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# Poudre Trails

The Poudre Wilderness Volunteers Newsletter



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Summer 2005

## Beyond Spring Training

by Linda Knowlton

Just because Spring Training is over for this year doesn't mean that your training opportunities are over. As evidenced by many of the comments we received on our Spring Training feedback forms, some of you are eager for more. And we've got it!

Some comments asked that we provide more intensive training in things like map and compass and first aid during the training weekend. But that just isn't possible, given the time we have. Keep in mind that the chief purpose of the training weekend is to train new volunteers in the absolute essentials of being a Poudre Wilderness Volunteer. For the most part, that means teaching you how to interact with people on the trail and dealing with the most common situations you will encounter. A secondary purpose of spring training, since it is our annual meeting, is to provide interesting and useful things for returning volunteers to do while the newbies are on their hike. (Another purpose, certainly, is to meet lots of new people and have lots of fun!)

Map and compass proficiency is not necessary to be a PWV, nor is first aid certification required. But we realize that both of these are valuable skills and PWV is pleased to be able to offer these, and other topics, as supplemental training. Supplemental training classes are held, usually at the FS offices, on weeknights during the year. Please look for notices about these classes in the newsletter and in e-mails that you will receive. We've already done programs this year on GPS, map and compass, and weed identification. There is another map and compass session coming up. We're also planning a couple of first aid courses.

Another way to hone your skills is to attend our monthly meeting at Avogadro's Number in Fort Collins. These are on the second Thursday of the month and always feature a short topic of interest to our members, as well as a social setting in which you can get to know one another better.

If you have a particular topic you wish we'd address, please let us know. Also, if you have a skill that you'd like to teach other people, we'd like to hear from you. Dan Seeber is our Supplemental Training committee chair; he can be reached at [manitobaz@att.net](mailto:manitobaz@att.net).

## Spring Training 2005

by John Paul Lumpp

It could not have been a more perfect weekend at Jack's Gulch. The days were sunny and warm with clear blue skies and the nights, cool and pleasant. Thirty-five new recruits were treated to the usual day-and-a-half training with too much information all at once (at least that's how I felt, but know better now).

Once again all the trainers agreed that this was a dynamic group of new recruits who would prove to be excellent volunteer rangers. We are fortunate every year to attract so many dedicated and experienced volunteers. With these new members, we now have 182 active volunteers – a new high. PWV had the highest retention in history—more volunteers returned for another season than in previous years. Your dedication is greatly appreciated.

While recruits were out on training, there were a number of wonderful programs for returning members:

- **Frank Gillespie** led a nature hike around Jack's Gulch. Did you know that if you see kinikinnick, you won't see rattlesnakes? Frank offered a great deal of flora insight.
- **Kevin Lee Hayes** lead a course on map and compass. Now, if I could only remember what a declension is and where do I get one?
- And, for the outdoor dining enthusiasts volunteers were treated to a lip-smacking demonstration on gourmet cooking in the backwoods, thanks to \_\_\_\_\_.



Entertainer Danny Manyhorses relates music, humor and native wisdom. Photo courtesy of Liz Mock-Murphy.

Founders **Chuck Bell** and **Art Bunn** were awarded handcrafted leather binders, for their PWV Field Guides, in recognition of PWV's Tenth Anniversary. The binders were created by Colorado leather crafter Jennifer Lusch, who was most generous in her donation of the binders to PWV.

Canino's of Fort Collins provided Saturday night's lasagna dinner. A special recognition and hearty thanks to our "Coffee Crew" — best ever! And, to all the role players (your Oscars are in the mail) and those who helped make spring training happen, thank you. The door prizes were fantastic (I didn't win one). Thanks to EMS, Wal-Mart, Bisettis, the Cupboard, and Starry Night.

**Danny "Many Horses" Real** was our guest entertainer. Danny Many Horses, from the Mescalero Apache Tribe, dressed in Native American costume, captured the audience with his flute playing as the sun was setting. He also told native folklore and threw in a few jokes for good measure. It was a nice mix of humor, music, and native wisdom. The sun setting behind the pine trees and Apache flute music. A perfect ending to a perfect day.

## Forest Service Update



Kevin Cannon reports that both the PWV Trail Crew and the Forest Service Trail Crew are doing considerable work on the trails. New trail-

head signs are going up on existing kiosks, a task that should be near completion by the end of July. Also, the Hewlett Gulch Trailhead is now open. PWV trail reports continue to be extremely useful in assisting the Forest Service.

When a person died recently on a trail in the Rawah Wilderness, Poudre Wilderness Volunteers were on hand to keep people away from the body and to help Search and Rescue when they arrived on the scene. Kevin Cannon reports that they "handled the situation professionally and well.

Members are advised to caution the public about the **increasing fire dangers** and especially about being very careful with campfires.

# To Read or Not to Read

by Sharon Ruch

All my life I've been an avid reader. When I was younger, I would read everything and anything I could get my hands on. Now, as an adult with time constraints, I have to pick and choose. One thing I've found that holds my attention and makes it worthwhile to take time out of my busy day is ... don't be too shocked ... PWV trail reports. This is my third year of volunteering, and I haven't come anywhere near hiking all the trails available. I read the reports to see if there is one I may like to try for the first time. Is it especially scenic? Strenuous? Are there wonderful wildflowers or birds?

And if I am already scheduled to hike a trail, new or familiar, a day or two before departing I read the previous reports for that trail. I find all sorts of interesting and helpful information. For instance, when I hiked Roaring Creek this season, PWVers reported a stretch of trail about 50 yards long covered with water. (Thank you, Thomas Linnik, Robert A. Manuel and Wayne Tobey.) Sure enough, there it was, wide and murky, thick and slippery with mud. I couldn't see the end, but because I knew it was going to eventually end, and not continue on till the end of the trail, I was willing to slip and slide my way through. Without that information, I might have been tempted to give up and turn back, thereby missing the lovely almost flat upper section of trail that meandered next to a quieter, less roaring creek.

Many of the reports are what I charitably call concise. It seems some of the more experienced members, especially, don't find it necessary to report any more than the bare bones. I know the Forest Service wants this basic information – how many people were on the trail, where are the illegal campsites, are there trees that need cutting, etc. And even this brief reporting is useful if you read between the lines. Perhaps you are enamored of dismantling fire rings, or chopping trees, and there was one or more the previous volunteer didn't have time to take care of. You can bring your extra-thick gloves or your saw and take care of it when you go. Was the trail especially crowded with bikes or dogs or even people? You'll be prepared to expect the same things.

My favorite reports, though, are the ones that have lots of stuff in the comments section. That's where you'll find more than just the dry facts. If you aren't already, try reading the reports some time, particularly before you set off for your next hike. You might become a fan. And maybe be inspired to make your report even more informative.

# The Experiences of an Amateur in PWV

By Henry Weisser

I joined PWV four years ago with the fond hope that I might help to save people from the environment and help to save the environment from people. I was and am an amateur outdoors person. I was apprehensive in making my application because I thought I was not very well very well qualified for PWV: I had no military experience, thanks to the year in which I was born and my stint in the Boy Scouts was brief and undistinguished. Above all, I have always been an urban person who does not like to camp out in the woods with unidentified creatures that rustle about in a manner that seem menacing in the dark of night. I have no special knowledge of trees, weeds, flowers, birds, indigenous mammals or orienteering. The only outdoor expertise I have involves butterflies, which I studied, raised and collected when I was young.

On the positive side, I did some hiking in Colorado since my arrival here in 1965. What kept me in condition for the trails was the fact that I walked roundtrip from home to work at CSU, a distance of over three miles, for a grand total of 37 years. I also noted on my PWV application that I gave some superficial hiking advice in my book about the Rocky Mountain States, which was essentially an admonition for hikers to bring enough water.

Because of this background, I felt rather unsure of my use to the organization by the time I arrived for spring training weekend. The expertise displayed by some veteran PWVs made them appear to be latter day versions of Daniel Boone or Special Forces veterans. To catch up, I tried to learn as much as possible about all the emergencies that a PWV volunteer might encounter, such as edema, hypothermia, broken legs, sprained ankles and how to properly examine an injury victim for other injuries. I also studied skills with maps and compass zealously. Fear encouraged me to pay particular attention to information about how to deal with mountain lions and bears in anticipation of sudden confrontations with these animals.

My training session was four years ago and since then I have faithfully completed all of my hikes and gained a nice certificate each year for doing so. But all of my patrols have been pleasant and utterly ordinary. I have yet to encounter any kind of serious emergency as a member of PWV.

Wildlife has kept its distance. Once I thought I had confronted a black bear that was looking at me through trees and bushes. It was a cow. I did not come across a single sick or injured person. Everyone that I have seen on the trails was

healthy and, in most cases, capable of moving along faster than I could. The only lost person I had to deal with was myself, when I wandered off on a spur that had petered out. On that occasion and on a couple of others, I had broken the rule about hiking alone because a PWV partner did not show up or was unable to arrange for a substitute. Yes, my rudimentary knowledge of how to use a compass and map from spring training did get me out of that situation.

Dehydrated hikers provided my only opportunity to render physical assistance. They were happy to have the surplus water that I always carry. One of them was a young woman from the flatlands of Nebraska who was jogging on the Greyrock trail with no pack, no equipment and absolutely no water. I was able to quench her extreme thirst both on the way up and on the way down. I also found two high school students who were shy, initially, about admitting that they had consumed all of their water and needed more.

Except for these encounters with the waterless, hiking has consisted of cheerful greetings and exchanges with remarkably pleasant people from all over the world. Not a single person has been rude or difficult. The most frequent topics of conversation have involved sharing information about the trail, pointing out locations on the map and giving an estimate of what lies ahead. I have had to say "I don't know," many times because I have not been able to answer specific questions visitors are apt to ask about particular flowers, trees, birds and locations. But PWV service inspires us to learn a bit more about all of these topics as time goes on, no matter how amateurish we may be at the beginning.

Sometimes cautionary remarks to hikers were in order, but I always made sure to deliver them in a friendly, informational manner rather than as an authoritarian pronouncement. The usual advisories have been: Children should stay close to their parents; Dogs should stay on leashes in certain areas and it might be a good idea to keep them on a leash in other areas also. In addition, I always check to make sure that people have enough water, particularly if they come from areas that are not as high and dry.

What has been most gratifying is to see how happy people are to have us on the trail with our impressive shirts. It means that we are there to look out for them and to look out for the wonderful environment that they are visiting. Even if emergencies are few and far between, we are there to offer a helping hand as best we can in case one arises. Even amateurs can do this kind of productive work for PWV.

# Bravo!

## Garin VanDeMark—Steward for the Environment

by Dave Cantrell



**G**arin VanDeMark gives human voice to Northern Colorado's wilderness. His ardent desire to preserve and protect our wild areas has combined with personal commitment, extraordinary vision, and gifted leadership to help shape the values and behavior of thousands of forest visitors.

He gives himself tirelessly and wholeheartedly to wilderness protection at every level: patrols wilderness, maintains trails, teaches and trains hundreds, designs programs that multiply his personal contribution many times, and is a sought-after advisor on regional wilderness policies.

The Front Range of Northern Colorado is home to some of the most beautiful wilderness areas on earth. It is also home to three times the number of people who lived here a few decades ago. In 1996, Poudre Wilderness Volunteers (PWV) was founded to help the United States Forest Service (USFS) care for these precious areas. Garin was one of our founding members. He brought a wealth of managerial experience to the service of PWV: he had been an officer in the U. S. Army, a Vice President of Woodward Governor (and General Manager of their Aircraft Controls Division); he had served on the boards of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers and the General Aviation Manufacturers Association.

He was a Director of PWV from 1998-2003, our Chair in 2001 and 2002, and has been an Advisory Director since 2003. During these years in which his leadership has been so important, we grew from a handful of concerned individuals into a well-trained and dedicated force of 170 volunteers, who annually contribute thousands of hours of service to our local forests.

Garin has been an effective steward for the environment at every level—as an individual volunteer, an organization leader, and an advisor.

As an individual volunteer, Garin patrols, talks to visitors, repairs and maintains trail, and trains new volunteers. He recruits new volunteers everywhere he goes. He has trained and certified many Forest Service volunteers in Leave No Trace Outdoor Skills and Ethics (LNT) principles. He is a contributor to our publication program and a “go-to” spokesman on wilderness issues for local papers.

He has been the heart of our Community Education program. He has taught LNT principles and wilderness ethics to thousands of volunteers, school children, and interested citizens, through

presentations and workshops to Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts, Estes Park YMCA camp counselors, the Colorado Mountain Club, local companies, elementary school classrooms (where he is especially popular), our county Volunteer Naturalist Training Program, multi-agency volunteer trail crews, and, as he says, “anyone who would listen to discussions of LNT.”

His teaching is always influenced by his gentle philosophy: “I think most people are trying to do the right thing, but some just don't know what the right thing is. We let the water and land tell us the right thing to do and then we educate users.”

As an organization leader, Garin has a sure eye for program development, and the personal and organizational skills to bring programs to fruition. He sees the need for a new program, inspires others, and guides program development with a quiet assurance that lets everyone feel proud of their role.

He was one of the key developers of our Spring Training, a widely praised experiential training course that has attracted observers from the USFS and from as far as Africa.

When he saw the need to extend training, he designed and developed the PWV Mentor program, in which experienced veterans continue new volunteers' training on actual patrols, teaching them how to interact with forest visitors in a way that will change their long-term behavior.

He formulated, founded, organized, helped train and supervises PWV Trail Maintenance crews, which annually contribute about 80 person-days to the protection and repair of local trails. These pictures of trail crew work were taken just a few days ago. The man who took them said, “The logs that are the base of that new bridge weighed 1,000 pounds each, and the water was running fast under them. If Garin hadn't been there, we'd never have managed safely.”

As an advisor to the Forest Service and other agencies at the regional level, Garin has been part of significant leadership initiatives to guard wilderness: as a representative to Wilderness Ranger workshops, on a Forest Service panel on the role of volunteer organizations, and as a member of organizing committees for wilderness initiatives like the Wilderness Education Council of Colorado and the Wilderness Stewardship Network.

For all his efforts, Ellen Hodges, our District Ranger, wrote him to say, “Your service and dedication are beyond compare.” James Bedwell, Forest Supervisor for the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests and Pawnee National Grassland, recognized him for his contribution to the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests and Pawnee National Grassland Foundation.

## Trailhead Hosting — An Easy Alternative

by Sharon Ruch

**H**ave you ever wanted to do more for the PWV but didn't have the energy or stamina to hike another long trail? Perhaps you've sprained an ankle, or are still recuperating from surgery or an illness, or there are other reasons you don't feel up to a hike. You can scratch that itch to get outdoors, and still fulfill your desire to help the PWV, by becoming a trailhead host. Hosting duties are important, but require very little stamina.

People starting out on the trail may have questions, or you may offer suggestions. Are they carrying enough water? Do they know the trail regulations? You can describe the trail, including handing out printouts, and let them know of any hazards they may encounter. Are there streams to ford? Areas of poison ivy? You get the idea. Or conversely, you can let them know of non-dangerous interesting things, such as a gorgeous view, nesting hawks or an exceptional meadow of wildflowers.

The hikers returning to the trailhead after completing their hikes may have information about conditions on the trail that you can pass along in your report.

The trails that need hosts are Greyrock, Lions Gulch, Young Gulch, Blue Lake, Rawah and West Branch. You can sign up on the website the same way you schedule a hike. And then all you have to do is hang around at the trailhead and greet the hikers.

## Notices:

**Jacque Bolinger**, the “rock” of our office administration, was seriously injured in May when she was thrown from her horse. We sincerely hope she is feeling better. Jacque, our thoughts are with you and are hoping for a rapid recovery.

**Fairs and Floats.** PWV will have a booth at both the New West Fest and Rist Canyon Arts Festival. Both events have been great venues for us to tell people who we are and what we do. It's also a chance for us to recruit new members and sell a few books. We could always use more members to help us staff the booth. If you are interested, contact **Gayle Vancil** (our volunteer coordinator) at [vancilga@aol.com](mailto:vancilga@aol.com).

Also, PWV will be in this year's Home Coming Parade. PWV **Jim Cook** is heading up the project. He is designing the float and will be using a flatbed truck courtesy of BMC. He would like as many uniformed PWVs to be in the parade—“what a sight that will be.” Contact Gayle Vancil or Jim Cook (970-484-1686) if you are interested in participating.

## PWV Schedule of Events

### JULY

21 PWV Board Meeting\*

### AUGUST

18 PWV Board Meeting\*

### SEPTEMBER

15 PWV Board Meeting\*

New West Fes

### OCTOBER

20 PWV Board Meeting\*

\*PWV Board Meetings are open to all members and are held at the USFS Office Building at 2150 Centre Ave., Building E, Fort Collins.



Canyon Lakes Ranger District  
Arapaho-Roosevelt NF & Pawnee NG  
2150 Centre Avenue, Building E  
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If you like what you see in this newsletter and want to join the **Poudre Wilderness Volunteers** or support our cause, please mail us at:

**P.O. Box 271921,  
Fort Collins, CO 80527**  
or contact us at **(970) 295-6730**



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## Hazardous Materials

by Paul Smith

PWVs may be exposed to hazardous materials as a result of inspecting or cleaning up campsites and surrounding areas near trailheads, parking areas, and toilets. These may include items that contain or have contained bodily fluids (blood, urine) human or animal waste products (toilet paper, clothing, etc.), drugs (recreational and medicinal) or chemicals used in the manufacture of drugs. All PWVs should wear gloves when picking up these materials. In order to avoid direct contact with these materials, disposable (Nitrile) gloves should be used AT ALL TIMES and be part of your equipment (check with your local pharmacy for availability). Use your trowels to loosen the materials and scoop them into plastic bags that can be sealed with duct tape. After cleaning the area, the gloves should be disposed of by putting them into a zip lock bag. The gloves should NEVER be reused as they may be contaminated.

PWVs should be aware that portable containers are commonly used for manufacturing drugs (i.e., meth labs), such as Styrofoam coolers. Sometimes these coolers are taped shut and abandoned in parking lots and may contain poison gases and/or explosive mixtures that are by-products of the manufacture of drugs. They should be approached with extreme caution.

Removing the cover of a sealed container may expose you to serious injury or contamination as a result of an explosion or the release of hazardous gases under pressure. Plastic bags that have been sealed with tape may contain dangerous gases or chemicals. These items should NOT be opened under any circumstances!

If you see what you think may be explosive components, hazardous chemicals, or sealed containers as described above, you are advised to contact the Larimer County Sheriff's office immediately. These items may be evidence of illegal drug activity. Remember, YOUR SAFETY COMES FIRST. If you are the least bit concerned about suspicious containers or materials, leave them and report it to the Sheriff's office and the Forest Service.

Other precursor components for drug manufacture, or other indicators, can include large quantities of matchbooks, cold medications or empty cold medication packages, gasoline additives (i.e., "HEET"), acids, fuel bottles, camp stove fuel, obvious drug paraphernalia (smoking pipes, syringes, etc.), or plastic packaging materials with residue (small baggies with white or green residue). These items are also evidentiary in nature and should be forwarded to the Sheriff's office for processing.