFTA Vice President - Government but continues to serve as a Board Member.

Board Member: Diane Hoover

Diane Hoover is the widow of Hank Hoover, former president of BFTA. She has lived in Black Forest since 1973 and loves all the parks and open spaces in the Black Forest area. However, Black Forest Regional Park is special to her as Hank's memorial bench is at the highest point in the park for everyone to enjoy. She is a long time member of the BFTA and a board member for the last two years.

These talented people thanklessly serve us all! So let's fix that. Next time you see them give them a BIG HUG AND HEARTFELT THANKS for all they do. They need your help in another way. We still have two board member positions vacant and need your help filling those spots. Please contact me at 332-4567 if you want to join the team!



Board members, L to R:

Steve Eckmann, Cheryl Pixley, Diane Hoover, Nancy Reinhardt, Carolyn Brown, Andy Meng, Larry Fariss

Thanks to all and warm Season Greetings!

Larry Fariss
President BFTA

PS: Michelle and I have been married 40 years, I served as a pilot in the Air Force for 30 years, and we raised three boys while living in Black Forest since 2001. I am a passionate hiker/biker having completed the 2600 mile Pacific Crest Trail as well as bicycling across America twice. I am honored to be Prez!

Juel Kjeldsen Memorial Bench

By Cheryl Pixley

BFTA is pleased to honor former Vice President-Government Affairs and long-time trails & open space advocate Juel Kjeldsen (1933 - 2012) with the dedication of a memorial park bench at Black Forest Regional Park.

BFTA conducted a fundraiser for Juel's bench and raised over \$500 in donations. El Paso County Parks Department contributed the balance in costs to purchase the bench and installation materials. Many thanks to Eagle Scout Joseph Wells for installing the bench on the hillside above the east end of the ball field, where Park users can sit for a respite and savor a beautifully-framed view of majestic Pikes Peak. Joseph's involvement is a fitting tribute to Juel, who was a Scout Master in Houston, Texas in the 1970s.

Juel first came to Colorado nearly 60 years ago when he was stationed with the US Army at Camp Carson. Later returning to the area, he and his wife, Irene, made their home in Black Forest where they resided for over 30 years.

Enthusiastically sharing his passion for preservation, parks, trails and open space, Juel served as a board member with the Trails and Open Space Coalition, the El Paso County Parks Advisory Board and Colorado Springs Parks & Recreation. He worked in association with the Bureau of Land Management, the US Forest Service and the counties of El Paso, Teller, Park and Chaffee.

Over the years, Juel volunteered tirelessly to complete projects involving Black Forest Regional Park, Fox Run Regional Park, Bear Creek Park & Nature Center, Fountain Creek Nature Center, Section 16 Open Spaces, Paint Mines Park, Red Rocks Park, Ring Around the Peak Trail and Chaffee County Midland Trail. As Government Affairs VP of BFTA, he was instrumental in gaining miles of trails for public use through new subdivisions in Black Forest.

Deacon Matt Kaspar from the Kjeldsens' church, St. Patrick's in Colorado Springs, led the October 15, 2016 bench dedication ceremony, well attended by Juel's family, friends and fellow trails advocates.



Wells-Didleau Trail Open For Business!

By Larry Fariss

Part of the Black Forest Trail Association's stated mission is to link Black Forest neighborhoods with a series of trails across private and public properties. This creates important links that provide access to our vast network of unimproved roads suitable for non-motorized hiking, biking and riding. Currently, BFTA sponsors about 10 such trails, a few of which were damaged in the 2013 fire. Repairing these trails takes time, manpower and resources that are in short supply for BFTA. Fortunately BFTA has found a partner in the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) that helps us overcome the challenge! Achieving BSA's top rank of



Eagle Scout requires the young man to complete a project that benefits the community, and our damaged trails fit the bill. The McDermott Trail was repaired in this manner in 2013. Now, BFTA and Boy Scout Ryan Trcka, are proud to announce the re-opening of the Wells-Didleau Trail connecting Meadow Glen Lane and Forest Heights Circle! The photo on the left shows what the trail looks like now.

This important connector trail crosses the western boundary of John and Phylis Didleau's five acre parcel just SE of the Swan/Herring intersection. The trail was originally built on land owned by the family of Phil Wells. After the fire, he sold the five acre parcel containing most of the trail, to the Didleau's who had lost their nearby home in the disaster. The path continued to receive use as a social trail the past few years while John and Phylis built their new home. BFTA approached them about re-opening the route across their property as an eco-friendly, emergency egress, non-motorized recreational trail and they eagerly accepted the proposal. Here is what that means:

- **Eco Friendly:** Volunteers, using minimal equipment, create a 250 yard trail that uses 75 burnt logs, bucked into 12 foot sections, to line the trail on both sides. This keeps trail users on the right of way and is a great way to productively use and return the biomass to the land!
- **Emergency Egress:** During the fire, many folks in this neighborhood were nearly trapped because Meadow Glen and Forest Heights, like many roads in the forest, are dead end thoroughfares with only one way out. To remedy this, although the trail is normally limited to non-motorized traffic only, it was built to a width of ten feet, to allow residents on either road to have an emergency egress route for them and their vehicles if their primary exit is ever blocked liked it was in June of 2013.
- **Recreational:** By linking the ends of Meadow Glen and Forest Heights Roads, the trail creates a 2.5 mile circular route that traverses the McDermott Trail, unimproved roads, and Swan Road, allowing hikers, cyclists and riders to get out and enjoy the great outdoors!

So with a plan in mind, BFTA approached the BSA to see if any Scouts wanted to take the project on—enter Ryan Trcka! This outstanding young man orchestrated volunteers from his troop, heavy equipment from Ludwig Drilling, and chain saw wielding adults that in a single day completed the project.

Update on The Pineries Open Space

By Larry Fariss

With the full support of the Black Forest Trails Association, an El Paso County Park Master Plan was completed for the Pineries Open Space (POS) property in 2010; however, public access development on the property was delayed by the 2013 fire. BFTA is excited to report that over the winter and early spring of 2016, Rocky Mountain Field Institute (RMFI) partnered with El Paso County Park Operations staff to begin preparation of a tier-one multi-use trail corridor featured in the Master Plan. When completed, hopefully in 2017/18, the trail corridor will connect two nearby regional trails, the Black Forest Section 16 Trail, to the southwest, with the Woodlake Trail, to the northeast of the property. The following are excerpts from the Pineries Open Space Tier One Trail Corridor Clearance Final Project Report dated November 3, 2016 as prepared by Andy Riter, RMFI Program Coordinator.

Summary: In early December 2015, representatives from RMFI and El Paso County parks staff visited the southwest portion of the property to confirm survey markings delineating trail routing through an easement crossing private land. Representatives also discussed the general alignment and corridor clearance requirements for the remainder of the trail, estimated at approximately 3.7 miles in length, and running along and inside the west and north boundaries of the property. RMFI's role in trail corridor preparation first involved marking an exact intended alignment of the future tier 1 trail, using an access easement and a proposed general depiction of the course of the trail. Upon approval of the alignment marking, RMFI began corridor clearance by removing trees and shrubbery for a total width of 12 feet, centered on the trail alignment, and for a minimum height of 10 feet to accommodate equestrian users. Additionally, hazard trees, defined as dead trees of 6 inches or greater diameter, and within 60 linear feet of the center of the trail, were also removed. Before clearing began, the County and RMFI decided to modify earlier Black Forest Fire hazard tree criteria to protect trees that still had live, green needles (no matter how small the percentage) in the crown. The cut branches and small-diameter remains of the felled trees (slash) were scattered on the property so as not to pose a significant impediment to wildlife, and to disperse ground fuels. Where practical, tree trunks were bucked at 10 foot lengths and stacked for later use by the Parks Division staff.

Specific Task Results:

Task 1: This task covered trail corridor preparation beginning in the southwest corner of the property, connecting with Black Forest Section 16 Trail at the intersection of Shoup and Vollmer Roads, and proceeding north, for approximately 4,300 feet to the future "Main Trailhead" located at the old ranch headquarters. Approximately 3,200 feet of this task were through a narrow public-access easement on private land. The majority of this length was through severely-burned area; however, a large number of dead trees bordering the trail easement had already been removed by the private land developer. RMFI staff marked alignment and felled and disposed of 44 standing dead trees along approximately 3,900 feet of alignment from the intersection of Shoup and Vollmer Roads north to the trail crossing of the current main drive to the ranch/main trailhead off of Vollmer Road. This end point is approximately 800 feet short of the parking and main trailhead; the remaining trail segment awaits final alignment determination by the Community Services Department to tie-in with future development of the main trailhead and parking area.

Task 2: This task included trail corridor preparation running northeast from the future Main Trailhead and along an existing ranch road, and then running due north along the property's western boundary to

the vicinity of a WPA or CCC-built dike and pond in the property's northwest corner. The alignment running along the existing ranch road required no clearance work; however, the north-running segment of approximately 5,200 feet transited frequent patches of moderate and severe-intensity burn areas of thick ponderosa forest, where intensive hazard tree removal was required. Certain segments of primary alignment were marked to route through green (unburned) trees, to pass on the edge of a meadow, and to avoid passing through additional large patches of severely-burned standing (hazard) trees. RMFI felled and disposed of approximately 393 trees, almost all of these hazard trees.

Task 3: This task required the removal of hazard trees within 60 feet of private fencing or private property along a 2,300 foot stretch bordering the adjacent Blue Spruce Lane neighborhood. RMFI staff designated and felled approximately 217 hazard trees from within 60 feet of private residential property and fencing along the Blue Spruce Lane neighborhood. Slash from the processed trees was dispersed on the POS property and remaining logs were stacked for future use by County staff.

Total Project Work Statistics:

- 30.5 total workdays (including 7 volunteer workdays).
- 1,405 total on-the-ground hours.
 - 789 volunteer hours (volunteer labor valued at \$20,482 at \$25.96/hour per independentsector.org).
 - 616 RMFI field staff hours.
- 148 community volunteers engaged.
- Approximately 9,900 linear feet of trail alignment marked (8,400 primary and 1,500 alternate).
- Approximately 9,900 linear feet of trail corridor cleared and approximately 438 hazard trees removed and processed.
- Cleared approximately 2,300 linear feet (or 3.2 acres in area) of safety corridor with 217 hazard trees removed and processed from hazarding Blue Spruce Lane neighboring property

Watch for BFTA announcements in 2017 for volunteer opportunities that will help get this fantastic addition to our Black Forest up and running!

We've published the entire RMFI report entitled "*Pineries Open Space, Tier One Trail Corridor Clearance Final Project Report*", including maps, on our website at:

<http://www.blackforesttrails.org/pineries>

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BFTA Membership

By Andy Meng

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. The Black Forest Trails Association is a non-profit organization under IRS Code Section 501(c)(3). Donations are fully deductible to the extent permitted by tax law.

There are 4 tiers of BFTA membership (Dues are tax deductible):

- 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, and if you become a member now, your membership will be good through March 31, 2018. 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>