



Mountain Lions in Our Midst

Mother Nature provided the residents in Mountain Shadows with another vivid reminder that we live in Mountain Lion Country as there was an apparent mountain lion kill on a neighborhood street in January. Sometime between 6 and 7 a.m. one weekday morning, there was evidence of a mountain lion killing a deer at the corner of Ashton Park Place and Courtney Drive. Local news stations carried the news, in large part because of the proximity of the attack to a local school bus stop.

As with previous attacks on pets and wildlife, this is a wake-up call for our neighborhood. These cats do not stop chasing something just because they come upon asphalt. No matter which street you live on, it's a good bet that you know someone who's seen a mountain lion, seen a kill, or had their dog taken.

This may seem frightening, but it is nothing to panic about. It is rare for a mountain lion to attack a human being. This area is teeming with natural prey for these big cats. And the average lion would much rather attack and eat them. However, it is still important for us to be aware of our proximity to lion hunting grounds.

LOCATION CHANGE FOR MSCA MEETINGS

The Mountain Shadows Community Association has changed its meeting location. We are now meeting in the conference room (room 19) at Chipeta Elementary School, 2340 Ramsgate Terrace. Meetings are still scheduled for the last Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m.

Please note that our Annual Member Meeting will be held on April 26, starting at 6:30 p.m., in the Chipeta gymnasium. This space will accommodate a large group, so we encourage and invite all residents to attend. Guest speaker to be announced.



The Colorado Department of Wildlife has several suggestions for what to do to avoid mountain lions and what to do if you encounter one:

- Do not hike alone: go in groups, with adults supervising children.
- Keep children close, especially near dusk and dawn.
- Don't leave small pets outside by themselves at dawn, dusk, or night, since several smaller dogs have vanished in our area in the past years.
- Do not approach a mountain lion—most will try to avoid confrontation, so give them a way to escape.
- Do not run from a mountain lion: running may stimulate the instinct to chase. Instead, stand and face the animal. Make eye contact. If you have small children with you, pick them up so they don't run.
- Do not crouch down or bend over. This can make you look more like a prey animal. Instead, make yourself look as large as possible.
- Throw something at the animal—rocks, your backpack, a flashlight—anything you have on you.
- If attacked, fight back.

Another reminder: Do not feed their prey. It seems kind to feed the deer and rabbits, but you are conditioning these animals to ignore their natural fear instincts, which can make them easy prey.

Report any sightings of mountain lions or bears in residential areas to the Colorado Division of Wildlife at 227-5200.

Above all, remember the old adage: *They really were here first.* We need to realize that our neighborhoods have encroached on their natural territory. We can coexist, but we must be careful and mindful of our surroundings.

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SCHOOL NEWS

Chipeta Eagles Soar to New Heights!

Once again, Chipeta rated “Excellent” on the State of Colorado School Accountability Report. This was our fourth “Excellent” rating in a row, plus we achieved the added status of “improving” within that excellent range, which means our children are showing gains from year to year. Your children have all been working so hard, and it is really paying off!

The CSAP testing window is fast approaching this year. *What can parents do to help their child be successful?* Two of the best tips: make sure they get a good night’s sleep and have a good, healthy breakfast. Teachers will take care of the rest.

While the testing process is important, at Chipeta we don’t lose sight of the total educational experience. This time of year is jam-packed with activities. Our fantastic parent volunteers in our PTA have arranged enrichment programs galore for children after school. Afterschool programs include Spanish, intramural sports, ceramic painting, cartooning, cooking, Science Matters, and even yoga. We have several students participating in Battle of the Books, an upcoming science fair, musical programs for first and fifth grade, and field trips scheduled to the State Capitol and the Colorado Mining Museum. Students will participate in Jump Rope for Heart in March. The fifth grade Revolutionary Ball in May is another highlight.

Please visit your community school.

PROSPECTIVE PARENTS: Chipeta’s Kindergarten information night is March 21 from 6 to 7 p.m., with kindergarten registration on April 14 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Parent Forum: Student Safety & Success

Holmes Middle School PTSA and BAAC are cosponsoring a Parent Forum, **Monday, February 27**, from 6 to 8 p.m. in the Holmes Media Center (library). Holmes staff and external speakers will present four topics on Student Safety & Success. Parents from area elementary schools are invited. Refreshments will be served. Attendees will select one program during each 45-minute session:

Session 1: Safe Teen—Suicide is the third leading cause of death for young people aged 15 to 24; and the fourth leading cause of death for persons between the ages of 10 and 14. Suicide is preventable. Unfortunately, District 11 schools deal with suicide annually. Safe Teen is a suicide awareness and prevention program sponsored by the El Paso Health Department to teach parents the warning signs and appropriate responses.

Motivating All Students for Achievement—Mike Kreidel and Jennifer Mitchell provide an overview of school programs to increase learning and performance for all levels of learners.

Session 2: Internet Safety—Did you know 12-15 year olds are victimized on the Internet at a rate 84% higher than the general population? Lisa Joseph shares tips for ensuring your child’s Internet safety.

Safe2Tell—What issues are facing our teens today? Susan Payne, Director of Safe2Tell and a 15-year detective with CSPD, will open your eyes to the world of our teens and explain her Colorado program for helping teens “break the code of silence” and report unsafe situations.

Holmes is located at 2455 Mesa Road, phone 328-3800. Nora Brown (PTSA President) and Janet Vaupel (BAAC Chair)

Renaissance Academy Summer Program

Renaissance Academy Environmental Center (RAEC) offers half-day and full-day outdoor education for youth from mid-June through mid-August. The environmentally oriented and experiential curriculum is designed to foster an appreciation of nature with topics that range from drama and art to local flora and fauna.

Please call 475-2510 for a program guide with course descriptions, weekly themes, dates, and pricing. Check www.therenaissanceacademy.org after March 1. We at RAEC are excited as we prepare for our second season. We hope you will join us this summer as we embark on our continuing adventure.

Trailblazer 2005-2006 “Home of the Timberwolves”

The first few months have been fast paced with assessments, team planning for instruction, PTA family events and lots of learning. We are currently in third quarter and our students are preparing for the state assessments (CSAP). Our students continue to score well above the state and district averages in reading, writing, and math. We appreciate our parent community in partnering with us to help our students be successful.

We welcome the involvement and support of the Mountain Shadows Community. We invite you to visit, volunteer or be apart of our Building Accountability Advisory Committee or PTA. For more information on these opportunities please contact our office at 328-6300 or visit our web page at www.d11.org/trailblazer.

Katherine Tapia-Griego and The Trailblazer Staff

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN MOUNTAIN SHADOWS

Refurbished Bike Program

Recently twenty-seven decent bikes were donated through Charitable Release from the Police Department impound lot for distribution to hurricane evacuees.

Al Brody of the Pikes Peak Area Bikeways Coalition is arranging work parties and individual volunteers to get the bikes roadworthy. Bicycle Village, REI, Old Town Bike Shop, Bikepro-Mobile, CS West Cycling Hub, Brian's Bicycle Repair Shop, CS Cycling Club members, CS Pub Crawlers, and other cyclists have agreed to help refurbish the bikes. But more volunteers are needed.

Memorial Hospital is donating a new helmet to go along with each bike. Elke Glavan is coordinating the distribution with the Pikes Peak Support Center.

Contact Al Brody at 266-6846 to donate a bike or to volunteer. *If we all do a little, we will get it done!*

FENCING INFORMATION

One of the more common questions we at the Mountain Shadows Community Association (MSCA) receive is about the fencing that runs behind the houses on both sides of Flying W Ranch Road.

Some residents have noted that new fencing has been installed in Rockrimmon along Vindicator between Centennial and Rockrimmon Boulevard. Many are asking why this has not happened in Mountain Shadows.

Please note that MSCA has neither the authority nor the funding to put up fencing. This fencing is on the property of individual homeowners, and it is up to each person to take the responsibility to maintain their own section.

Coronado High School is sponsoring:

Westside Wrestling Club Freestyle, Greco, & Collegiate

The Club begins Monday, April 3, and continues every Monday and Thursday until the end of May.

5:30 to 7 p.m.

For ages 8 to 18

Cost: \$50

Where: Coronado High School, Wrestling Room
You may register the first day of practice.

Questions? Please call:

Matt Brickell 592-9368

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A Word from City Council

Scott Hente,
Colorado Springs
City Councilmember

Speed Limits

There has been discussion since the City started to move forward on changing speed limits on various streets. As the local media reported, the City recently concluded speed surveys to ascertain whether or not speed limits should be adjusted. These speed surveys—a recognized practice at both the National and State levels—are used to determine the speed at which the “normal” or prudent driver would drive, barring unusual circumstances.

Why do “speed surveys”? The simple answer is it they are mandated by law. Without speed surveys, we could be accused of arbitrarily setting limits too low so as to be able to issue more citations. In addition, as the current

surveys indicate, the public sometimes does not feel safe driving as fast as some limits allow and so we should set a lower limit than currently exists.

The assumption is that the majority of drivers, if no other restrictions were in place, would drive a safe speed for a given street. The recognized practice is to then look at speeds at which 85% of the drivers drive at or slower than. (It’s assumed that 15% will drive too fast for a given speed.) Given that, the set speed is determined by 85% of drivers. This is the 85th percentile figure that has been reported. Or said another way, this is the limit that 85% of the drivers (based on their driving habits) feel the limit should be no higher than.

This is important: First, this 85th percentile is where the speed should be set barring other mitigating circumstances, such as school zones, residential neighborhoods, or high accident prone areas. It is prudent to keep speeds lower in those particular circumstances. Second, this in no way is

meant to imply that the City is backing off of the 25-MPH limit in residential areas. On the contrary, we are as committed as ever to keep speeds lower in areas where we live and play. And finally, the City will continue to actively enforce traffic laws as a means of deterring excessive speeding.

The City has been accused by some of strictly enforcing speed limits only as a means of securing revenue. **This is not true.** We enforce speed limits to promote public safety. Placing reasonable speeds on our streets (which in some cases means raising the existing limit) is a good faith measure with our residents, showing that we are dedicated to having the appropriate speed. We want all of our residents to follow the traffic laws, and it is incumbent on us to set reasonable limits.

I stand ready to answer any questions you may have on this or any other topic. Please feel free to contact me at shente@springsgov.com or at 385-5487.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Fire Where We Live

Your home is in area that is referred to as the wildland-urban interface (WUI). Simply put, the WUI is the place where homes and the natural environment meet. A common concern for you and your neighbors is that wildfire is a part of the natural environment surrounding your home.

Wildfire in Winter

People often associate wildfires with dry summer days, but recent winter wildfires illustrate that Colorado Springs has a year-round wildfire risk. With a shortage of moisture even now, the vegetation in the wildland-urban interface is extremely dry. Recent warm temperatures and strong, gusty winds compound the problem by further drying out the vegetation and increasing the fire danger. While snowfall and precipitation can reduce the fire danger, the return of unseasonably warm and windy days can quickly cause the fire danger to be elevated again.

Brush Patrol

In times of increased fire danger, you may see the Colorado Springs Fire Department's (CSFD) Brush Patrol driving in the wildland-urban interface. The Brush Patrol is an additional resource consisting of a wildland firefighting vehicle and firefighters available to quickly locate and suppress any

wildfires that might start. They will also talk with homeowners about the CSFD FireWise Program and ways to reduce wildfire risk around the home.

Sharing the Responsibility

The Colorado Springs Fire Department's FireWise Program asks you to **Share the Responsibility** of living in the wildland-urban interface by using responsible and legal measures to reduce the wildfire risk around your home. To find your home's specific wildfire risk:

- Visit the FireWise website at <http://csfd.springsgov.com>.
- Click "What Is My Wildfire Hazard Rating?"
- Click "Search" and enter your street number and name

We want you to know that you live in an area with an elevated risk of wildfire. If you have a home that has an **extreme** or **very high** wildfire risk, you should have recently received a newsletter entitled "Where We Live." You can look forward to future newsletters in 2006 with new articles about living in wildfire-prone areas. Additionally, homes with an **extreme** wildfire risk also received a postcard from the FireWise office this past summer. Residents of homes with an **extreme, very high, or high** wildfire risk will receive postcards from our office later this year.

Free, Onsite Consultation

If you want to reduce your wildfire risk before a wildfire burns through your neighborhood, contact the FireWise office at 385-7281 to schedule a **free, onsite** consultation to learn how you can improve your home's survivability.



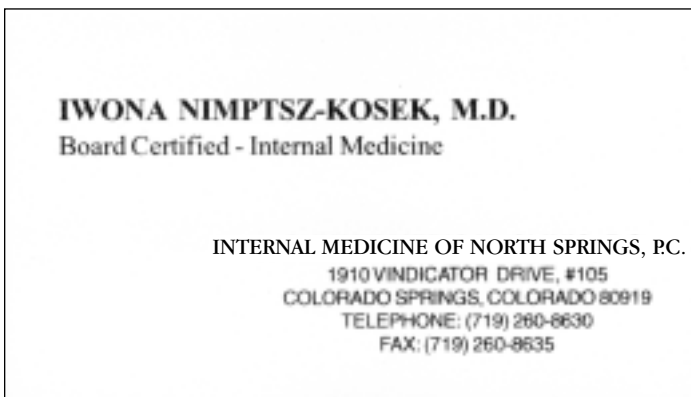
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Tell Us About Events!

Leave a note about items for the community calendar for Dave Bolt at www.mountainshadows-msca.org with dates of important events and key details, so he can add them to our calendar.



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Upcoming Summer Concerts— Mark Your Calendar

Watch for more information on two upcoming summer concerts: **Rock & Roll on June 25** and **Country & Western on September 10**. These events take place at in our neighborhood park—Mountain Shadows Park at 5151 Flying W Ranch Road, next to Chipeta Elementary School.

The band from last summer’s successful concert—The Rolling Tones—will be performing again for us this year at the June 25 concert.

We plan to have free ice cream and sodas (while they last) plus face painting for the kids. Bring your own chairs, blankets, food (no gas or charcoal), and drinks (alcoholic beverages are prohibited in all city parks).

Times to be announced.

Events like these take place thanks to our voluntary MSCA member households. Are you a member yet? See page 9.



MSCA BOARD CHANGES

MSCA is losing a valuable asset in April. Our treasurer, Bob Shee, has tendered his resignation from the board. Bob has been a terrific asset, but has other obligations and must move on.

If you have interest in participating on the MSCA board in any capacity, please contact one of our committee members. (See phone numbers on page 2.) We meet monthly for about an hour and a half, and there are a few things to do (depending upon your position) between meetings.

Please come to the MSCA meeting April 26 and see what we are all about. All meetings are open to residents and we welcome your input.

Garage Sales Anyone?

Several local neighborhoods have annual garage sales. When neighbors coordinate their sales it can maximize traffic in a particular area. Mountain Shadows Community Association wants to know if our residents would be interested in participating in such a sale.

Based on feedback, we will pick a date and place a newspaper ad. All you have to do is open your garage door, put your items out, and run your own sale. *Does this interest you?*



Please let us know. We are considering late June, but if you prefer July or August, let us know that. Visit www.mountainshadows-msca.org to let us know what you think.

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Is Your House Worth More Than You Paid for It? LET'S TALK CURB APPEAL!

Our homes are probably the biggest investment most of us make. Do you remember why you chose yours? Take a walk down memory lane... Were you impressed with location? Schools? Access? Or was it simply the best buy for your dollar? For whatever reasons you may have had, most of this rings true for buyers who are looking for homes today.

When it comes to the value of your home, first impressions matter. The at-a-glance attractiveness called "curb appeal" is more important than ever. Many prospective homebuyers will size up a property within just a few seconds of viewing the exterior. That doesn't even get them in the door to look at your upgraded fixtures or remodeled bath!

The appeal of Mountain Shadows

As a real estate professional and resident of Mountain Shadows, I can assure you that our community is extremely desirable. Situated in the foothills, Mountain Shadows offers wide appeal. Broad price range and styles. Wooded and private lots and also views and open space. Wildlife. Access to parks and trails, convenient shopping, business access (yet tucked away), great schools, and of course, a stone's throw from the wonders of Garden of the Gods Park.

How appealing is your property?

Next time you come home, stop across the street to get a good view of your house and its surroundings. *What is your first impression of the house and yard area?* What are the best exterior features? How can you enhance them? What are the more challenging exterior features? How can you minimize or improve them? Stand on the curb and look at your house objectively. Walk up to the door and see if there is

anything that would look unattractive or disturbing to another person.

Homeowners who aren't selling should still care about keeping their biggest asset in top condition and generating interest in our community. Bottom line: appeal drives value. Potential buyers are continually driving through our community; make sure that your home is the talk of the trip!

Enhancing Your Home's Value

These outdoor items may require repeated attention but the payoff is worth it. If it isn't attractive, or looks like it would require too much work to get it into shape, many buyers will keep on driving.


• *Landscape to enhance instead of hide the property.*

Flowers add maximum appeal and they are easy and inexpensive. Flowerbeds or containers placed in front of the house, set with mixed flowers in

bright shades do wonders to spruce up a property. A recent Gallup Survey concluded that an increased selling price is realized when a home is nicely landscaped.

- *Trim shrubbery, edge the lawn, and make sure to remove all debris.*
- *Attention here will minimize your work in the long run.*
- *Repair the driveway and/or walkways.*
- *Sweep the driveway.*
- *Repair damaged fencing.*
- *Make sure the front entrance sparkles. Scrub it or paint it if needed.*
- *Repair ripped screens, cracked window panes, and chipping and peeling paint.*
- *Clean gutters and windows.*

Waynette Rand, Broker Associate,
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

ARE YOU RELYING ON THE "SOLAR METHOD"?

This time of year, it is especially important to remember that we are each responsible for snow removal on our property. Some residents seem to think that removing snow is optional. Unfortunately, even those of us with southern exposures need to help nature along.

So, what exactly are we responsible for? We must clear our driveways and walkways of snow and ice as much as possible. This includes the sidewalks along our property lines. Please shovel the snow onto the grassy surfaces. Aside from the moisture this provides to lawns, City Code prohibits shoveling snow into the street. Let's keep those walkways safe for the children on their way to the bus stops and your neighbors as they walk their dogs.

MSCA MONTHLY MEETING CHANGE

The MSCA Board meets the last Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. in the conference room (room 19) at Chipeta Elementary School, 2340 Ramsgate Terrace.

Open to all Mountain Shadows residents.

Babysitting Co-Op

The babysitting co-op provides neighborhood babysitting. It is a great way for you and your children to meet neighbors, make friends and get dependable care for your children. Planned activities include playgroups, mom's night out, an annual picnic and couples activities. For more information, please call Kim Washburn at 548-9295.

IT DEPENDS ON HOW YOU LOOK AT IT...

- It seems easier to put the trash out at night for morning collection, but that gives bears and other scavengers a free-for-all.
- It seems caring to feed the deer and rabbits, but that makes them an easy meal for predators in your yard.
- It seems convenient to leave the dog poop where it fell, but that turns our neighborhood into a cesspool.
- It seems expedient to speed on streets in our neighborhood, but that puts all the pedestrians in danger.

NEW MEMBER INFORMATION

03/06

- YES, I/we want to participate in our community. Sign me/us up for the next 12 months.
- YES, I'll/we'll help out, too. Please tell me/us how we can help.

NAME(S) _____

ADDRESS _____

HOME PHONE _____

Please send your email address to: msca@adelphia.net

AMOUNT ENCLOSED
\$25.00 12-month dues

Please make checks payable to the Mountain Shadows Community Association.

Mail this form to: MSCA Membership Committee • P.O. Box 49072 • Colorado Springs, CO 80949

A date on your mailing label signifies when your membership expires.

The mission of the Mountain Shadows Community Association is to enhance the quality of life and promote the well being of the community.

Mountain Shadows Community Association
P.O. Box 49072
Colorado Springs, CO 80949

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ANNUAL MEMBER MEETING will be held April 26 in the gymnasium at Chipeta Elementary School, 2340 Ramsgate Terrace. The starting time will be 6:30 p.m. and special guest speaker to be announced. *We encourage and invite all residents of Mountain Shadows to attend.*

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