

### Wolf Rescue coming to Hermit Park

Hermit Park Open Space will welcome the Ignacio Wolf Rescue and its live Wolf Ambassadors the weekend of July 18. Hermit Park Open Space is located just southeast of Estes Park off U.S. Highway 36. Camping reservations can be made through [www.larimercamping.com](http://www.larimercamping.com). The programs are free, but there is a \$6 per vehicle entrance permit required. Registration is not required for these programs, which are stationary with no hiking involved.

Visitors have four chances to visit with the wolves and learn about rescue operations:

> 10 a.m. and 7 p.m.

July 18

> 10 a.m. and 7 p.m.

July 19

For more information contact Rob at (970) 679-4561 or [rnovak@larimer.org](mailto:rnovak@larimer.org).

To learn more about Larimer County's parks and open spaces, go to [www.larimer.org/naturalresources](http://www.larimer.org/naturalresources).

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*Reporter Herald 7-9-09*

### Ignacio Wolf Rescue to visit Hermit Park Open Space

Ignacio Wolf Rescue and its live "wolf ambassadors" will visit Hermit Park Open Space the weekend of July 18.

The group will give presentations about the wolves and its rescue operations at 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, July 18-19. Hermit Park Open Space is just southeast of Estes Park, off U.S. 36.

The programs are free, but there is a \$6 per vehicle entrance permit required.

Registration is not required for the programs, which do not involve hiking.

Camping is available at Hermit Park. Reservations can be booked at [www.larimercamping.com](http://www.larimercamping.com).



For more information contact Rob Novak, 679-4561 or [rnovak@larimer.org](mailto:rnovak@larimer.org), or visit [www.larimer.org/naturalresources](http://www.larimer.org/naturalresources).

— Reporter-Herald staff

CATCH OF THE WEEK

*Reporter Herald 7-11-09*  
**Seats filled on county boards, commissions**

Board of Larimer County Commissioners has appointed the following people to county boards and commissions:

**Board of Adjustment:** Peter Bohling, Alan Cram, Jeffrey Schneider — Fort Collins.

**Citizen Review Panel:** Cathy Lund — Fort Collins, Duke Sumonia — Glen Haven, Nancy Kain — Loveland.

**Extension Advisory Committee:** Marsha Dooley, Pam Harrold, Mel Hilgenberg, Sonia Koetting — Fort Collins.

**Office on Aging Advisory Council:** Marcy Greenslit — Berthoud, Peggy Bowers, Valerie DiBenedetto, Carolyn Funk, Howard Hay, Ellen Pihlstrom, Bill Prather, Stan Ulrich — Fort Collins, Kristina Seth — Loveland.

**Open Lands Advisory Board:** Patricia Brennan, Peter Kast, Steve Vessey — Fort Collins.

**Parks Advisory Board:** Frank Gillespie, Barry Lewis, Forrest Orswell, Vickie Traxler — Fort Collins.

**Planning Commission:** Mina Cox — Berthoud, Andrew Boucher, Gerald Hart — Fort Collins.

— Reporter-Herald staff

## IN BRIEF

Loveland Connection 7-11-09

### Guided hikes offered through the county

Larimer County will host a series of guided hikes and events this month.

The following is information about the events:

- 8 a.m. today — **Life on the Edge:** Explore Red Mountain Open Space and learn about the ecology and biodiversity of the area. This is a two-hour, easy hike. Registration is required. For more information, call 679-4561.

- 8 a.m. Sunday — **POGO Hike:** Join a naturalist at Fossil Creek Reservoir, north of Highway 392, west of the Windsor/Interstate 25 interchange, for an adventurous search for pelicans, osprey, grebes and others. This is a two-hour, easy hike. For more information, call 679-4561.

- 8:15 a.m. Friday — **Moon Over my Open Space:** Take a walk through Larimer County's new open space, Red Mountain Open Space, 25 miles north of Fort Collins on County Road 15. Participants will learn about the moon's myth and legend and nocturnal wildlife. This is an easy hike. Registration is required.

For more information, call 679-4561.

- 7 p.m. July 25 — **Wiley Coyotes:** Learn about coyotes during this presentation at the outdoor classroom of Fossil Creek Reservoir Open Space, north of Highway 392, west of the Windsor/Interstate 25 interchange. This is an hour-long stationary program. For more information, call 679-4561.

### Larimer County Outdoors

Beinhoud Recorder 7/16/09

Hermit Park Open Space will welcome the Ignacio Wolf Rescue and its live Wolf Ambassadors the weekend of July 18. Do not miss out on this excellent opportunity to get up close and personal with one of the world's most charismatic and often misunderstood predators — the grey wolf. Hermit Park Open Space is located just southeast of the Town of Estes Park, off Hwy 36. Camping is available — book your reservation now at [www.larimercamping.com](http://www.larimercamping.com). If you can't stay, come anyway. The programs are free, but there is a \$6 per vehicle entrance permit required. For more information, contact Rob at (970) 679-4561 or [rmovak@larimer.org](mailto:rmovak@larimer.org).

LovelandConnection.com

7-22-09

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## IN BRIEF

### County names board members

The Board of Larimer County Commissioners recently announced the following appointments to Larimer County citizen boards:

- Board of Adjustment: **Nancy Kain** of Loveland; **Peter Bohling**, **Alan Cram**, **Jeffrey Schneider**, all of Fort Collins.

- Citizen Review Panel: **Cathy Lund** of Fort Collins; **Duke Sumonia** of Glen Haven.

- Extension Advisory Committee: **Marsha Dooley**, **Pam Harrold**, **Mel Hilgenberg**, **Sonia Koetting**, all of Fort Collins

- Office on Aging Advisory Council: **Kristina Seth** of Loveland; **Marcy Greenslit** of Berthoud; **Peggy Bowers**, **Valerie DiBenedetto**, **Carolyn Funk**, **Howard Hay**, **Ellen Pihlstrom**, **Bill Prather**, **Stan Ulrich**, all of Fort Collins

- \* Open Lands Advisory

Board: **Patricia Brennan**, **Peter Kast**, **Steve Vessey**, all of Fort Collins.

- Parks Advisory Board: **Frank Gillespie**, **Barry Lewis**, **Forrest Orswell**, **Vickie Traxler**, all of Fort Collins.

- Planning Commission: **Mina Cox** of Berthoud; **Andrew Boucher**, **Gerald Hart**, all of Fort Collins.

## Online Poll

7-19-2009

From ReporterHerald.com  
Should Larimer County Department of Natural Resources contract with Estes Valley Recreation and Parks District to manage two Estes campgrounds?



Number of votes: 158

Poll should not be considered scientific. Poll taken at [www.reporterherald.com](http://www.reporterherald.com).

This week's question:

Would it bother you to see someone carrying a holstered handgun in public?



## Nothing but a blue sky ahead

BY MILES BLUMHARDT  
*For Loveland Connection*

Straddling my mountain bike on the edge of the redrock rim of the hogback and looking out over the valley typically green for this time of year, my helmet chin strap was as saturated as a soaker hose and sweat stung my eyes.

Wondering how I let myself get this out of shape and if my legs had it in them to ride the only section of the 22-mile Blue Sky Trail system I hadn't ridden — the Indian Summer Loop — I waited for the air in my lungs to fill my brain with good sense.

Two hummingbirds came out of nowhere to sword fight a foot from my face in hopes of sucking nectar from my red Giant mountain bike. The winner went away disappointed. Canyon wrens called out their throaty buzz among the redrock. The scent of silver sage carpeted the air.

I headed my mountain bike downhill, picking my way through the loose rock and winding around sharp turns lined with the frizzy silvery mountain mahogany seed heads shining in the morning light toward the valley floor. Leveling off, then slowing

and it wasn't sweat. I hopped off my bike in a goblin forest of spiky mullein, sprawling bee balm and stickery musk thistle to determine what stung me.

The place was buzzing with bumble bees, honey bees, hummingbirds, butterflies, all sucking sweet nectar from the forest. It was obvious as I sat among the buzzing that I had accidentally been stung.

I begrudgingly got back on my bike to pedal up the Indian Summer Trail, a 2.1-mile loop that takes riders as far west of the Blue Sky Trail as you can go. The trail was a nice conditioning addition to the ride, with some views back to the valley from which I came.

From my Indian Summer Trail overlook, I had every intention of riding nonstop back to the parking lot. It's only about 3.5 miles. I rode back through the buzzing goblin forest, stair-stepped my way down the redrock and labored back up the various hogbacks (OK, there was plenty of hike-a-bike involved) to the top of the ridge where Coyote Ridge Natural Area meets the Devil's Backbone Rimrock Trail.

From here, it was a matter of carefully descending the 2.1 miles back to the parking



Photos by Miles Blumhardt. For Loveland Connection

**Tim Schultz** of Loveland hikes his bike down stairs on the Rimrock Trail. Inset, a bumble bee buzzes a Rocky Mountain

## ABOUT BLUE SKY TRAIL

- **Miles:** 22 miles, including additional loops and adjoining trails, from Horsetooth Mountain Open Space on the north to Devil's Backbone Open Space on the south
- **Trailheads:** Devil's Backbone Open Space west of Loveland, Coyote Ridge Natural Area, 1 mile south of Trilby Road on Taft Hill Road south of Fort Collins or Soderberg Open Space along Inlet Bay on the west side of Horsetooth Reservoir
- **Hours:** Sunrise to sunset
- **Open to:** Mountain biking, hiking, trail running and horseback riding
- **Fee:** Free if accessing from Devil's Backbone or Coyote Ridge; \$6 if accessing from Soderberg.
- **Facilities:** Restrooms, water and information kiosk located at trailheads only. Bring more water than you think you'll need.
- **The ride:** Mostly intermediate singletrack with some very technical sections ascending and descending the ridges. These are hike-a-bike sections for all but experts. Can be done in various sections either out and back or with a shuttle.
- **When to go:** Early morning or evening when you're more apt to see wildlife and avoid the heat of the day.
- **Pets:** Not allowed at Coyote Ridge Natural Area or Rimrock Open Space
- **Snake alert:** Yes, you're likely to see bullsnakes and rattlesnakes on or near the trail. No need to freak out. Observe from a distance and enjoy.
- **Information:**  
[www.larimer.org/Parks/bluesky.htm](http://www.larimer.org/Parks/bluesky.htm)

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8/15/2009

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## Poor planning gates off areas for riders

I have to admit that I was excited to have Red Mountain Open Space and Soapstone Prairie Natural Areas open to the public in June.

Since Red Mountain and Soapstone are in my backyard — literally — I knew I had some good riding ahead of me. Years before the city bought Soapstone and Larimer County bought Red Mountain, I would ride my horses for miles out there.

The city and county spent a lot of time and money planning for these two wonderful new parks. A very nice dirt road and several bridges replaced the old washed-out Larimer County North County Road 15, now called Rawhide Flats. The bathrooms at the parks are new and clean and there's even a rider's mounting block that is wheelchair accessible at Soapstone. Everything is very neat, tidy and organized.

Then why am I not happy?

Well, for one thing, you can't bring your dog to either park. Doesn't matter if they are well-trained and better behaved than most children — no dogs.

OK, I'll let that one go. Rattlesnakes, heat stroke, pronghorn deer, maybe it's better that the dogs stay home.

But I'm still not happy. The reason is because although the city made a lot of effort to make Soapstone a horse-friendly park, it seems that the county's open space staff who put in the gates on the trail that crisscrosses Soapstone did everything possible to make it downright dangerous to ride your horse there.

There are a gazillion (hey, I counted) gates all through the park that are decidedly unhorse-friendly. Not only are they too narrow to open on horseback, but they're



**Terry Jester**  
Animals A to Z

even too narrow for a rider to go through on horseback if someone is holding the gate open.

Now, I'm assuming that most people are like me and have legs that come down on each side of the horse while riding. Open space planners seemed to have forgotten about the little things — legs, saddles, saddle bags — that have to go through the gate at the same time that the horse does. My group tried but the only person able to ride through some of those gates with their legs up over the horse's neck still got their saddle bags ripped in the process by barbed wire that was used on the posts.

I guess having your saddle bags ripped is better than having your horse ripped and the accompanying rodeo that would ensue. But suffice to say, the narrow gates, barbed-wire hardware and spring-loaded closers don't just make for an unpleasant on-off, on-off experience, it makes it dangerous as well.

The solution? I'm hoping that the people in charge will change things to make them safer. Meanwhile, I'll be riding at horse-friendly and much safer, Red Mountain.

**Terry Jester** is a nationally recognized companion animal behaviorist. To learn more about companion animal training, visit [www.rockymountain-rawhide.com](http://www.rockymountain-rawhide.com). For questions about your own pet, call Jester at 568-7585 or send e-mail to [arriniranch@aol.com](mailto:arriniranch@aol.com).

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## Open space grants available; applications due by Oct. 14

The Larimer County Open Lands Advisory Board has expanded the county's Small Grants Program.

Applications for grants will be accepted through Oct. 14.

The program disperses Help Preserve Open Spaces sales tax dollars for projects that protect and enhance open space on public and private lands.

Three new grant categories have been added: "agriculture," "increased access to open spaces" and "research on open spaces."

The original category — "protection or enhancement of open space, trails, natural areas, wildlife habitat, river areas, and wetlands on private or public land" — remains.

A total of \$20,000 is available through the Small Grants for Community Partnering, for individual awards of up to \$2,000 per project.

Applications are due by 3 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 14, with awards announced by February.

To learn about grant selection criteria or to apply, visit [www.larimer.org/parks/openlands/smallgrants.htm](http://www.larimer.org/parks/openlands/smallgrants.htm).

Application packets also can be obtained at the Bison Visitor Center at 1800 S. County Road 31, Loveland, or by contacting Sue Burke, coordinator for Small Grants for Community Partnering, at the Larimer County Department of Natural Resources at 679-4566 or [sburke@larimer.org](mailto:sburke@larimer.org).

— Reporter-Herald staff