



Granite Falls E-Newsletter

Suggestions? Let us know! Terra Rafael & Sam Marutzky
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Our Granite Falls Little Library

The first Little Free Library was built by Todd Bol, in Hudson, Wisconsin. It replicates a one-room schoolhouse, in honor of his mother.

A Little Free Library is a free book-sharing box where anyone may take a book or share a book. They function on the honor system. You do not need to share a book in order to take one. If you take a book or two from a Little Library, try to bring some to share to that same library or another in your area, when you can.

Our own Granite Falls Little Free Library is next to the first postal boxes on entering Granite Falls on Mescalero. It is the brainchild of Cyndy Tate and came together with major building skills of Jeff Tate. Cyndy thanks several others who contributed tools and other help to get it completed and placed: Chad, Sam and Terra. Thanks again to Cyndy and Jeff for pulling this all together!

Granite Falls HOA Report

HOA Update June 2023

Hello Granite Falls Community,

We hope you enjoyed our beautiful Spring and are ready for the start of summer. We are so fortunate to live in western Colorado where the morning air is crisp, the days are mostly sunny, and the view of the Monument never ceases to amaze. This year's snowfall was also amazing providing much needed water for our reservoirs and turning the mountains green again, not to mention the awesome skiing and river rafting/kayaking. The wildflowers are incredible!

It's been a busy Spring as you'll read about in the articles that follow. Subcommittees for our governing documents, common areas, landscaping, and irrigation are actively making our community more inviting. In addition, we now have a library to share books and other common interests.

We had a great turnout for our Spring community cleanup and our block party. It was great to meet so many new people. We'll plan another cleanup and party this fall so stay tuned.

This Spring's runoff has been challenging to our irrigation system. We replaced our 10-horsepower pump at the start of the season, but the water has been so dirty, our automatic flushing systems have struggled to keep up and it's been hard to keep our sprinklers clear as well. As a result, keeping our grass along South Camp is a work in progress. We are trying not to over water but the existing sprinklers don't provide adequate coverage. Fortunately the water is slowly clearing and the system is back on an even keel, so (fingers crossed) hopefully you'll start to see improvements.

The ballots for changes to the CC&Rs were opened at our June 6, 2023, HOA meeting and all items passed, so we will be posting a revision soon.

A few housekeeping items:

- The speed limit in our subdivision is 20 mph, but with all the construction congestion and adults/children enjoying the long days outdoors, slower is more appropriate.
- Please observe the all stop signs in Granite Falls, especially at Mescalero and Pollock Canyon.

Read about other updates in the articles that follow. As always, if you have any questions or ideas for improvements, please contact us at granitefallshoa8@gmail.com.

We hope you continue to have a wonderful summer, enjoying the outdoors and our beautiful western Colorado.

Thank you, Granite Falls HOA BOD



Spring Bird Walk by Sam Marutzky

Our Spring Bird Walk was a great experience - informative and fun! Over a dozen folks participated on Friday, May 12. . Weather conditions could not have been better. We definitely have some serious birders in our community, but birding is for everyone. Nic Korte with the Grand Valley Audubon Society guided us through our western common area listening and watching for bird life. Nic leads the Owl Monitoring Project for the Society. They place owl boxes throughout the area to provide habitat for owls. On our walk today he identified over 15 different species of birds including Quail, Grosbeak, Lazuli Bunting, Collared Dove, Magpie, Red-Winged Blackbird, Hummingbird, Bullock's Oriole, and Golden Winged Warbler.

Nic suggested an app for our phones called **Merlin** to identify birds. It even identifies birds by listening to their call. You can play calls and the birds will call back if they are around. The best time to see and hear birds is early in the morning, sitting and listening.

Nic was impressed with our common area and he suggested we minimize our impact of the area. We now have a diverse ecological habitat. Even invasive plants like Russian Olives and Tamarisk provide habitat for various wildlife.

Anyone wanting more information can check out the local Audubon site - www.audubongv.org

Thanks to everyone who participated. We will have more opportunities in the future.

Spring Clean Up

We held our Spring Clean Up on May 6. Thank you to all who participated helped make our community a little more beautiful (and safer). We not only picked up several bags of trash, but also installed signs for pet owners to pick up after their pets, and removed the wire fence along the canal. And....we got \$20.54 for the recycled wire. Yea!!



GF Block Party

Our annual Spring Neighborhood Party was held on June 10 and over 30 neighbors attended. The weather was perfect with a light rain right before we gathered, and of course the views are awesome! The city of Grand Junction provided their party trailer complete with chairs, tables, trash cans, and games. It was great to meet many of our new neighbors! We enjoyed lots of great snacks and conversation. In case you missed it, we'll plan another get together this fall.



Activities & Groups to Join

- **Colorado Mountain Club** - Neighbor Victor Ketellapper vkhome77@yahoo.com Founded in 1912, the Colorado Mountain Club is Colorado's community for mountain adventure, education, and conservation. Trips and training include hiking, backpacking, cross country skiing, rock climbing and more. Learn more at www.cmc.org
- **Speed Walking group** - Neighbor Pat Lurye: 970-318-0622 pclurye@gmail.com
- **Poker Club** - contact Aaron Meckler: 303.324-4510 (text) or Aaron.meckler@gmail.com
- **Game Afternoon Club** - contact Jennifer Bradfield: Jennifer.bradfield@gmail.com
- **Families w Kids Club** - contact: Elizabeth Brookmeyer: ebrookmeyer@gmail.com
 - Wednesday Bike beginning April 12, 4:30 pm Sieber Canyon cul-de-sac area- kid play, etc - all welcome
- **Frontier Wholesale Buyers Club** - Neighbor Linda Chumbley: GJBuyingClub@gmail.com
- **Book Club** - Neighbor Terra Rafael: wisewomanhood@gmail.com We currently have space for one more member; (taking July off)
- **Biking Club** - Heartcycle Bicycle Touring Club. www.heartcycle.org
- **Pickleball Club** - Neighbors : Michael/Loretta Servedio servedio144@gmail.com
 - Western Slope Pickleball Club www.westernslopepickleballclub.com
- **Outdoor Club** - Neighbor: Deb Orlick, Dcdorlick@gmail.com
 - The Outing Club, which has been around for over 20 years (no online presence). The purpose is to encourage & assist people to enjoy outdoor activities such as hiking, biking, camping, water sports, and skiing. Most hikes occur on Saturdays. For more info gjoutingclub2@gmail.com

Yard Care Tips for Summer by Bob Mohler

Vegetable Gardens:

So far, I have not seen any squash bugs or stink bugs on any of my squash plants. Followed my own recommendations regarding use of mint, radishes and marigolds and have the diatomaceous earth and neem oil at the ready. Beans, tomatoes, and peppers should be producing well; watch out for tomato horned worm (transforms into a hummingbird moth), which can be readily picked off the tomato vine. Aphids have been in abundance, more so on yuccas and orchard trees such as plumcots; these can be controlled by a strong spray of water as aphids are not very mobile once sprayed off the leaves. Pyrethrin sprays and insecticidal soap are quite effective. Those with herb gardens are most likely harvesting rosemary, lavender, French tarragon, thyme, chives, culinary sage, and oregano as these are perennials here, at least all of mine survived the winter two years in a row.



Herb and vegetable garden



Dwarf orchard interspersed with a variety of day lilies

Fruit Trees:

The Colorado State University Extension Service has many publications on the planting, feeding, pruning and spraying of fruit trees (website: <https://extension.colostate.edu/topic-areas/yard-garden/>), look under publications. Several neighbors have planted fruit trees, unfortunately, many of the trees are standard size, well above twenty feet eventually in height or semi-dwarfs which may reach twenty feet in height so future pruning may be necessary (see extension website). I have planted several dwarf trees (also termed reachables), but had to order online (e.g., Gurney's, Direct Gardening and Jung Seed) as I found none of the local nurseries carrying such. The dwarf trees reach up to twelve feet in height and about four to five feet in width.

Lawns:

New lawns not established may need to be watered twice a day until the roots take hold. Several watering recommendations for Western Slope lawns may be viewed via internet searches, many recommend watering at three times per week, about an inch at a time (usually about 15 minutes with common sprinkler heads). An easy way to measure the amount of water being applied is to put a plastic plant saucer in the yard just prior to watering and see how much water is in the saucer afterwards. With the Colorado River at much higher flows than normal, there is quite a bit of sediment and organic matter in our irrigation water, I have had to clear the main filter at my pump several times thus far as well as clean every filter associated with the sprinkler heads. Also remember to check your drip sprinkler heads, although they utilize culinary water, periodic adjustment is often necessary. For established Kentucky bluegrass lawns now is the time to fertilize, fescue lawns can wait until August; always water for a few minutes after fertilizing as this will wash the dust off the blades of grass and help prevent burning; if you use a fertilizer with iron as an ingredient, remember to sweep your sidewalk and driveway or risk rust stains from the granules. Pets should be kept off the lawns until after watering as well. If you have young trees within your yard, would not recommend a weed-and-feed as it can harm or kill young trees. Some of the local landscapers recommend "Revive", which is a chicken manure-based fertilizer available at box stores, I have tried it with success.

Ornamental Trees and Shrubs:

Much of our native trees and shrubs require little fertilization once established, but until then an application of liquid fertilizers such as miracle grow once a month usually works well as does an application of root stimulator (both available at box stores) per directions. For those with pinyon trees unfortunately, we have pine beetles (e.g., pinyon pitch mass borer) and other pests; late June, July, and August are the recommended times for spraying using permethrin per direction. For those with Juniper trees, sometimes fungal problems will ensue, my juniper had what appeared to be juniper-hawthorn rust in its first year, three sprays with a copper-based fungicide at weekly intervals alleviated the issue. Also, remember that these trees are native to our dry climates so be careful of applying too much water, junipers (such as Utah Juniper) take up most of their water during winter months. Several neighbors have aspen trees, which are really mountain trees, not necessarily the best for our neighborhood. In the Valley they are subject to a variety of cankers identifiable by split bark and a variety of colors other than the normal off-white of the bark (see the CSU website for identification and self-treatment or local tree services) as well as aphid infestations.

Some of the neighbors have noticed tent caterpillars. These are easily treated with a blast of water from the hose so the birds can have at them as well as pyrethrins and bacillus thuringiensis.

As mentioned in previous newsletters, for young linden, some maples, and redbud trees it is often good to wrap the trunk with a tree wrap to help prevent sunscald (splitting of the bark near the base of the trunk). Several publications mention wrapping from October through April, with my redbud I do all year with a two-week break in the spring.

Cactus, Cholla and Yucca:

Now that the blooming season is close to over, excessive watering can be an issue because of water draining from lawns onto the plants.



Roses:

Thankfully we have little issues with fungal problems such as “Black Spot” as we use drip irrigation. About the only issue I have seen is with aphids.

HOA Natural Area

A subcommittee of the Beautification Committee was formed to address assessment, propose plans, and draft long-term management plans for the seven acre “Natural Area”. The area was designated as the Natural Area to identify it as a separate and distinct management area for Granite Falls from the other open spaces of the Granite Falls subdivision. At the June 6 meeting the HOA board approved an initial vision for the Natural Area as follows, ***“The Granite Falls Seven Acre Natural Area will be managed to mitigate fire hazards, benefit wildlife with useful habitat, and provide an enjoyable and useful natural area for Granite Falls subdivision residents. This will be an ongoing effort with an initial mitigation and remediation effort of approximately five years. We will seek grant funding to improve the area, focusing on BLM fire mitigation funds initially.”***

The subcommittee has met with the public liaison from the GJFD and a commercial contractor to gather information about fire mitigation and habitat enhancement. Initial thoughts are that the Russian Olive tree canopy requires some tree thinning in order to create “islands” of trees, rather than one large extended tree area. In addition to creating fire breaks, this approach will increase edge areas for better wildlife habitat.

Bob Mohler and Todd Sanders, two of the subcommittee members, are collaborating on a management plan for the area. After the draft has been reviewed by subcommittee members, it will be sent to the HOA Board for review.

The goal of the subcommittee is to be ready for the fall cycle of BLM grants, with anticipated application dates in August.

Colorado Search and Rescue - There When You Need Them

By Brian Langfitt , Granite Falls HOA President AND Seven-year member of the Colorado Search and Rescue Fund Advisory Council

It is now summer and I know a lot of us Granite Falls folks are getting ready to hike, bike, ATV, boat, raft, fish, hunt etc. in our beautiful country side. That is one of the reasons we have chosen to live here isn't it? But with all of these back country recreational opportunities there are risks that we all need to be aware of. Do you know what to do if you become lost or hurt while you are out recreating? Do you have a plan in place? Are you recreating with others? Did you tell someone where you were going and when you planned to be back? Do you have the right gear? Are you carrying enough water and supplies? Hopefully you are doing all of the above-but what happens if you become lost or injured?

Fortunately, in Colorado, we have some of the best equipped and most highly trained search and rescue (SAR) teams in the country. They are volunteers that can be dispatched by the sheriff at a moment's notice to start a search and rescue. There are teams that specialize in searches at high altitude, in lakes and rivers, and in the back country and everywhere in between. Each team is qualified in using climbing gear, ATV's, boats, mountain bikes, snowmobiles, first aid, communications and all of the rest of the tools they need to find someone and to get them back to safety. Do you want to know a little secret? There is never a charge for a SAR in Colorado!

How is this possible? Colorado took a proactive approach to SAR many years ago. One year, during a big game hunting season, a large snowfall caught dozens of hunters and stranded them in a remote area of southern Colorado. It took a large amount of resources including helicopters to rescue these stranded hunters, their gear, their horses, etc.. In Colorado the sheriff office is responsible for all SAR which also includes the cost associated with the SAR. This happened in a very rural county with relatively small tax revenue, which is often the case, and was a "budget buster" for the sheriff.

This started some great minds to think of a way to prevent this in the future. They came up with the idea of organizing SAR teams statewide. But how would they fund this? I mentioned earlier that the SAR members are volunteers but there are still a lot of expenses involved with a SAR. Colorado decided to start the Colorado Search and Rescue Reimbursement fund. Twenty five cents of each Colorado hunting and fishing license, and boat, snowmobile and off highway vehicle registration goes to this fund. They also started a COSAR card for individuals to pay into the fund if they did not use any of the above. It is also available to out of state recreationists who are visiting Colorado for some outdoor fun. COSAR can be purchased at many retailers or on line for \$3 for one year and \$12 for five years.

To manage these funds the Colorado Search and Rescue Fund Advisory Council was formed. Members of this council were chosen by the Governor and represented Colorado Park and Wildlife, Colorado Search and Rescue (CSAR), sportsmen and women, and various outdoor groups. The primary duty of this council was to reimburse counties for costs associated with SAR. To accomplish this the council came up with a three tier system for classifying SAR and how to distribute these funds. A tier 1 SAR would be for someone who directly paid into the fund using the above methods. A tier 2 SAR is for an immediate family member (living in the same house) of someone who has paid into the fund. A tier 3 is for someone who has not paid into the fund.

The sheriff is responsible to initiate a SAR when they are notified of a missing person. The sheriff, or more directly the county, is responsible for costs associated with the SAR. CSAR stays on the SAR until the person or persons are found. Sometimes that happens quickly and sometimes it takes several days.

Once the SAR ends the Sheriff decides which tier applies. If it was a tier 1 the Fund Advisory Council would reimburse the full amount of the SAR. If it was a tier 2, the council would most times reimburse for that SAR as well. If it was a tier 3, generally they would not be eligible for reimbursement. The Sheriff would have to decide if it was worth trying to seek reimbursement because they had not paid into the fund. The council did fund some tier 3 SAR because of a number of factors (Like a "budget buster" to the county etc.).

As I stated above, a CSAR never bills the person or persons. The fund is not insurance though. That means the teams will find you and get you to safety but you will personally not be reimbursed in any way. If you are hurt and need to be transported to a hospital (by ambulance or helicopter) you are responsible for those costs once those services start. The CSAR team found you and got you to safety, that is the end of their obligation and possibly the beginning of yours.

The Colorado Search and Rescue fund is legislatively mandated to completely empty their bank account annually. The SAR part usually depleted about half of the funds raised. For the remaining funds the council initiated an annual grant process where the fifty CSAR teams could apply for funding. These grants were mostly for additional training and equipment for their team. The funds would then flow back in again the next year through the renewal of above mentioned twenty five cents or the sale of COSAR cards. These funds averaged, in the neighborhood of, \$1.5 to \$2 million annually. That's a lot of quarters!

I hope none of you ever need to use the services of the CSAR! But isn't it reassuring to know that there are teams of highly trained, professional SAR teams out there if you ever need them? For more information Google Colorado Search and Rescue or COSAR cards.

Get out there and have fun but be safe!

HOA Basics

For more info and earlier e-newsletters go to : www.granitefallshoa.com

To contact the Board of Directors: granitefallshoa8@gmail.com

For Design Review Committee: drcgranitefalls@gmail.com

Enewsletter - articles, suggestions, corrections, updates:
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