RISTWATCH

RCVFD Quarterly Newsletter P. O. Box 2, Bellvue, CO 80512 Issue No. 110 April 2024

Letter from the President

Heavy Snowstorm Preparations

By the time you see this newsletter, the heavy snowstorm from March of this year will be a memory. All of us know that living in the mountains means a certain amount of taking responsibility for our own safety. But we also know that there are times when we need the help of others. In my neighborhood there was an inspiring number of neighbors helping neighbors with access issues during and after the storm.

Fortunately, our department did not receive any calls for help during the height of the storm when getting help would have been the most difficult. I asked Chief Neuroth about the department's capabilities during a snowstorm. First, a lot of our responders keep snowshoes handy so they can hike over deep snow.

One of our firefighters has rigged a snowmobile with a sled that can be pulled behind. I have seen these types of rigs used on ski areas to move a patient. Finally, Larimer County Emergency Services has a few trailer-mounted, tracked snow cat vehicles that can be called up for use in an emergency.

While these contingencies and preparations should provide some peace of mind to everyone, remember that none of these come free. Our department is completely donation funded, so please remember the thought and preparation that has gone into keeping you safe when you donate to keep our department funded.

Neil Faber
President - 2024

Chief's Report

What do Volunteers Do?

I would like to take this opportunity to inform our residents what our volunteers do and to give kudos to those that serve. Our firefighters often train twice a month for several hours each session. They maintain their equipment and often buy additional gear at their own expense. They respond to emergencies day or night and often in bad weather. Our EMTs (emergency medical technicians) take online courses for CE (continuing education) to keep up their certifications.

Our Board of Directors spend a lot of time in addition to the monthly meetings. They maintain our financial stability, keep the books, and make sure we have the best, up-to-date equipment we could possibly have. Our grants committee has put in many hours applying for funding. Due to their hard work, we recently received 12 new SCBA (self-contained breathing apparatus) units, an ECG (electrocardiogram) monitor, 4 AEDs (automated external defibrillators), and new bunker gear for our new firefighters.

The Mountain Festival volunteers are a whole other article. Last year's festival was a big success. Well over 100 volunteers and hundreds of hours were invested to make this happen.

Area reps attend the monthly Board of Directors meetings and keep us informed on conditions in various parts of our district. We have partnered with Larimer County Sheriff's office to provide residents with a property and wildfire mitigation assessment. There will be more information on that coming soon. This will also be administered by volunteers.

All these people working together have made RCVFD a great department and a wonderful community to belong to.

Thank you to all who put in time and money to make this endeavor successful.

Gratefully submitted,
Mark Neuroth, Chief
Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department
P.O. Box 2, Bellvue, CO 80512
chief@rcvfd.org

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 (7-9 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.

Submissions to The Ristwatch

The Ristwatch reserves the right to edit, refuse, reject, or cancel any article or ad at any time. We base this decision on our responsibility to our readers. We will not knowingly print any article or ad that is misleading or untruthful. Articles submitted to the Ristwatch are a representation of the author and not necessarily an endorsement by the RCVFD.

Submissions of written work or photographs are welcome and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Please send submissions to the Ristwatch Editor at ristwatch@rcvfd.org.

Letter From the Vice President

March 2024 Snow

The snow on my deck at 2am on Thursday, 3/14/2024. In the picture below (left) is my picnic table under 3+ feet of snow. The table chairs are barely visible. My wife Janet made a snowman at the end of our driveway at 3pm on Monday, 3/18/2024, to celebrate that we had finally plowed out.

Picnic Table Buried Under Snow
photo credit: H.J. Siegel

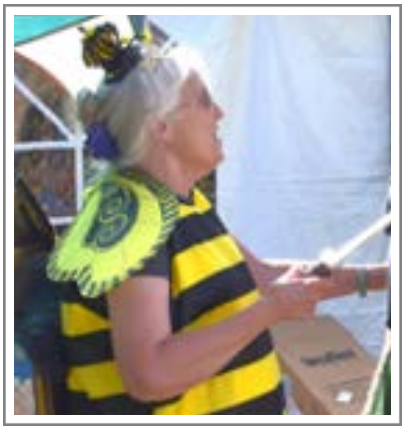
Do Not be Silent about Helping

At the RCVFD Mountain Festival Silent Auction, hundreds of items donated from stores and community members are sold at bargain prices to raise money for the RCVFD. Help is needed to solicit items (it is easy), maintain the Silent Auction webpage, prepare bid sheets, etc. Please contact the Co-Chairs Janet (equuphile@gmail.com) or Pam (tahoemeow6670@gmail.com).

Silent Auction
photo credit: H.J. Siegel

Want to be Royalty?

After chairing the RCVFD Mountain Festival book tent for many, many years, the Queen of the Book Bees (Carolyn) is retiring as chair. If you want to consider coordinating an existing group of great Book Bees, please contact Carolyn (cloud9sewing@gmail.com).



Queen of the Book Bees
photo credit: H.J. Siegel

Wanted: RCVFD Mountain Festival T-Shirt Chair

Come join the RCVFD Mountain Festival team as T-Shirt Chair. Mentoring from the current T-Shirt Co-Chairs is available (they are shifting to other Festival positions). The position involves working with our graphic designer to create, order, and sell commemorative shirts for the Rist Canyon Mountain Festival. Please contact the current T-Shirt Co-Chairs: Shannon Phelps (shannonp13@hotmail.com) and Molly McLean (mollybea37@hotmail.com) for more information.

H. J. Siegel
RCVFD Board Vice President
Mountain Festival Coordinator
HJ@computer.org

Save the Date!

A full day's lineup of entertainment and activities for the entire family in a beautiful mountain setting is a not-to-be missed event. Mark your calendars for the annual Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department Mountain Festival. All proceeds benefit the volunteer-based, donation-funded Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department (RCVFD).

"The Mountain Festival provides us the opportunity to welcome visitors and community members for a day of fun and entertainment for the entire family," says RCVFD Chief Mark Neuroth. "Equally important is that it allows us to show our appreciation for the hard work and dedication of our all-volunteer firefighters that respond to all types of emergencies."

Come rain or shine, the festival is the perfect way to kick off the fall season. Festival favorites include a gigantic used book sale, silent auction, bake sale, plant sale, firefighter dunk tank, craft and art vendors, food trucks, large covered seating area, and the 2024 RCVFD commemorative t-shirt booth. Admission, parking, tractor-pulled hayride shuttle to/from the parking area (handicapped parking available), live musical entertainment, large kid's activity area, farm animals, educational booths and demonstrations, and ice cream all are free of charge.

"The Mountain Festival is a unique opportunity for the entire family to enjoy a day in our beautiful mountain setting," adds Chief Neuroth. "We look forward to your joining us showing your support for our firefighters in their biggest fund-raiser of the year."

LIVE MUSIC · HUGE BOOK TENT · CRAFT VENDORS · FOOD TRUCKS

SILENT AUCTION • BAKE SALE
PLANT SALE • KIDS ACTIVITIES

MEET OUR FIREFIGHTERS • WATCH DEMONSTRATIONS

RIST CANYON MOUNTAIN FESTIVAL

SATURDAY, SEPT. 7, 2024
10 A.M. – 4 P.M.

RAIN OR SHINE!

We hope you will mark your calendars and plan to bring the entire family to enjoy the festival. The festival location is 14 miles from downtown Fort Collins and 27 miles from Loveland.

Across from Fire Station 1 at
11835 Rist Canyon Rd.
Bellvue, CO 80512.

For more information visit ***www.festival.RCVFD.org*** or follow us on ***Facebook.com/RCMountainFest.***

Preparations are already underway. Find out how to participate as a vendor (profit or non-profit participant), volunteer, sponsor, or to donate items to the silent auction by contacting the Festival Coordinator, H.J. Siegel at ***HJ@computer.org.***

AND AS ALWAYS

FREE ADMISSION · FREE ICE CREAM

RIST CANYON FIRE RESCUE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPT.

The RCVFD serves a more than **110 square mile area** that includes Rist Canyon, Stove Prairie, and the Buckhorn, as well as providing mutual aid to an **additional 50 square miles.** The approximately **35 volunteer firefighters** provide emergency response to life and property from fires, natural disasters, medical emergencies, motor vehicle and cyclist accidents, and all other rescue/emergency situations.

Our emergency responders want to remind everyone to be **Fire Wise,** keep an eye on the skies for potential dangers, and drive aware watching for wildlife, cyclists, and increased traffic throughout the year. Always stay informed and know the rules of the high country making time in the area safe and enjoyable is a paramount priority.

TIPS AND INFORMATION ARE AVAILABLE AT WWW.RCVFD.ORG.

Book Tent News

We Book Bees have had several mornings of sorting and will continue to sort until we run out of books. The community has been generous, and we have had several donors from outside our area. As always, the Old Firehouse Book Store is a constant donor.

Donation boxes are located at Station 1 and at the Pleasant Valley Church near the Bellvue Post Office.

After chairing the book tent for the last 5 years, I am stepping down as chair. I plan to continue to help with the festival in any way I can and will be available to help the new chairperson. I have given the Mountain Festival Coordinator a guideline to help the next chair.

If you are interested in working with a great group of people, please let us know.

Carolyn Stanley

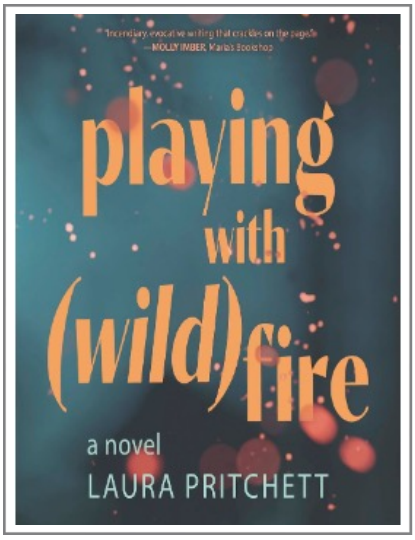
Bake Sale Tent News

Please Donate Baked Goods for the Mountain Festival

THANK YOU to all the fantastic community bakers that donated baked goods for the Bake Tent last year! It was a great success, producing the highest profits in Bake Tent history! We had the perfect combination of pies, cookies, dessert items, and breakfast goodies. Pies are our very popular big-ticket item. However, last year the lower cost, small packages with a few cookies, brownies, or dessert bars were also in high demand. People were munching on them as they walked around at the festival. I hope you'll plan to contribute goodies again this year. Donating baked goods is a terrific way to get the entire family involved in supporting our firefighters and EMS. This year we will need a few volunteers to work at the Bake Tent on the day of the festival, so please consider getting involved in that way. Thank you for supporting our incredible RCVFD that keeps us safe. If you have any suggestions or questions, please feel free to contact me anytime.

Patti Clutter
Bake Sale Chair
858-248-6328
clutterp28@gmail.com

Playing With (Wild) Fire



Book Cover
Playing With (Wild) Fire

Local author Laura Pritchett read from her latest novel, *Playing With (Wild) Fire*, at the Old Town Library as part of the Fort Collins Book Fest in February. Inspired by events of the Cameron Peak Fire in 2020, the book is a set of linked stories told from the points of view of the people, animals, and even trees of the region as they cope with and struggle to understand the disaster.

Pritchett lives in Bellvue and is the author of five previous novels and two works of nonfiction. Born in Fort Collins and raised in LaPorte, she went to Cache La Poudre (CLP) schools and has been an active part of the community for years. She teaches and speaks at events around the country and also is Director of the MFA (Master of Fine Arts) program in Nature Writing at Western Colorado University. "I left for a few years to travel and earn my PhD," she said, "but I have always considered this area my soul-home."

Author, Laura Pritchett, reading from her book
photo credit: Diane McCarthy

During the 2020 and 2012 fires, she watched evacuees come out of Rist Canyon from her living room window. "It was a terrible and traumatic time for so many," she said. "And yet, we also saw the best of humanity. People offering to help in big ways and small. Lemonade stands and taking care of strangers' animals. Real compassion and care and gratitude for firefighters. I can't tell you how many people I saw crying out of relief and thanks – including myself!"

This is not her only book to contain wildfires – indeed, two of her other novels contain fire, and four are set in this region. Her biggest take-home from the new book, she says, is to reinforce the idea of community. "Sure, we have different ideologies and politics and old feuds," she said. "But when crisis hits, I'd like to believe we can set that all aside. We can be there for one another in the ways that matter most –

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Notes from Your Area Representatives

Our March snows have made the roads incredibly icy and snow packed. Always keep in mind which direction you are going to look ahead if going up or down a hill. ***Up Hill*** always has the right of way in Colorado. There are a few areas that reverse this. Be sure to contact your Road Association.

Blue birds have already been spotted gracing our bird boxes. Hummingbirds will soon be cheering on spring. Remember to only use real sugar, no honey, raw, or fake sugars. Their systems cannot digest anything other than the regular sugar we buy. Also, be sure to clean your bird feeders often. About every other week is fine. However, for hummingbird feeders it should be every 3 to 4 days. Never use bleach. If you don't get the feeders rinsed out well enough, it could poison them. Vinegar with water is best, and be sure to rinse them very well with hot water. Don't forget to check out our great nurseries in town for plants that our birds can get their own food from. There are so many. Check out poppy, bee balm, flox, and echinacea. Now enjoy the spring and summer birds.

Louise Creager
Stratton Park Area Representative

photo credit: Louise Creager

photo credit: Louise Creager

Notes from Your Area Representatives

By the time you receive this Ristwatch, the March snow storm will be a memory, and we will hopefully soon be seeing the spring flowers from all this moisture. The birds are taking advantage of my feeders. Along with our regular birds, we have several magpies hopping about our yard.

Signs for your home and Chimfex sticks are still free. I have some Chimfex sticks at my home if you are interested in one.

Louise Creager has brought up this point, and I thought it was worth mentioning again. We came home from a party to a beeping in the house. The fire alarm was making it known it needed batteries. When we tried a new battery, it did not take care of the problem. We ended up replacing 2 alarms.

If you have any concerns about the fire department or their response to our area, please let me know. Our area reps are here to help in any way we can.

Carolyn Stanley
Davis Ranch Area Representative

From Your RCVFD

Free

Address Signs

Address signs help your fire fighters find you FASTER when you call. To order, call Louise at 970/217-6843.

Chimfex

Be prepared for a chimney fire. Ignite and place into a closed firebox to extinguish a chimney fire in just a few seconds.

Email officers@rcvfd.org or your Area Representative to order.

With lots of snow the roads seem to be in good shape. Packed snow and ice are still present so use caution when traveling the Upper Buckhorn.

Pretty soon we will see signs of spring moving in. Watch for the creek to start breaking up and open water becomes available for forest animals. We've had a lot of turkeys around this year. Hope to see you all around this spring!

Erica Michel
Upper Buckhorn Area Representative

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Bears. What's the Problem?

Every year in North America, thousands of healthy black bears and more than a hundred grizzly bears lose their lives for being too good at making a living in People country.

Ask almost any bear behavior expert what's the biggest cause of human-bear conflicts, and the answer is always the same: teaching bears to associate humans with food is a recipe for trouble. Almost all conflicts between people and bears can be traced back to people intentionally or unintentionally attracting or providing food sources for bears.

Bears instinctively avoid us. But foraging all day in the wild is a lot of work, and there are no guarantees of turning in for the night with a full stomach. Foraging for five minutes in the garbage is easy, predictable, and productive. Sometimes the lure of a life-sustaining easy meal for very little effort is too powerful to ignore.

Bears are biologically programmed to follow their noses—seven times more powerful than a bloodhound's— to food sources, whether they're around the corner or several miles away.

Nature has equipped bears with the size, strength, and endurance to regularly roam far and wide searching for meals, along with the stomach of an omnivore, so they can eat just about anything. Bears are naturally curious and constantly exploring their environment looking for new things to eat. That can lead them to new natural food sources—or places it isn't safe for bears to be.

Bears are attracted by anything that smells interesting or different or unusual. It doesn't have to be good to eat or even edible. Sometimes there are berries or nuts; or maybe an ant hill, beehive, or rotten log full of insects; or even a yummy decomposing carcass at the end of the olfactory rainbow.

But sometimes a bear follows its nose to an overflowing garbage can, a bird feeder filled with seeds, a mini-orchard of ripening fruit, a flock of chickens roaming through the backyard, a picnic table groaning with food, or a backpack stuffed with energy bars. Getting its paws on such calorie-laden rewards teaches the bear that overcoming its natural wariness of people pays off big time. Now the bear will risk spending a few minutes someplace it doesn't really want to be for the reward of a quick and easy meal.

Sometimes the source of the interesting odor turns out to be something that's not edible even by bear standards, like a hot tub cover, vinyl tarp, container of oil, or a citronella candle. Sometimes that good smell turns out to be coming from something like antifreeze that's downright lethal.

It usually starts with something small. If nothing bad happens, the bear learns it's O.K. to come back for more. The next time it won't be so shy or wary. Soon, it may be going from house to house or

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Bears. What's the Problem? *cont'd from page 10*

or camp to camp looking for handouts. Before you know it the bear has become a "nuisance" and is causing a lot of "problems."

People expect bears to intuitively understand that they're supposed to respect our boundaries and leave our stuff alone. But the only rules bears play by are self-preservation and survival of the fittest.

While most people don't have to worry about where their next meal is coming from, all wild bears live from paw to mouth, with no guarantees where or when they'll find something to eat. So when a bear discovers a seemingly endless supply of high-calorie food, it will come back until the source dries up. It's simple math. A bear foraging out in the woods would have to work all day long to find the same number of calories it can gulp down in minutes in someone's backyard. The less energy bears have to expend finding food, the more fat they can store for their upcoming long winter's fast.

If a hard-working woman struggling against all odds to make a living behaved like a mother bear, we'd greatly admire her. We'd say things like, "No matter how tough life got, she figured out a way to survive, find food for her family, and put a roof over their heads. She worked three jobs, learned new skills, and took some big risks that paid off with big rewards." The family would probably get their own reality TV show and a bunch of lucrative endorsements.

In the real world it's much more likely the bear will learn to rely on people for food and become human food-conditioned. The more relaxed human food-conditioned bears become around us, the better the chances for conflicts between the two-footed and four-footed neighbors. When human-bear conflicts escalate to encounters and confrontations, it's almost always the bear that loses.

Bear information in this issue excerpted from the Living with Bears Handbook by Linda Masterson
For more information or to order, visit livingwithbears.com

Find the The Bear Behavioral Ladder of Progression—
A step-by-step journey from wary beginning to untimely end

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Friends of the Festival

Join the RCVFD Mountain Festival Team! The photo below shows some of the RCVFD Mountain Festival leadership team. The annual Festival raises money to support the operations of the Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department to take care of our shared community. You call 911 and RCVFD shows up to help you and your family. We welcome and encourage community members to join our Festival leadership team, which works all year to prepare the Festival. This year the Festival will be on Saturday, September 7, 2024.

Please contact Festival Coordinator H.J. Siegel for more information: HJ@computer.org. Thank you.

The March 2024 Gathering of some of the "Friends of the Festival" leadership team. Bottom row: Smokey, Carolyn, Sandy, Pam, Debbie, Janet, Debbie, Molly, Shannon. Top row: Brett (behind Smokey), Diane, Bridget, Juana, H.J., Nancy, Trisha, Patti, James.

The Bear Behavioral Ladder of Progression— A step-by-step journey from wary beginning to untimely end

cont'd from page 11

Smell something interesting. Follow nose to people place. Food smells good, but people might be dangerous.

Wait until dark to explore. Gobble up birdseed on ground. Knock down feeder, eat lots more. Run back to the woods.

Come back a few nights later. Feeder is full again! Chow down. Follow nose onto deck. Jackpot! Find garbage by back door. Open, scatter and eat. Score a day's worth of calories. Plan to return often to this new food bonanza. Amble back to the woods.

Come back a few nights later. Feeder is full again! Chow down. Explore the neighborhood. Get much fatter much faster than you could foraging in the woods.

Start coming during the day since food supply seems endless and humans appear to be harmless. Find open garage, knock over refrigerator. Eat pizza and ice cream. Score a week's worth of calories.

Do enough damage to get reported. Make the news. Start approaching people, looking for food. Get trapped, ear-tagged and hauled away.

Find your way back. Yummy treats still there! Pick up where you left off. Scare someone putting out the trash. Get labeled a threat to human safety. Get killed way before your time.

Make room for another bear that smells something interesting.

Notes from Your Area Representatives, *cont'd from page 9*

Howdy from the Lower Buckhorn Rep. Very little news has happened in the lower Buckhorn Canyon area in the new year. It has generally been very quiet and exceptionally dry until we received a two foot snow fall earlier in March. It was a very wet and heavy snow. I attempted to plow it about halfway through this storm with my four-wheeler and plow but hardly made a dent in it. I even had to walk back to my garage to get a shovel to dig myself out because I got stuck at the end of the driveway next to CR 27. The County plows had already been through the road and piled the snow too high to break through it. Eventually I was able to borrow a tractor from a neighbor to clear our driveway. We have ~200 yards of driveway.

As I write, we have just received our second snow this month, but it's only about four inches deep. Fortunately, the snows have melted at a slow enough pace that there has been no flooding of the creek so far.

Best wishes to all in our area of the Buckhorn.

Dean Yoder
Lower Buckhorn Area Representative

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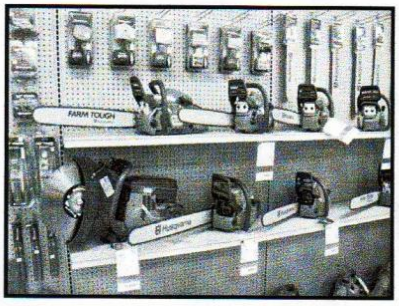

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221-5300
Check out our website at: www:pvcoop.com

Rist Canyon and Stove Prairie Noxious Weed Invasion

A two-front hostile invasion is displacing valuable wildlife habitat and degrading the landscape in our area. The aggressors are moving through Rist Canyon, Stove Prairie, and the surrounding areas at an alarming rate.

The aggressors are state-identified "noxious weeds." Two quick moving, now highly visible species top the list in our area: Leafy Spurge (pictured at top right) and Dalmation Toadflax (pictured at lower left).

In the spring, summer and fall, the hills along Rist Canyon are covered with a neon yellow-flowering plant known as Leafy Spurge. Meanwhile, the hills between Masonville and Stove Prairie have rapidly expanding areas of yellow glow from the highly aggressive Dalmation Toadflax blossoms.

Leafy Spurge | **photo credit: Karen Salaz**

Dalmation Toadflax | **photo credit: Karen Salaz**

Larimer County follows the guidelines of the Colorado Noxious Weed Act, which defines "noxious weeds" as plants that are exotic and invasive. Exotic in this context means non-native, or weed species that originated in other parts of the world. Most weed species considered noxious in Colorado originated in regions of Europe and Asia with a climate similar to the Rocky Mountains.[1]

Invasive plants are defined as those which are vigorous and competitive enough to crowd out desirable plants (including grasses) and, in doing so, decrease native plant diversity and wildlife habitat. The increased vigor and competitive ability of a non-native plant is the result of being introduced into an area with different grazing animals, dissimilar predatory insects and diseases, and without the limiting factors that kept it in check in its native land.[1]

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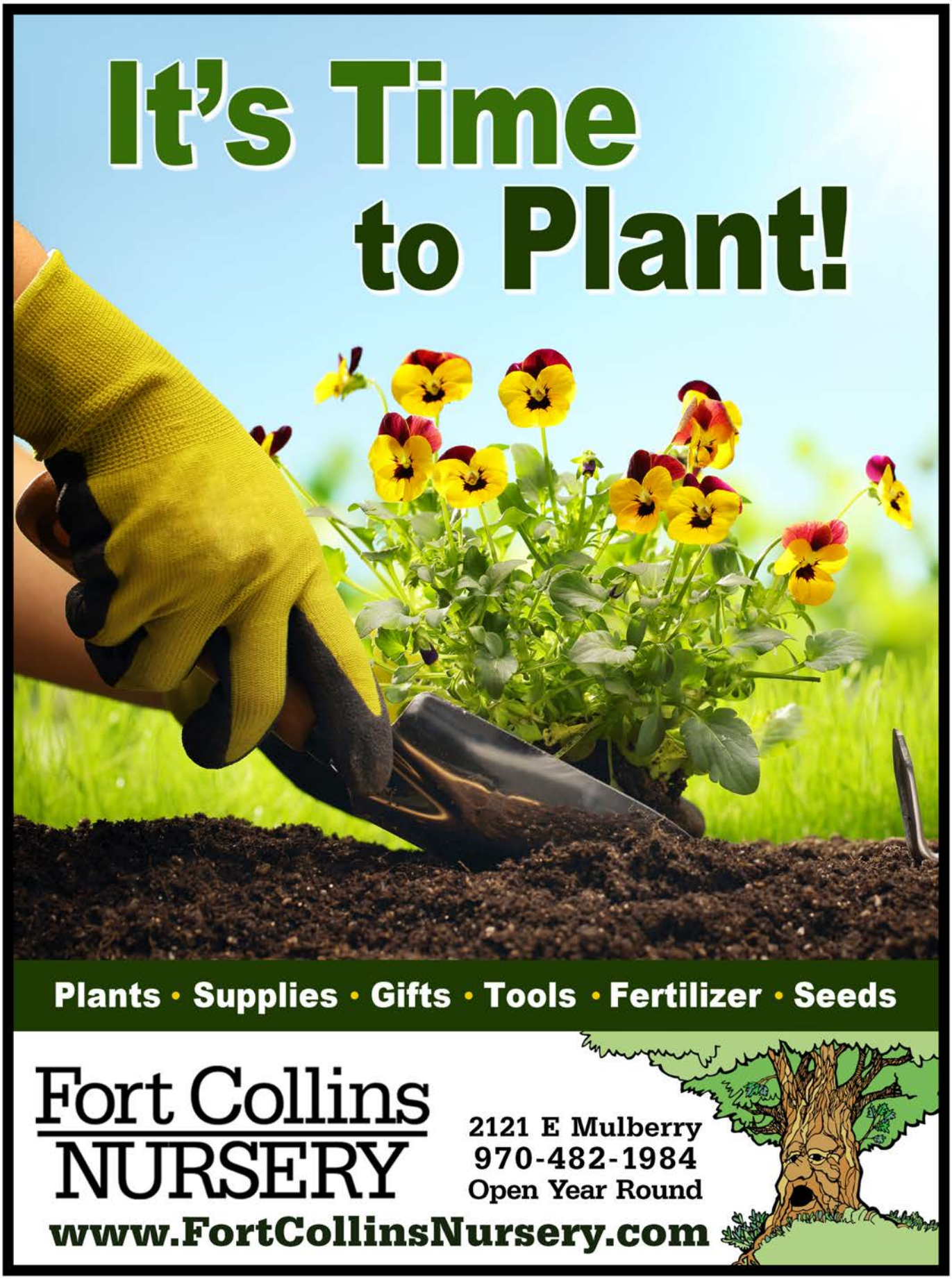
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Noxious Weed Invasion, *cont'd from page 14*

Dalmation Toadflax Closeup
photo credit: Karen Salaz

The Colorado Noxious Weed Act lists weed species considered to be a threat to the economy and environment. The Larimer County Noxious Weed Management Plan requires eradication of all List A species and eradication or suppression of List B species depending on abundance within the county.

List A species are not well established in Colorado; yet, they potentially pose a problem to the state, and require mandatory eradication. In Colorado, List A species are designated by the Ag Commissioner. Currently, none are present in the RCVFD coverage area. Orange hawk weed is growing south of our area.

List B species are common enough in Colorado that eradication is not feasible. Depending on their regional distribution, these species may be recommended for eradication, suppression, or containment. For List B species, the Ag Commission — in consultation with the state noxious weed advisory committee, local governments, and other interested parties — develops and implements state noxious weed management plans designed to stop their continued expansion. List B species prolific in our area include: Bull Thistle, Canada Thistle, Dalmation Toadflax, Dame's Rocket, Hoary Cress, Houndstongue, Leafy Spurge, Musk Thistle, Scotch Thistle, and Yellow and hybrid Toadflax (populations are in the south end of our area).

List C species are widespread and well established. These plants are invasive, but currently no management action is mandated by the state for these species. List C species in our area include: Common Mullein, Cheatgrass, Field Bindweed, and Johnsongrass.

Watch List Species are those that pose a potential threat to the agricultural productivity and environment values and serve advisory and educational purposes only. [1]

The Larimer County Weed District does not service the entire RCVFD coverage area; however, they provide advice and assistance to all areas of the county. They are located at 2649 E. Mulberry St., Suite 6 in Fort Collins. Free literature can be found at www.larimer.org/weeds . The office can educate landowners on tools to address various noxious weed issues. Hours of operation are from 8 a.m.-4 p.m., Monday-Friday (except holidays), DNR_WeedDistrict@larimer.org, please call ahead. The CDA also has an illustrated online reference resource at Noxious Weed Species ID | Department of Agriculture (https://ag.colorado.gov/conservation/noxious-weeds/species-id#a).

Compiled by Karen Salaz in consultation with the Larimer County Weed District Weed Specialist Casey Cisneros.

[1] Larimer County Weed District | Larimer County
and Noxious Weed Species ID | Department of Agriculture (colorado.gov)

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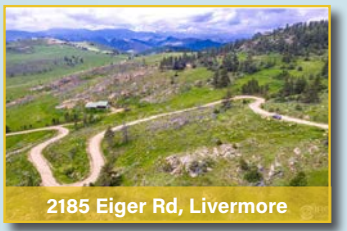

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— which involves kindness and understanding." At her talks, Laura reminds people of the importance of donations and support for local volunteer firefighting groups.

The Chief of the Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department, Mark Neuroth, also spoke at the event and shared a slideshow of photos taken during the Cameron Peak and other fires to which he has responded over the years.

RCVFD Chief Mark Neuroth speaks at the Old Town Library
photo credit: Carol Miller

Chief Neuroth and Laura Pritchett are neighbors, and she shared many early chapters with him to get feedback about perspectives of firefighters on the front lines.

Neuroth told the audience that many of the stories in *Playing With (Wild) Fire* really hit home, and he was proud to be involved in the writing process. He also reminded the audience that Rist Canyon and so many other fire departments in wildfire-threatened regions do not receive tax dollars, relying on donations and fundraisers and grants to do their important work.

He expressed his pride in the RCVFD and the hard work its members put in to keep their training current.

We owe all of our volunteers and firefighters and EMTs a big thank you.

Diane McCarthy

Two Easy Ways to Help the RCVFD

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

It's easy—just post this link:
http://coloradogives.org/RistCanyonVolunteerFireDepartment
to Facebook and ask them to donate! Your fire department thanks you!

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