



RISTWATCH

RCVFD Quarterly Newsletter P. O. Box 2, Bellvue, CO 80512 Issue No. 119 July 2026

Letter from the President

A Call To Action.

Mark Twain famously said, "Everybody talks about the weather, but nobody does anything about it." But I am here to challenge that notion. At least a small part of it.

Colorado is suffering from a historic drought. NOAA says that a mere 2.4% of the state is rated "Abnormally Dry". That leaves 97.6% of the state in moderate, severe, extreme or exceptional drought. I had no idea there were so many classes of drought.

While none of us can do anything directly about the weather, we can all take steps to minimize the impact of the drought with regards to our properties. This would be an excellent time to make sure that your defensible space is still adequate. Move wood piles away from your house. Clean dead needles, leaves and pinecones from gutters, on and under decks, or anywhere else near structures. Mow the grass near your structures and keep it short. Remove trees near your house. It would

be a good year to put hardscape adjacent to your house. RCVFD offers mitigation advice to anyone who asks.

If we all do this, then in case of a wildfire, our firefighters will be able to concentrate more on fighting the wildfire and less on structure fires.

RCVFD is finishing up our Community Wildfire Protection Plan, soon to move from its draft form to its final form. We have a committee working on this in coordination with county, state and federal officials.

Please take this opportunity to help our firefighters and ourselves by making our properties as fire safe as they can be.

Neil Faber
President - 2026

Rist Canyon Mountain Festival

RAIN
OR SHINE!



SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2026 10AM TO 4PM
11835 RIST CANYON ROAD, BELLVUE



LIZ BARNEZ



ALSO KNOWN AS



GORDON CREEK BAND



WENDY WOO

LIVE MUSIC

PLANT SALE

KIDS ACTIVITIES

RCVFD MERCH

BAKE SALE

ARTISAN VENDORS

CAR SHOW

SILENT AUCTION

FOOD TRUCKS

FREE ICE CREAM

BOOK SALE



BENEFITING THE RIST CANYON
VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT



 RIST CANYON MOUNTAIN FESTIVAL
[HTTPS://FESTIVAL.RCVFD.ORG](https://festival.rcvfd.org)



Letter from the Vice President

Here are some photos of some of the activities at last year's RCVFD Mountain Festival. In 2025, the Festival was enjoyed by about 3,500 attendees and raised about \$30,000 profit to help RCVFD serve you!

This year's Annual RCVFD Mountain Festival is on Saturday, September 12, 2026, from 10am to 4pm. It will be in the field opposite RCVFD Station 1, rain or shine. For more information, please see festival.rcvfd.org. **Come have fun and support RCVFD!**

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



Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department 2026 Mountain Festival

Saturday, Sept. 12, 2025, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
11835 Rist Canyon Rd., Bellvue, CO 80512

BELLVUE, CO – The 2026 Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department (RCVFD) Mountain Festival will feature a full day's lineup of live music and activities for the entire family. The festival generates funds critical in the department's ability to provide services throughout the year. All proceeds benefit the department, a 501(c)3 entity. Mark your calendars for the annual RCVFD Mountain Festival, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday, Sept. 12, 11835 Rist Canyon Road, Bellvue, CO.



This year's musical entertainment will be Liz Barnez, Wendy Woo, Also Known As (AKA), and the Gordon Creek Band. Come rain or shine, the festival will feature free live music presented on-stage in front of a large covered viewing tent, firefighter demonstrations, kid's activity area, nonprofit booths, car show, tractor shuttle to and from the parking lot, and the ever popular-free ice cream. The festival also features used books, plants, baked goods, and t-shirt sales; a firefighter dunk tank; and food trucks.

The department serves residents and visitors in all types of emergency situations. Department responses are more than 75 percent medical-related in years when no major fires occur. The RCVFD was established in 1975 by volunteers from all walks of life coming together to begin building a fire department. Today there are more than 45 well-trained volunteer firefighters and EMTs serving the 110 square mile response area. The coverage area includes Rist Canyon, Stove Prairie, and the Buckhorn, as well as providing mutual aid for an additional adjoining 50 square miles.

Mark your calendars and plan to bring the entire family to enjoy the fun. The festival location is 14 miles from downtown Fort Collins and 27 miles from Loveland. For more information visit www.festival.RCVFD.org or follow us on Facebook.com/RCMountainFest.

Free use photographs available upon request.

Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department 2026 Mountain Festival

Want FREE ice cream all day?

Do you want to be the super ice cream hero?

Do you want to be the master scooper?

Do you want to make kids and adults smile?

Do you want to assist picking the flavors that over 3,000 people will enjoy at the Festival?

Do you want to ensure that a key feature of the RCVFD fundraising Mountain Festival does not disappear in the future?

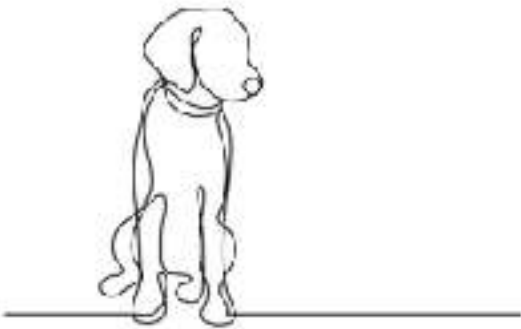


We need a new Ice Cream Chair for the Festival starting in 2027, after this year getting training, guidance, and detailed written instructions from a past Chair. Please help the Festival and consider this. You can bring a friend as a Co-Chair. You can get more information with no obligation --- please contact the Festival Coordinator HJ (HJ@computer.org).

Non-Profit and Educational Booths. We currently have 22 non-profit/educational organizations joining us this year. Booths range from Poudre Wilderness volunteers to various county/state organizations. But we would love more! Are you part of a non-profit or educational organization? We would love for your group to join. Non-profit and educational booths are FREE to 501-C organizations. These booths allow your group to share your information and opportunities with the community. If you are interested in participating or have any questions, please contact me. We are always looking for new additions to the festival.

Kids Activities Area. Join us for family fun in the kids' area of the festival! Some of the FREE activities include: calf roping, games, farm animals and BUBBLES! See you there!

Trisha Johnston | Kids Activities and Non-profit / Education Chair
Tajohnlmt@gmail.com



PETS. We appreciate and thank you for your four legged furry family members to be on a leash at all times, if attending the festival with you.

We will have a couple of dog water bowls around the festival grounds, but please ensure your pet has access to water, and please do not leave them in a vehicle in case the weather becomes too hot.

Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department 2026 Mountain Festival

Plant Sale. The RCVFD Annual Festival Plant Sale needs both plant growers and plant lovers! We rely on donated plants of all sizes for our booth. If you have house or garden plants that are ready to divide, root, or share, please consider propagating a few extras and bringing them to the festival on the morning of the September 12 event. Please bring your donations on the day of the festival as early as possible so that we have an excellent selection for those who are looking for a new plant addition for their home. Healthy starts, cuttings, bulbs, rooted plants, and potted houseplants are all welcome. Every donated plant helps raise funds for RCVFD.

And if you love plants or just want to brighten up your living space, please stop by the plant booth during the festival! You can pick up something beautiful for your home, find a gift for a friend, and support RCVFD at the same time.

Whether you grow them or buy them, plants are a wonderful way to help our community bloom. We thank you in advance for your generosity. We truly appreciate your contributions to making the festival a success.

Dean Yoder and Roger Dev, Festival Plant Sale Co-Chairs

Sponsorships. Do you own or support a business or are an individual that would be interested in becoming a festival sponsor? We ask that you consider becoming a 2026 festival sponsor. We have various levels of corporate and individual sponsorships available starting at \$100 for your consideration. Your support helps ensure the department has the operational resources necessary to provide emergency services throughout the year for visitors and community members. Also, by helping control festival costs, our sponsors help us make the festival a family friendly event with free admission and a full day's line up of live entertainment and activities. All proceeds benefit the RCVFD, a 501(c)3 entity.

This year it's easier to donate as a sponsor at our website festival.rcvfd.org/sponsorship. Click on the "Become A Sponsor" link and complete the Sponsorship Form. You can pay online with a credit card or by requesting an invoice.

All Sponsor's names and logos are prominently displayed on large banners at the entrance of the festival where approximately 3,500 people participate in a day of fun activities. We also recognize our Sponsors in RCVFD festival social media and our community newsletter.

James Clutter | Sponsorship Chair
festivalsponsorships@rcvfd.org

Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department 2026 Mountain Festival

Mountain Festival Music. The entertainment lineup for the 2026 Mountain Festival brings new talent plus some of our favorite returning artists. We are excited to welcome the Gordon Creek band to our lineup and are very grateful to our returning musicians, Liz Barnez, Wendy Woo, and AKA for joining us once again for a lively day of free entertainment. Put on your dancing shoes and come join the fun!

The Gordon Creek Band is a three-piece musical group based out of Livermore and Red Feather Lakes, Colorado. They play an energetic blend of bluegrass, blues, jazz and country music heavily influenced by legends like Muddy Waters, Doc Watson, and Merle Haggard. Their performances feature a mix of original songs and vibrant covers that frequently impress and surprise the audience.

The Liz Barnez band has been a mainstay at the Mountain Festival for many years. Liz brought her eclectic style of guitar playing and songwriting to Colorado Stages in the late 80's and hasn't slowed down since. Her music incorporates elements of Folk, New Orleans Rhythm and Blues, Jazz, Country and hints of Pop. Liz grew up in the French Quarter of New Orleans, Louisiana where she began her musical career playing in Bourbon Street clubs. Her signature "Acoustic Swamp Rock" style mixes Funk with Gospel, Soul, and Dixieland influences.

Wendy Woo and her Band bring rich harmonies with a fusion of original material and nostalgic covers. They have been part of the Colorado music scene for over thirty years. Wendy is a resident of Loveland, Colorado who plays both electric and acoustic guitars. She has recorded more than 100 original songs and is known for her unique "Slap Tap" acoustic guitar work. The band's music spans a variety of genres including folk, blues, funk, rock and pop.

AKA (Also Known As) play an eclectic brand of Americana music they call "City Western." They bring high energy with their six-piece band featuring a wide array of instruments and powerful vocals. Their musical influences range from Bakersfield to Cajun Louisiana and from Nashville Newgrass to Memphis Rock-a-Billy. They have been part of the Northern Colorado music scene since 1996 when they played as Prairie Dog Companion at New West Fest in Fort Collins, CO.

We are grateful to Houska Automotive for their continued support of the festival's musicians.

Sandy Veraney-Reilly | Entertainment Chairperson

Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department 2026 Mountain Festival

Silent Auction. Big tent! Lots of donations! Lots of donors and volunteers, all to support our Fire Department! This year's Silent Auction will be AWESOME! We already have great treasures awaiting your perusal and purchase at the Festival, but we need lots more! We love all of the donations we receive: gift certificates to your favorite stores, gift cards for everything, amazing artwork of all kinds, eclectic, elegant, intriguing, and downright unusual items, fine jewelry and liquor, and so much more!

THANK YOU to all of our generous donors, and also to the resourceful people who find our donors. We would LOVE TO HAVE YOUR HELP! Your donations are always welcome, in fact, many of our best sellers come from our community. If you loved an item but are now willing to part with it, your neighbors will probably love it too. You can find it a new home AND support the Fire Department.

Here's how you can donate: text or call Janet Siegel, Silent Auction chair, at 970 231 7877, or email her at silentauction@rcvfd.org. That's all you need to do! We will be happy to pick up your items, give you tax forms, and display your donations on social media and in the Silent Auction tent during the Festival.

You can also help us by finding new donors. To be part of our continuing success, you can talk to prospective donors wherever you go. Your favorite restaurant, store, service provider, brewery, crafter, or mad inventor might be happy to contribute to the Fire Department.

We would love to have you join our Silent Auction team! The current group of Festival volunteers love what they're doing, and they do it very well. We are always looking for good people to keep the energy going, and new ideas to make things fresh. There are tasks you can do all year (soliciting auction items, organizing, photographing, and publicizing donations, maintaining spreadsheets and social media) and tasks around and during Festival time (store and track donations, transport and set up items, help customers during the Festival, record all sales, organize all items and distribute them to bid winners, and pack up all leftovers). In other words, there is something for everyone to enjoy while helping with this Silent Auction. Here you'll be continuing a 50 year tradition of volunteering to keep our community vital and connected. It's the right thing to do (and it's fun!).

Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department 2026 Mountain Festival

Book Tent. BOOKS, BOOKS, BOOKS! We need your books that you have read. Give us your old read books and come to our festival and get fresh ones to read. We still need more book donations for the festival! Please drop them off anytime at the donation boxes located in front of Fire House Station # 1, located at 11835 Rist Canyon Road, the Pleasant Valley Church of Christ near the Bellvue Post Office, Laporte Hardware Store, and inside Laporte Pizza. We can pick up large donations at your location if needed. Please contact Patti Clutter to arrange a pickup.

The RCVFD Mountain Festival Book Tent will have a huge variety of cheap books to buy. Shop from an assortment of popular fiction, mysteries, westerns, science fiction, fantasy, classics, etc. Our non-fiction includes biographies, history, civil war history, hobbies, cookbooks, travel and many more. Also, kids' books, special collections, coffee table books, vintage books, audio books, DVDs, CDs, vinyl albums, puzzles and games. There's something for everyone! All proceeds from the book sales go 100% to RCVFD.

The Book Tent needs help from many volunteers before, during, and after the festival. If you can volunteer for an hour, or two, or more, please drop by the festival book tent. Here are some ways you can help.

Wednesday, September 9th , 5:00pm: Unload book boxes from trailers to the book tent and carry them to the tables. Lots of strong folks will make this a faster and easier job.

Thursday, September 10th, 9:30am—2:00pm: Move and shuffle book boxes into their final arrangement on the book tent tables. Straighten up books in the boxes and put up signs in the book tent.

Friday, September 11th, 9:30am—2:00pm: Set up cashier tables, book bags, and organize the tent. Put up small tent canopies on the outside of the book tent.

Saturday, September 12th, FESTIVAL DAY 8:00am—4:00pm: Volunteer as a cashier or hand out shopping bags, consolidate book boxes, and enable volunteers to have a break and lunch.

Sunday, September 13th, 9:00am—12:00pm: Put lids on boxes, load them on trailers, and move them up to the firehouse storage unit or onto pallets for removal from the festival grounds. Strong volunteers with trucks and/or trailers are especially needed. Many hands make light work for everyone!

If you have any questions, please contact Patti Clutter, Chair at booksale@rcvfd.org, 858-248-6328), Carolyn Stanley, Co-Chair (cloud9sewing@gmail.com, 970-221-2024), or Kathy Cox, Co-Chair (kathyc228@yahoo.com).

Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department 2026 Mountain Festival

Bake Sale Tent. Hello from the Bake Sale Chair! As coordinator of all things yummy at last year's Festival, I absolutely adored seeing the creative efforts of all those who lovingly baked for us. Our amazing community bakers once again outdid themselves! In fact, we had so many mouthwatering treats for sale that this year, I asked for a little more tent space. With that knowledge, I am asking all of you to **BAKE MORE PIES!** Seasonal fruit and nut pies remain the most popular big-ticket sale items. Smaller items such as cookies, brownies, bars, specialty desserts, breakfast treats, and breads also help profits soar!

Some helpful baking tips:

- As it can get warm at the festival, baked goods that do not require refrigeration are best for the sale. I can attest that decadent buttercream will get soft.
- List high allergen ingredients such as gluten, nuts or dairy.
- Package items in sellable amounts (e.g., 2-4 cookies, ½ dozen cookies, 1 dozen cookies, 4-6 packs of cinnamon rolls).
- A thin layer of plastic wrap covering the pies is sufficient, but pie boxes are also welcomed.

Donations can be delivered starting at 7:30 AM on the day of the festival. It is highly recommended that if you have large quantities to donate, or if walking on rough surfaces is difficult, please drop off no later than 9:30 am so that you can drive up to the bake tent. Upon arrival, notify the gate attendants of your needs, and they will assist you with how to proceed through the identified traffic plan. Keep your eye out for the "Pie Guys" adorned in giant pie costumes closer to the tent. They will direct you where to go. Once the festival has begun, you will need to park and walk to the bake sale tent.

Is baking not quite your thing, but you want to help? Volunteering in the bake tent is a lot of fun! "Sign Up Genius" is out and ready for you to volunteer a few hours of your time. Sign up early to get your preferred time slot.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0A4BA9A823A2FF2-64594606-2026>

Whether you're baking, volunteering, purchasing, or all three, I look forward to enjoying the Festival with all of you!

Any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Darcy Budge | Bake Sale Chair
bakesale@rcvfd.org

Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department 2026 Mountain Festival



Crawlers

Mountain Vehicle Show. If you have a race car or a rock crawler with stories to share, or want to check out the interesting vehicles your neighbors own, come check out the vehicle show at the Festival. Entrants are classified into two divisions: Pavement for classic canyon cruisers, and Dirt for off-road adventure vehicles.

Vehicle registration fee for RCVFD residents is \$25, and \$35 for non-residents. At the festival, you can purchase a ballot with a \$1 or more donation to vote for the Fan Favorite in the Road and Dirt divisions. In addition, the volunteer fire fighters will choose their Fire Fighter Favorites. Winners and prizes will be announced at the end of the festival. 100% of proceeds benefit the RCVFD. Opportunities are also available for dealership or sponsorships.

If you're interested in entering a vehicle, or volunteering to help with advertising for entrants, dealer sponsorships, registrations, or day-of event support, please reach out to:

**Josef Dvorak at
Vehicle_Show@DvorakHome.com or
970-631-4789**



Cruisers

Vendor Booths. We have a full house of vendors attending the festival this year! Stroll up and down several aisles to browse and shop the many new and returning favorite vendors. Enjoy the vibrant mix of artisan jewelry, woodcrafts, metal art, original art, pottery, handmade items, yummys like local honey and bottled coffee to name a few and so much more. Don't miss out on the opportunity to discover local craftsmanship. Cash and credit card sales available.

Join the Rist Canyon Mountain Festival Leadership Team



We always want more people to join our fun and friendly RCVFD Mountain Festival leadership team. The Festival is RCVFD's big fundraising event for the community. Most of the "Friends of the Festival" leaders are in the photo below from our March 29, 2026, Gathering.

Please contact the Festival team coordinator, H.J., to learn about the team, with **no obligation to join!** HJ@computer.org



Side: Shannon Phelps, H.J. Siegel

Top row: Roger Dev, Neil Faber, James Clutter, Diane McCarthy, Sarah Rowan

Middle row: Bridget Tisthammer, Lauren Lee, Sandy Deraney-Reilly, Karen Salaz, Pam Thomas, Patti Clutter, Janet Siegel, Lucy Corro.

RCVFD 50-Year History Now Available Online

The Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department's 50th anniversary (June 2, 1975-June 2, 2026) has come to a close. Throughout the last 12 months we have been documenting its growth here in the Ristwatch. The compiled history, along with additional information and photos, is now available at <https://rcvfd.org/50th>.

We would like to again extend a very special Thank You to Bob Gann, Carol Dollard, Richard Lund, Wes Rutt, and other community members for their invaluable help in compiling the history.

Here's to the next 50 years!



1975 ground breaking ceremony

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. 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](https://rcvfd.org).

Fire Danger Guidelines

(Excerpts from Retired RCVFD Chief Bob Gann's July 2006 Ristwatch report)

Driving into the Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department's service area signs and colored flags indicate the current fire danger. The question is, do you really know what each of the flag colors signifies?

In 1974, the US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and state forestry organizations established a standard adjective description for five levels of fire danger for use in fire prevention signage.[i]

Although the levels have been tweaked, the five levels have remained largely consistent since the program's inception. Fire danger is calculated based on temperature, fuel moistures, potential for fires, energy stored in the fuel, etc. This tends to change relatively slowly and is highly dependent on the fuel moisture. So, usually you will see a trend that changes over a number of days.

However, there is one other type of "Fire Danger" rating that tends to come and go quickly. That is the "Red Flag" warning. Red Flag warnings are issued by the National Weather Service based upon specific weather events combined with certain weather and increase the fire danger/potential dramatically for the duration of that weather event. Typically, Red Flags are shorter lived because the weather that causes them changes. Red Flag warnings are due to low humidity, high temperature and, primarily, ...wind. A fire that, on a calm day, is a slow creeping fire can turn into a large running fire if the wind blows. That means that "High" can go to "Red Flag" in a moment if the wind comes up and back down when the wind goes away.

When there is a Red Flag alert:

Be especially careful with ignition sources. Any kind of fire, smoking, welding, sparks, hot vehicle mufflers. Report any fire or smoke immediately. Do not wait or assume it has been reported. The critical element is time – responders need to get to these fires when they are small.



Continued on next page

Fire Danger Guidelines (continued)

Continued from previous page

Green Flag: Fuels do not ignite readily from small firebrands (defined as a piece of burning wood) although a more intense heat source, such as lightning, may start fires in duff or punky (rotted) wood. Fire in open cured grasslands may burn freely for a few hours after rain, but woods fires spread slowly by creeping or smoldering, and burn in irregular fingers. There is little danger of spotting.

Blue Flags (Moderate): Fires can start from most accidental causes but, with the exception of lightning fires in some areas, the number of starts is generally low. Fires in open cured grasslands will burn briskly and spread rapidly on windy days. Timber fires spread slowly to moderately fast. The average fire is of moderate intensity, although heavy concentrations of fuel, especially draped fuel, may burn hot. Short-distance spotting may occur, but is not persistent. Fires are not likely to become serious and control is relatively easy.

Yellow Flags (High): All dead fuels ignite readily and fires start easily from most causes. Unattended brush and campfires are likely to escape. Fires spread rapidly and short-distance spotting is common. High-intensity burning may develop on slopes or in concentrations of fire fuels. Fires may become serious and their control difficult unless they are attacked successfully while small.

Orange Flags (Very High): Fires start easily from all causes and, immediately after ignition, spread rapidly and increase quickly in intensity. Spot fires are a constant danger. Fires burning in light fuels may quickly develop high intensity characteristics such as long-distance spotting and fire whirlwinds when they burn into heavier fuels.

Red Flags (Extreme): Fires start quickly, spread furiously, and burn intensely. All fires are potentially serious. Development into high intensity burning will usually be faster and occur from smaller fires than in the very high fire danger class. Direct attack is rarely possible and may be dangerous except immediately after ignition. Fires that develop headway in heavy slash or in conifer stands may be unmanageable while the extreme burning condition lasts. Under these conditions the only effective and safe control action is on the flanks until the weather changes or the fuel supply lessens.

Ultimately, regardless of a flag's color of the day, exercising caution is the best route.

Submitted by Karen Salaz

Reminder: The Ristwatch Has Gone Digital!

The Ristwatch newsletter is your primary source for community information, safety tips, RCVFD history, and ads from local businesses. It arrives in your mailbox once a quarter, and we hope you get value and enjoyment out of every issue.

Now it's time for an upgrade! We have heard from many of our readers that you would like to receive the newsletter by email. Comments have ranged from wanting to reduce paper waste to preferring to read on a screen. Whatever your reason, we are ready to make it happen!

Choose which of these three statements below applies best to you:

"I would love to get both email and paper Ristwatches!" If you are on our Community Alerts email list, we have already added you to the email Ristwatch list. This means you will receive both the paper and email copy from now on, and you don't need to do anything else! If you are not on our email list, or are not sure, email us at mailinglist@rcvfd.org to get added.

"I don't want the email Ristwatch. I like to have a paper copy in my hands." No problem! We recently sent a Community Info notice to the email list, telling you how to opt out of the email Ristwatch. At the bottom of every email from the RCVFD, you will always find instructions on how to choose which emails you receive. Email mailinglist@rcvfd.org if you're not sure how to do this. Or - just delete the Ristwatch email when it comes each quarter.

"I want to save paper! Please stop sending me the paper Ristwatch." We can do that! Email mailinglist@rcvfd.org and tell us the name and address on your mailing label. If you are not sure if you are on our email list, let us know.

We think that emailed newsletters are a great option for many of our readers. Email has many advantages, including less paper waste, less postage and printing expense for the RCVFD, color photos, and the ability to forward the email to other people. If there are internet links in articles, you can easily click through right on your screen. However, rest assured that you will still receive the paper edition if that is your preference.

A note to our Ristwatch advertisers: If the artwork you sent us was in color, your ad in the email Ristwatch is in color. If your ad is not in color, we'd love to get new artwork from you!

Finally, a reminder that every issue of the Ristwatch is already available in electronic form on the RCVFD website, going back ten years. You can find them all at <https://rcvfd.org/ristwatch>.

Diane McCarthy, RCVFD Treasurer
Melanie Bevers, RCVFD Assistant Treasurer
Ellison Carter, Ristwatch Editor

Help Build a Resilient Rist Canyon



Wildfire Partner Program Now Accepting Assessment Requests

RCVFD now has trained Wildfire Partner Program (WPP) Ambassadors ready to offer voluntary home assessments designed to help you identify and prioritize practical projects that can improve the chances of your home withstanding a wildfire.

These assessments are free, confidential, actionable, and focused on clear, achievable steps you can take at your own pace.

To learn more or to request a Wildfire Home Ignition Zone Assessment for your home, please visit our website at:

rcvfd.org/emergency-preparedness/home-assessments

Working together, we can strengthen our community's readiness and help keep Rist Canyon safer and more resilient in the face of wildfire.

Can We Reach You in an Emergency?



Can We Reach You In An Emergency?

Please take a moment to register with LETA911 (www.leta911.org). RCVFD and Larimer County Emergency Services use this system to send emergency updates and evacuation notices. You can choose to receive alerts by phone, email, or text. You

can also note any special circumstances, such as oxygen use or mobility limitations, that may make evacuation more difficult. Thank you for considering registering with LETA911!



Photo credit - Jeanne Bolz



Photo credit - Pam Thomas

Notes from Your Area Representatives

Happy Spring! For your home maintenance this summer, why not set up a date to have our wonderful Firefighters come over and conduct a **"Home Ignition Zone Assessment."** It's free! Two firefighters will walk through the exterior of your property with you, discussing things that might improve your mitigation efforts. They will also take pictures on a tablet and provide you with a detailed report that you can use to organize your ongoing efforts. Homeowners who have requested assessments from us in the past have indicated that they have learned quite a lot during the process. Go to *RCVFD.org* - then to *Be Prepared, and now Property Mitigation*. Fill out the form and you will be contacted for an appointment - EASY! None of this will be shared with your insurance company or anyone else.

ALWAYS BE PREPARED!

Now you can sit back and enjoy! It's Summertime, and the livin' is easyyyy. 🎵 Take time to appreciate the beauty that surrounds us. Watch the sunset and the wonderful stars coming out. This July we will have a full moon called a Buck Moon - it is named so as that is when the male Buck Deer grow their antlers. Have a safe, fun-filled summer, and don't forget to wave to your neighbors—they're part of what makes this community so special! Have a Happy Summer!

Louise Creager — Stratton Park

Hello all. I hope everyone has been able to enjoy the beautiful spring and early summer weather. I'm no expert, but there are what I believe to be many beetle kill trees popping up along the Stove Prairie corridor. This coincides with articles I've been reading. Beetle kill is expected to accelerate along the Front Range from the Springs to Ft. Collins. As we all know, beetles are a necessity. It's just a major bummer to witness a blight of large magnitude. This happened on the Grand Lake side.

My suggestion would be to mitigate these trees if at all possible. This eliminates fuel for fire. Limbing the lower portions of trees not affected by beetles, but need some TLC can also help. It seems to keep trees healthier and more able to fend off the beetles.

Anyway, let's hope we get through this and enjoy the rest of the awesome weather Colorado has to offer.

Take it Easy!

Tim Stratman — Stove Prairie

Notes from Your Area Representatives

Summer in Upper Buckhorn

Upper Buckhorn has entered my favorite season—summer! The creek is flowing, the hummingbirds have returned, and before long our beloved state flower, the columbine, will be greeting us with its brilliant blue blooms. Everywhere you look and listen, there are joyful sights and sounds that remind us why we love living in these mountains.

Last month I had the opportunity to help open the Buckhorn Ranger Station and enjoyed visits from both neighbors and travelers passing through. A reminder that the historic ranger station cabins are now available for rent through [Recreation.gov](https://www.recreation.gov) for anyone looking to experience a little mountain history firsthand.

The county has completed some early summer road work, and overall the roads appear to be in good condition. You may notice a few extra bumps near the start of the canyon, but otherwise travel has been smooth.

We've also noticed an increase in both bear and mountain lion activity around the mountains this season. Please remember to store food, garbage, pet food, and bird feeders when not in use to avoid attracting wildlife.

One of my favorite summer activities has been recording birds using the Merlin Bird ID app at both the ranger station and our property. It's amazing how many species can be identified simply by listening. This season I recorded a new bird for my life list—a Scrub Jay! I've also enjoyed hearing and recording flickers, owls, flycatchers, and many other feathered neighbors.



Photo credit: Erica Michel

For those who enjoy exploring the backcountry, several mountain 4x4 roads, including Moody Hill and Flowers Road, have reopened for the summer season thanks to the hard work of local off-road clubs and volunteers.

Wishing everyone a safe, adventurous, and memorable summer in Upper Buckhorn. Enjoy the wildflowers, the wildlife, the cool mountain evenings, and all the beauty this season brings.

Erica Michel — Upper Buckhorn



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Notes from Your Area Representatives

We've had a very different spring this year of 2026. Our winter was unusually warm and dry. This fact alone reminds me that tick season is upon us and will likely be robust. I just pulled a small tick off our dog. Lime disease can be a real problem here in Colorado. If you're outdoors and going through tall grass and brush be sure to check yourself and pets when you get back home.

But back to the weather, snow and rainfall came in May and helped green up all the grasses and trees around here. It's been a few weeks since we've had a decent rain. Use this reminder that our State is under a drought protocol and open fires are not permitted. Keep your fires outdoors in a BBQ grill or an approved fire enclosure. And it's best if you don't have this use when the winds are very strong. Thank you for your safety consciousness.

Dean Yoder — Lower Buckhorn

Are you curious what's happening on the side of Rist Canyon Road near the location of the Davis Ranch mailboxes? Davis Ranch area residents received a grant from Colorado Parks and Wildlife in an attempt to reduce bear-human conflicts. Bear-proof dumpsters for trash and recycle will be built and placed on the new pad in August or September (it takes 8 weeks to build them.) They will be serviced by Canyon Utilities with individual billing to participating residents, including people along Rist Canyon. If you are interested in being on the email list to receive updates and information, please send an email to the chair of the Bear Conflict Reduction Grant Committee, Vicky Jordan, vjordan678@gmail.com. Wishing all a fun and safe summer season.

Victoria Jordan — Rist Canyon



Photo credit: Debbie Benson, Rist Canyon Area Representative

Notes from Your Area Representatives

Do you own a Subaru? I wanted to let you know that this is the easiest car a bear can break into. Why I do not know. I will tell you if you do not lock your vehicle, as in this case, a bear got in. Not only did he tear the inside of the car up, the bear died in it because no one checked the car, even when there was a smell of something dead.

This happened on the Davis Ranch Road area. I was promised photos but never received them. Maybe that is a good thing. I understand this was a fairly large male bear. I understand the home owners will have to bury the bear.

I lock my truck every time I park it in my driveway. I do have claw marks on my door handle but no bear inside. This is another way to deter bears from entering your car. You might give this some thought.

Carolyn Stanley — Davis Ranch

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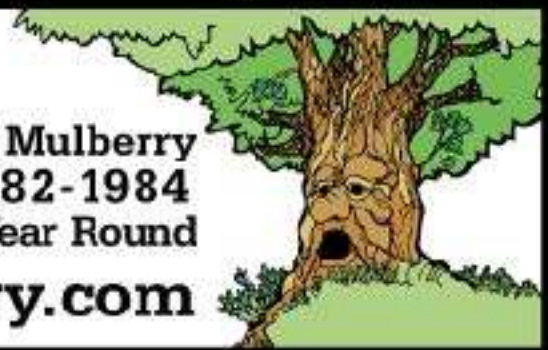


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WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO



WHAT A WONDERFUL SCHOOL YEAR!

We had a wonderful school year with weather events we've never seen- school closures for wind- unheard of! Hopefully this next school year will see good old snow days which give the students plenty of opportunities for sledding and a greener Spring season.

Planning for the Fall Festival is upon us!

Are you a local Vendor or maybe you know of someone who might be interested in having a booth at our annual Fall Festival? Reach out! Our Festival is gaining popularity, and your participation helps fund programs and enrichment activities for all the students at Stove. Information below!



OUR FALL FESTIVAL IS A HUGE SOURCE OF FUNDING FOR STOVE PRAIRIE ELEMENTARY AND IT IS 100% VOLUNTEER DRIVEN, WITH 100% OF PROCEEDS BENEFITTING THE SCHOOL. WE HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR OCTOBER 3!



A BIG THANK YOU FROM ALL OF US AT STOVE PRAIRIE!



Each year the Steadman Family of the Steadman Ranch welcomes our school to picnic and rest on their property- the students "touch the gate" to graduate on to the next grade level. Thank you for allowing us to continue this tradition!

We'd also like to thank Sky Corral Ranch for their generous annual donations. This year Sky Corral donated funds for each of the children to purchase books of their choosing. Thank you for supporting our school!

WE ARE LOOKING FOR VENDORS AND FOOD TRUCKS FOR OUR FALL FESTIVAL! QUESTIONS? IDEAS? EMAIL US AT STOVEPTO@GMAIL.COM

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- How homeowner's insurance issues are becoming a community issue as opposed to just a homeowner issue and how collaboration may be important.
- Why are defensible space 5' and 30' requirements so important when no one is there and the fire is.

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- **Louise Creager** with 19 years as a mountain, rural, farm and ranch specialist, as well as a community member for over 30 years; many of these serving as a board member and volunteer with the Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department.

- Land Scams and how we are affected by them
- Letters we receive to undersell our properties
- Your Q & A about the market today. I will have an update on properties sold and how they affect your property.
- Louise will also be able to give you your address sign if you don't already have one.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION FEEL FREE TO CONTACT LOUISE AT
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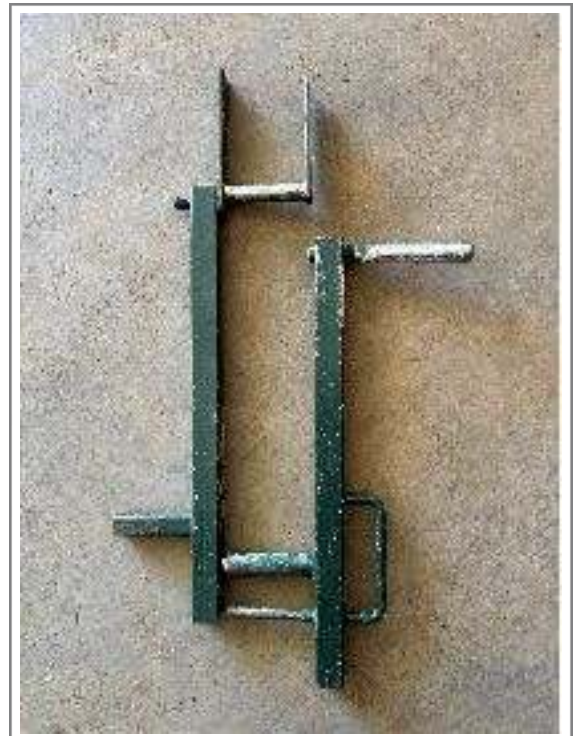
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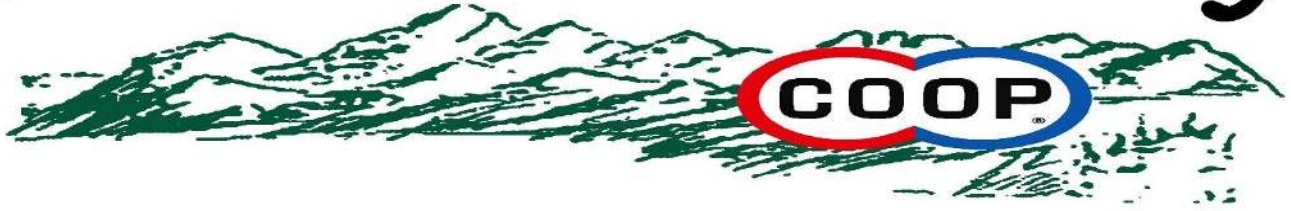
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- Crystal Park, No HOA



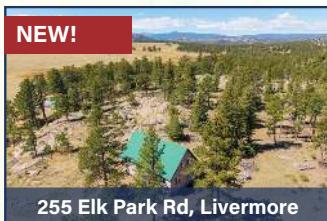
410 Pearl Creek Rd, Red Feather Lakes

- ~ 16.18 Acres
- Campsite already set up, No HOA
- Utilities conveniently nearby



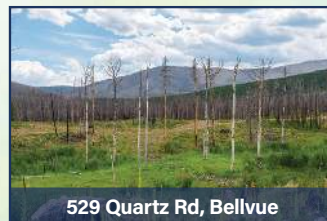
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If you have an account, sign in. Select Rist Canyon VFD as the charity you would like to give to. Use this website for all your Amazon purchases. If you shop on Amazon, there's no reason not to do it!



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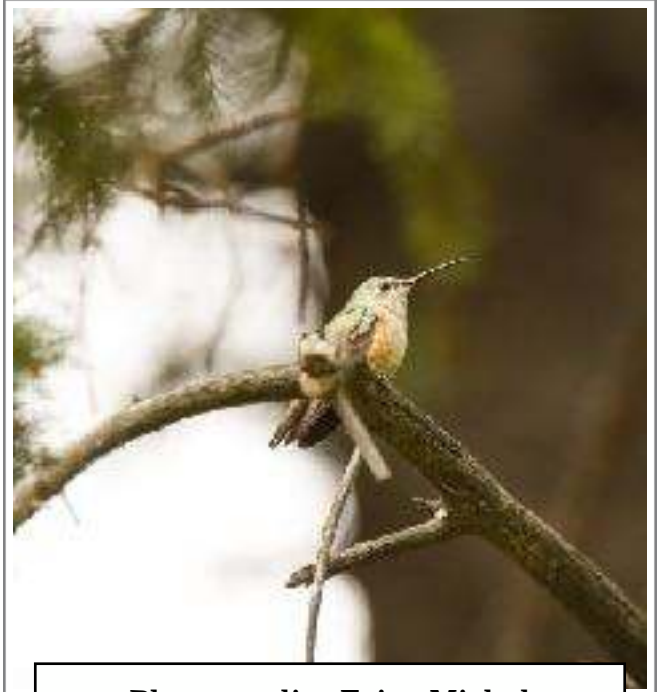


Photo credit - Erica Michel

Submissions to the Ristwatch

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.



2026 Annual Drive: Budget \$180,364 - 2026 Annual Drive YTD \$40,589

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