President's Corner

by Gudy Gaskill

Winter has finally come with snow in the high mountains. I’m sure that the ski areas were getting concerned with the late snows. The rest of us were glowing in the wonderful lazy fall weather. Our family took a quick bike ride out of Waterton Canyon to enjoy a bit of The Colorado Trail before the snow came in the following day. Now the trail has been put to bed for the winter. Cross-country skiers will be enjoying many parts of the trail as the snow gets deeper. One of the favorites for the Metro crowd is skiing from Kenosha west to Deadman’s Gulch. Other favorites are Searle Pass from Cooper Mountain to Janet’s Cabin, as well as Tennessee Pass south to Weir Gulch. Our friends, the Ken Marshalls and the Frank

Yurt Trip in February 1995

by Barbara Wasser

Two summers ago, I worked for one week outside Durango on the Sliderock portion of The Colorado Trail, near Kennebec Pass. My crew leader was Merle McDonald.

Merle sent out letters the following November to individuals who would be interested in backcountry skiing in the beautiful wilderness country of Hinsdale County, outside the small town of Lake City, Colorado. There would be two groups, seven individuals each. Our trip plan was to visit the John Wilson Yurt, the Rambouillet Yurt, and The Colorado Trail Foundation’s Yurt. I signed up immediately and began planning for my excursion in February.

The day arrived, and we were all set to go. Arthur Rankin, Elke Arbitol, Merle McDonald, and my son, Clint, Continued on page 4

Continued on page 2

The Rambouillet Yurt
“Tread Lines” is the internal newsletter of the Colorado Trail Foundation. It is published quarterly and distributed to the Friends of The Colorado Trail.

The Colorado Trail is a 500-mile-long, high-mountain educational and recreational hiking trail that meanders through some of the most beautiful terrain in the state. It stretches from Denver to Durango with many intermediate access points.

The Colorado Trail Foundation, an all-volunteer, nonprofit corporation, is governed by public agencies and private sector representatives. The Foundation recruits and trains volunteers for trail construction crews, coordinates the Adopt-A-Trail maintenance program, and distributes information on Colorado Trail activities, trail crews, and publications. Donations to the CTF are tax deductible.

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This edition of Tread Lines was compiled by Susan Junkin and Merle McDonald.

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Kleins like to ski on Molas Pass around the lake and west. Years ago we had four hardy skiers that skied The Colorado Trail before the complete route had been selected. They cached food in trees before the snows came. Of the four, two completed the whole trail. We need to print excerpts from their log . . . and the challenge through the Elk Mountains. I remember one of the comments that they made was the appreciation of the CT layout, keeping the trail away from known avalanche paths. Such a trip is only for the very few.

Trail Surveys

The volunteer hosts of The Colorado Trail survey met with Gudy and husband Dave as well as Board of Directors member Sam Guyton recently for an evening of food and good conversation about the goals and future plans on the CT. Julie Mesdag volunteered to review the surveys and pull the numbers together. A report by each of the hosts and the result of some of the basics in the survey are reported elsewhere in Tread Lines. See pages 24 through 28. The results will help with future problem areas and the design of the trail.

Trail Development in Durango

Executive Committee members Merle McDonald, Denise Wright, Chris Abston, Gudy Gaskill, and Board member Bob Moore met with independent landscape architect Paul Wilbert from Durango to review Durango’s plans to build a trail from downtown Durango out to the CT. The city is including this connection as part of the overall plan for trail development in and around Durango. They hope to get a GOCO Legacy fund grant to support this plan. Bob suggested that we accept the trail as a connector but retain the trailhead in the San Juan National Forest. The recommendation was accepted by the committee members.

Trail Workshop

Plans are now under way for a trail workshop in late spring in the vicinity of Marshall Pass. Jeff Hyatt from the Salida District is recruiting staff to help with the instruction. This workshop will be open to all CT Adopters and leaders. Some very basic reviews on maintenance problems will be covered. Included will be boggy areas and drainages, slough, and deep roughing and braiding. Hopefully there will be time for raised treads and water dips versus water bars. The announcement will be in the Spring issue of Tread Lines, and it is hoped that many of you can attend. The CTF will host a barbecue afterward.

Weekend Trail Crew

EMS sponsored Joe Slack’s weekend trail crew in the Buffalo Creek area
last June. As a result of the relocation of the work area made necessary by the Buffalo Creek fire, the EMS staff that came out with the goodies were unable to find the Camp! (The EMS T-shirts were distributed later.) Joe’s crew did such a fine job that they received a letter of praise from District Ranger Pam DeVore. See page 19. Congratulations crew! Such good Teamwork! Thanks EMS.

Event for Long-Term Supporters

For all of the supporters of The Colorado Trail with a longevity of three years or more (that is, as supporters), we are planning a special week-long event for you. This is our way of saying thanks to you for continuing to support our work. We need you and appreciate your loyalty. What comes around, goes around. As soon as the trek dates are set, and the availability of the van and pickup are known, you’ll be sent a special invitation. It will be your chance to be on part of The Colorado Trail for a great vacation, fun, and a little education on the side.

Holiday Open House
Saturday, December 7, 1996, 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Our annual Holiday Open House date has been set. It’s not too early to mark your calendar and plan on visiting with new and old friends. We will try to set up our new multimedia slide show (if we can find a room dark enough). Gudy and Dave Gaskill’s home on Lookout Mountain is the place. Topic: bring a gift of NATURE for exchange. It’s a good time to purchase your shirts, books, caps, and patches for Christmas gifts. To get to the Gaskill perch, take I-70 west to exit 254 (Buffalo overlook); turn north and go under the Mt. Vernon Country Club gate. Turn left (west) at the first split in the road. Follow the road around the hairpin turn to the bottom of the hill. Pine Song Trail is the road to the left of a large group of mailboxes. Follow the road to the Gaskills at the top of the hill. (Actually, follow the CT signs from the gate.) Hope you can join the festivities!

Looking in on Our Leaders

We have such an interesting group of leaders. For those of you who have inquired about Bruce Armstrong’s quadruple bypass, it is great to report that he’s doing fine, and Bruce and daughter Marta were a couple of the hiker/skiers on Kenosha Pass last weekend. George and Lila Miller just returned from a much-needed vacation in Utah. They explored some of the narrow canyons and basked in the warm sun. Jon Greeneisen has just returned from a working trip to the Ukraine, working for the State Department’s Agency for International Development. Just before his crew in August, Jon had been twice to China, working with the farmers on producing and marketing. Jon has some first-hand stories to tell of conditions and corruption. Lynn Mattingly has purchased a B&B in Peonia. It’s called Manor House Farm and is a century-old historic farmhouse. Her phone number is (970) 527-4414 if you are thinking of a charming getaway. For those of you who weren’t on one of Merle McDonald’s trail crews, Merle succeeded in climbing Mt. McKinley (20,323 ft) via the traverse route of up the west buttress, over the top, and down the classic Muldrow glacier route and across the tundra to Wonder Lake. The month-long trek included hundred-pound backpacks, where sheer icefalls and below zero temperatures were the norm. Arthur Rankin has expanded his shirt and hat business to all types of clothing and accessories, personalized to your perfection. Joe Slack has been on another Ports-of-Call trip to Switzerland. A couple of weeks ago, Joe came back empty-handed from hunting in the Vail area when he was caught in the snowstorm and incredible road conditions. Ernie Werren and Barbara have moved into their duplex in Silverthorne. Ernie has spent a great deal of time this fall with CT reconnaissance between the Waterton Canyon and the Mt. Princeton reroutes. We are planning on completing the Waterton Canyon/HiLine Canal project this coming summer and hope to have the Mt. Princeton reroute finalized in 1998. Gudy’s friends got tired of hearing her moan about her aching toe, so she had it shortened and should be back on skis by early December. Larry O’Donnell has had a great trip to Turkey, hiking in the Eastern Mountains and visiting the fabulous Roman and Greek ruins. The rest of the time Larry spends volunteering his time for the Alexander Foundation. Phil and Mae Smith have been busy with church work and keeping the school bus route going. A unique trip is planned for 1997.

Future Events

Watch the December Backpacker magazine for an article on hiking seniors. Areas in Colorado are mentioned, including The Colorado Trail.

Dates for the annual eight-day back-country ski trip are February 15th to 23rd. This trip is limited to six participants and the leader. Call Gudy to reserve a spot or phone the CTF at (303) 526-0809. Complete details will be in the Christmas newsletter.

Editors’ Note:

As an all-volunteer organization, the CTF divides the administrative workload among many volunteers at several different locations. Sometimes things get lost in transit. If you need to have some administrative business with the CTF tracked down, please contact the CTF vice president, Merle McDonald, at (719) 599-4258. He will be glad to help.
headed out to Lake City at 6:45 on the 16th of February. We arrived in Lake City and visited John Wilson who is from Dallas, Texas, and who owns a beautiful log home and cabin in Lake City. John was involved with the other group. Their itinerary was to ski in to his cabin located in the American Basin area. (The ski-in was 5½ miles on a jeep road.) John’s miles, and we were there in about an hour. Our first impression was, “it’s so big.” Actually the size of the yurt is about 14 x 16 feet. It is composed of heavy-duty plastic, 2 x 4s and plexiglass dome, and clear plastic at the front of the yurt. Inside we found a wood-burning stove, gas range, sink, two bunkbeds, and several cots. The yurt could house six people. Our first duties were to get water for cooking and to stoke the stove. We lucked out because there was a stream close by, so I grabbed a bucket, put my skis on, and headed down to the creek. With the help of Clint, we retrieved our water supply and put a pot on for boiling to purify the water. We all took turns preparing meals. We were each scheduled for a breakfast and one dinner. Art brought in the meal for the first night. Wonderful Chinese food from Alfalfa’s. What a treat. (The standard fare for breakfast was oatmeal, coffee, and usually an excellent bread with jam.) Once we finished our meal and cleaned up, we sat up and talked until about 8:00.

Everyone made their last trip to the “out yurt” and discovered the dark evening bursting with beautiful stars. That was our treat every evening—star gazing—it was spectacular. Once we were tucked in, the yurt was quite magical at night. You could see all the beautiful stars and the moon. It was a full moon on this trip, and one time during the night I woke up and gazed at the dome in the yurt and saw the moon was dead center in the middle, as if it was a spotlight shining down upon us. Gorgeous.
The fire was stoked through the night, and when morning arrived it was a tad chilly but so warm and snug in the sleeping bag. We all got up and enjoyed a leisurely breakfast, and the yurt was warmed within half an hour. We packed up and headed to our second yurt, the Rambouillet. We set out in the dense forest and had an elevation gain of about 800 feet. Clint had snowshoes and broke trail for us through four feet of snow. Thank goodness for skins! We arrived at the top of the incline, and we were still in dense forest. We headed north and saw orange marker flags on the tree and continued to follow the trail when Jerry Grey appeared. (He is the builder of the yurts and maintains a section of The Colorado Trail by Lake City.) We followed him out of the forest as he staked the trail for the second group. We arrived at the mesa, had lunch, and continued our skiing to the Rambouillet Yurt (about 4.5 miles from the John Wilson Yurt). It was a gorgeous day, and we had spectacular views. The mesa seemed to go on for miles, expanses of land that went on forever. We arrived at the Rambouillet, settled in, and relaxed after a vigorous day coming in. This yurt was constructed of poles, bark removed, set in a tepee manner. Same construction, only different carpet! Each yurt had a porch on the front, so we basked in the sun and enjoyed the beauty surrounding us. The third yurt, the CTF Yurt, was not complete, so we spent two nights in the Rambouillet. We toured the next day toward the CTF Yurt, had lunch, then headed up the lookout point and had a spectacular view of the San Juans. Our last day, we skied out and headed back to John Wilson’s home for much-needed showers. It felt so good. No more greasy hair. We stayed at John’s home that night and headed for his cabin the next morning (Monday), 5½ miles in. The cabin was nestled in the forest and was so great. John had installed a wood-burning stove with a catalytic converter, and it was cozy. There were platforms with mattresses and a loft upstairs for additional sleeping. The porch was beautiful. We faced a gorgeous mountain, with White Cross Mountain to the southwest and American Basin to the west. We all congregated on the porch and had a contest trying to guess the temperature that afternoon. 93 degrees!! There was a spring 50 yards away that was a dream; the gurgling was mesmerizing and tranquil and the water, wonderful. 

We skied to American Basin the next morning; it was spectacular. Then we skied back and packed up. We all headed out, and because Clint did not have skis, it was slow moving for him downhill. He rode on the back of my skis a few times—what a kick. It was a staggering glide, stop and start; either I would be out of control or Clint would jump off because it was such a spasmodic ride. We made it down to the car and had a lot of laughs skiing out from the cabin. Clint and I had a great time, along with all of our other companions. It was a trip I will never forget. Check with Gudy for information on this year’s yurt trip.
It was not a pretty picture. Packing day and the clouds were low with a cool breeze (cold wind?), but it really looked as if it would burn off. I had three calls asking if we would still be packing, and, “Oh, by the way, it is raining here,” I was told.

“It won’t rain, and we’re going for it,” was my standard reply.

And they came. And we started. We had a good start; in fact, some people were packing the boxes. AND IT RAINED, and rained and rained.

It started as a steady rain, not heavy, but not some light, fuzzy drizzle either. Boy! These people can move fast when the situation calls for it. Raincoats and slickers appeared out of nowhere. We HUSTLED, slitting big orange highway bags, throwing them over the piles of food, stacking boxes, throwing bags over them, trying to waterproof everything as much as could be done.

We ate lunch, had a good time, and discussed our options. GO FOR IT won out. We would have three packing centers—living room, hall, and family room. No sense in everybody getting wet, so Denise, George, Rick, and Roger did most of the retrieving of the now very soggy boxes and food piles.

I cleaned out my towel shelf as now we had to dry off all this stuff before it could go in another box. I threw the soggy boxes down the basement stairs, kept a steady stream of towels going to and from the dryer, and mopped the floor when it became dangerously wet.

We tried putting boxes of foods that had no inner bag—Minute Rice, to name one—in the oven to see whether they would dry out. As you may know, it did not work very well. I’m sure someone on kitchen duty had to scrape the rice off the sides of the box. The really wet ones were replaced; fortunately, there were a few extras.

All in all, it was quite a day, quite an experience, but such teamwork has to be acknowledged. The crew did a terrific job despite the weather. Only a video camera could have caught the true hilarity and pathos of the day. Of course, it finally stopped raining 20 minutes after the last person left.

It was the largest crew ever to pack food—15 people! Sorry we didn’t get a group picture afterward, but you understand.

THANKS TO Bruce Armstrong, Lois and Tracy Cochran, Marilyn and Rick Eisele, Nancy and Roger Gomas, Lila and George Miller, Harriet Patton, Arthur Rankin, Phil and Mae Smith, and Denise Wright. A special thanks to Denise for her great organizational skills.

The mountain of soggy boxes eventually dried out, and most went to be recycled. I think George should return his fancy, expensive raincoat that soaked him all the way through. In cleaning up, I found a raincoat, two large pieces of, I think, waterbed liner? sack? but it made great cover, plus another tarp. They are here waiting to be claimed.

THANKS AGAIN EVERYONE.

Donations

Thanks to our friends who have answered the call for donations of hard-to-find equipment. Jenny Kent has donated a stove-top oven and a hand-crank ice cream freezer; Sally Snyder found a stove-top oven for the Educational Facility; and Kathy Howard has sent a hand-crank ice cream freezer from her home in Arizona. Things still needed are folding tables and chairs. A wood-heating stove and a propane-burning apartment-sized cooking stove are needed for The Colorado Trail Foundation Yurt. Also, some very large cooking pots (20 quarts) with lids would be appreciated. If you have any of these items to donate, please contact Gudy at (303) 526-0809.
THANK YOU
TO THESE COMPANIES
THAT VERY GENEROUSLY
DONATED FOOD FOR THE COLORADO TRAIL CREWS

ALAMO DISTRIBUTORS—RON HAMILTON
CHIPS

ARCHWAY COOKIES—DAVID SULKOWSKI
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KETCHUP, MUSTARD, RELISH

KING SOOPERS—DON GALLEGOS/RUTH RICCIO
GIFT CERTIFICATES

*KRUSTEAZ—CONTINENTAL MILLS IN KENT, WA
PANCAKE MIX

KUNER EMPSON CO.—BOB SIEFERT
CORN ‘N PEPPERS,
DICED CARROTS

NESTLES FOOD CO.—KAREN OLSON
CANDY BARS, HOT CHOCOLATE,
BREAKFAST BARS

*ORIGINAL NUT HOUSE (HOODY’S)—CHUCK SMITH IN LOS ANGELES, CA
PEANUTS IN THE SHELL,
TRAIL MIX

*MRS SUTLER’S SNACKS—DAVE GREENHOUSE
TRAIL MIX

STOKES/ELLIS FOODS—PAT BAYHOUSE
CHILI WITHOUT BEANS,
CARROTS, KIDNEY BEANS,
GREEN BEANS

The Colorado Trail Foundation, the Food Committee, and—most of all—the Trail Crews appreciate the generous donations from these 11 companies. All of us associated with the trail can show our appreciation by buying products from these companies, and I hope you will do so. I also want to thank Scott Pierce at Colorado Closeouts for his price cuts and ‘deals’. MANY THANKS to all these companies for the help and cooperation I get when I call for donations.

*These Companies are new this year.  
Food chair, Pat Nagorka
A great team of 12 met at the Saguache Ranger Station of the Rio Grande National Forest on July 6, ready and willing to make a difference on The Colorado Trail. We jumped into our vehicles and played follow the leader 30 miles to our campsite. Fortunately, this year the road was dry and we had no problems en route.

The crew consisted of

Bob Ballou, Pueblo; Anne Biddle, Grand Junction; Susan Deady, Brenda McCord, Linda Parker, Miss Jo Standley, and Alison Walker, all from the Dallas area; Josh Logan, Colorado Springs; Charlie Sloan, Jr., Vienna, VA; Phil and Mae Smith, Castle Rock; and later in the week, Theresa Badylak, also from Dallas.

Realizing that numbers aren’t always a primary indicator of what is accomplished, nevertheless it gives some perspective. On Monday, the newly-inducted crew completed 672 feet of trail; Tuesday, 732 feet, Thursday, only 459 (they were worn out from a “day off,” I guess); and 936 feet on Friday—a total of 2799 feet And this is “baby bottom soft”—you could almost walk on it barefoot! The trail work was done primarily through rock in this area.

On Wednesday, Josh Logan didn’t take his day off, but worked the entire day for extra community service hours! All but 5 of us went to Gunnison on the day off, where they shopped, bathed, and had a massage. (I wonder why!) Our

I asked the crew to jot some impressions about this week, and here are some responses: “This is not easy work—but roasting miniature marshmallows over an outdoor fire is well worth the effort.” “My hands will hardly hold the pen.” “The mosquitoes are aggressive.” “Trails have taken on a different meaning.” “It’s only the first day!” “Tuesday: I now appreciate a well-maintained trail; however, I’ve never seen 36” of baby butt trail before.” “This sure tells you what is really important—a nice, dry bed, good food, and friends to laugh (and complain) with.”

We had it easy on going-home Saturday in that we were able to leave the potty tent, the shower stall, and both large tents and stoves and other equipment in place because another crew was going to use them in this location in two weeks. Everyone appreciated that—except my wife who had to see that all the food was packed in the back of my truck to take home!
Cumberland Basin #1, Crew #8 Report

by Joe Slack, Crew Leader

Leader: Joe Slack
Coleader: Herschel Smith
USFS Coordinators: Larry Johnson and Gary Mason

Project: Build new tread; repair the old; install water bars and diversions; install and relocate vehicle barriers; install and relocate posts with trail markers. Work area from Cumberland Basin parking area eastward to, at least, Kennebec Pass.

Crew members: Richard Byrd, Cassia and Steve Cearley, Lois and Tracy Cochran, Jason Crews, Steve and Kitty Cruser, Chris Fulenwider, Matt Heider, Marney Jewell, Larry Mack, Jim McIntosh, LaVern Nelson, Mike Robinson, Rolly Rogers, Linda Rowe, Elfriede Shoemaker, Joe Slack, Herschel Smith, Sean Tangeman, and Lee Umscheid.

Starting at the parking lot to build new tread, the crew was quite widely spaced. Tracy, Rolly, and Steve Cruser helped Herschel and Joe instruct new crew members in removing foliage, stones, and brush, and making smooth tread, etc. In a few hours, only touch-up advice was needed. In the meantime, Larry Mack began demolishing a couple red sandstone ledges in our tread’s way.

During lunch break on day two, Mike Johnson, Columbine District Ranger, visited the crew. He praised the crew on the length and excellent tread that had been made in such a short time. By the end of day two, 3/10 mile of new tread was completed except for a couple small spots needing touch-up.

Joe accompanied Mr. Johnson on a visit through our wonderful campsite, then over Kennebec Pass and onto an old mine road where he could view, across the valley, the Sliderock Trail that was completely rebuilt by three crews in 1994. Several times he commented about the good work done by this hardworking crew.

On day 3, Elfriede, Mike, and Herschel did the final “polish” work on the finished tread while also keeping an eye on our campsite so passing hikers wouldn’t be tempted to loot. The rest of the crew, with all tools, hiked approximately 3 1/2 miles round-trip to near Taylor Lake to repair on old, badly eroded tread by pulling in edges, removing brush, installing water bars, and rebuilding switchbacks.

Herald Managing Editor, and a photographer arrived here for a visit. Both commented about the heavy labor. Many photos were taken, and several members interviewed. Joe escorted them so Electa could hike on our newly built tread, view our campsite, then go to her car. A color photo of Kitty Cruser wielding a pulaski highlighted the very nice, informative, and crew-pleasing front-page article of the newspaper’s July 26, 1996, edition.

Continued on page 11
Saturday July 20, we drove by caravan from Saguache Ranger Station to our section of the CT. Our drive through the rocky open spaces of the San Luis Valley was dry and brown but with beautiful far-off vistas of the craggy Sangre de Cristos. We wound our way up a rough mountain road to a clear-cut area near the Continental Divide, just east of Razor Park. Large piles of dead lodgepole pines littered our base campsite. Years ago they had been cut and left by loggers, as an eyesore and embarrassment to the Forest Service. However, around the campsite the lodgepoles grew so dense and so tall, the only ground cover was in the clear-cut area—so the wildlife came here to feed. We set up camp, and our small crew of nine enjoyed a perfect view of the new moon and a sky full of stars.

Sunday afternoon we got initiation into what it meant to be a member of a CT crew. Phil Smith led us up to the ridge to teach us how to safely use Pulaskis, McLeods, picks, and rock bars. We worked two hours in the heat of a very hot day—even at 11,500 feet! We kicked up a lot of dust and just couldn’t seem to overcome it. That night from our campfire, personalities began to emerge to go with the names and faces of our small crew. Slowly we transformed from a “group” to a “team.”

Tuesday, roots slowed us down, and we completed only a little over 300 feet of trail. We swung the ax heads of our Pulaskis at the stubborn boot-grabbers. Texas Jim (one of two Jims) decided roots were the bane of trail building. Clint, the optimist, said something about using our “weak minds and strong backs to overcome,” and to “do or die,” and even “it just doesn’t get any better than this”! We admired his optimism even when we doubted it. That night from our campfire, we watched a brilliant lightning show flashing down on the prairies to the east.

Wednesday is usually a day off. But our eager group worked part of the morning (Phil bribed us with promises of a shower at the ranger station—a luxury afforded because we were so small and shortened workdays all week). As we left the trail, having completed 150 feet, Texas Jim was wondering if roots were really the bane of trail building, or could it be the rocks? Having hit rock on the trail that day caused some indecision. We spent the rest of the day on Sargent’s Mesa, exploring a tall marble monument to all who fought in the Vietnam War, both friend and foe. In that mountain meadow, scattered out in all directions from the monument-like shrapnel, were marble markers honoring the troops from every country in their own language. This high meadow, the wildflowers, the wind in the pines, the distant lowing of cattle, and the mountain vistas to the north and east. How far we were from the battleground—yet how close. On the way back to camp, Ohio Jim, Marilyn, my son Paul, and I discussed our memories of war times. It seems every generation grows up with one. That night as Texas Jim and Clint washed the dishes, they begged us not to tell their wives that they had such a skill—but we have the pictures!

Thursday was a very tough day. We picked our way through only 200 feet of rock and trail dust. Texas Jim decided that day that rock was definitely the worst part of trail building. At the campfire, Clint brought out popcorn to share and told us how wonderful all of this work was and how we just didn’t have to use our minds at all! Eating Mae’s ice cream for an incredible second time in one week, we wholeheartedly agreed with him! (Remember the air is very thin up there.) We hit just about every topic at those campfires—religion, politics, economics, regional jokes, flower and fauna identification, and, all being veteran trail builders, we shared the stories of past crews. Phil, Ohio Jim, and Marilyn had probably hiked the most miles, and not just in Colorado. Marilyn has trekked the world, and was an inspiration to all of us.
Friday, we completed 492 feet of trail, a real feat for our little team. We felt satisfied, proud, strong, tired, and sad/glad it was over! Sad to be saying good-bye to our new friends, and glad to be returning to hot showers and being able to stand up straight when we pulled on our pants in the morning. We were all happy about this except for Clint. His usual optimism dissipated as he wondered how we were supposed to go back to a bed and clean sheets after all this. He quickly recovered, however, promising that he’d surely try to make the best of it.

Saturday, we worked fast and hard to dismantle everything and leave the campsite looking like we’d never been there. Then it was!

This great crew was made up of Clint Britt, Houston, TX; Paul Marchand, Fort Collins, CO; Jim Reder, Keller, TX; Marilyn Robinson, Golden, CO; Jim Sprague, Parma, OH; Betty Taylor, Fort Collins, CO; and Phil and Mae Smith, Castle Rock, CO.

Day 4 consisted of relocating old barriers and placing new ones to control off-road vehicles. New signposts were planted and old ones relocated. A number of water bars and/or diversions were made on the west side of Kennebec Pass plus about four down the east slope to near the Sliderock area. Joe and Steve Cearley cleared loose rocks off the tread in the slide area. A section about 15 feet wide, which seemed stable, is creeping onto the tread and could have a few tons of loose, fine rock. This and a hiker’s report of downed trees near timber’s edge were given to USFS and the next crew leader.

A USFS Ranger gave a splendid talk to the crew concerning the significance of the new archaeological nature of our work area. Since camp was located in this newly designated site, all food, tools, equipment, personal gear, etc., must be hand carried or wheelbarrowed about 1/4 mile from our vehicles to camp. Camp routines were changed: all garbage and trash was bagged for USFS removal, USFS latrines were over 1/4 mile away, dishwasher disposal holes and shower stall had to be off the plateau, and no open fires were allowed. USFS supplied two two-burner and one three-burner stoves with propane tanks.

As usual, the Columbine District’s support was superior!
The original plan for these two crews was to relocate the overgrown trail along Middle Fork Creek, a valuable wildlife and plant riparian valley, to a less ecological location along the ridge, leading to our destination, Hidden Lake, at 11,400-foot elevation. This task would prove more difficult than Arden Anderson, BLM recreation manager, pathfinder, and cowboy poet could imagine.

These were backpacking crews, and once one realized he or she had survived that tortuous climb and finally arrived at our chosen campsite, located across a scenic tall grass meadow in a beautiful quaking aspen stand, one most surely felt they could contend with and overcome any challenges that might lay ahead.

**Trail Crew #10**

And respond they did. Crew 10 arrived to find only a cook tent provided and soon went to work creating, engineering, and building one of the most respectful camps imaginable, all without the first nail and hammer, drill, or skill provided. Constructing these most admirable facilities were J.J. Kleckner and Carole Colletti, “the one-hole-on-the-hill”; Greg Lane, Rand Jenkins, Jason Carmichael, and Richard Roth, our aspen logged, triangular, hold-everything kitchen table; Glenn Kepler, Roy Kepler, and Brendon Egan, “Solar-wind” shower; Tom “Rockbar” Ferriter, Jack Rogers, and John Ross, the sweetest, steadiest stove table ever in the Powderhorn; and fireside benches of aspen and volcanic rock constructed by Eric Lubell, Kari Malen, and Ben Ramage. And organization of the meals and kitchen during all this commotion was being done by Virginia Lane and Nathan Roth.

After constructing the 1/3 mile section of new trail from Middle Fork Creek, where the Kepler-Ross crew built TWIN bridges, to our campsite on the ridge, we came to an impasse. Because of boulder fields between camp and our destination, Hidden Lake, we were unable to continue directly up the ridge. We spent Thursday and Friday refurbishing approximately one mile of trail along the upper section of Middle Fork Creek. So, after all their toil and sweat, Crew 10 left without knowing whether or not their vigorous and beautiful trail work had been in vain.

**Trail Crew #12**

Where there were 17 volunteers plus Arden and me in the first crew (10) (four Floridians, two New Yorkers, one from Pennsylvania, and the rest of us Coloradans), we had a mere six but hardy volunteers to show for the second crew, #12 (Ben Ramage from New York, the only one to endure both weeks, one Bostonian, one Texan, and 3 Coloradans. We also had a very wide range of ages on both crews, from 13 to 65.

And yes, Arden was able to lay out an easier and even more scenic route that utilized approximately half of our camp trail. This reroute forked left and traversed the ridge through a lovely aspen grove overlooking the creek valley and beaver ponds below. It connects with the old trail just below where Arden had initially laid out that godforsaken, impossible reroute back to camp!

Our two retired colonels, Roger Gomas and Grady Monk, who so graciously volunteered to cook breakfast each morning, start the campfire, and prepare and set out our lunches for the days’ work ahead for Crew #12, also managed to find time from fishing to help build this beautiful section of trail. The fishing for both cutthroat and brookies was fantastic by the way, which most certainly can be attested by Crew #10’s fishermen Col. J.J. Kleckner and Tom Ferriter.

We also were able to complete another approximately 1/3 mile reroute around...
the muddy riparian creek area at the top section of the Middle Fork, that traversed off to the left through a conifer forest and to our destination, Hidden Lake! We were able to accomplish this because of the hard and diligent work by “first-timers” Julie Chose, Lauri Wardell, and Marie-Jeanne Lombardi along with Ben “Rockman” Ramage.

SUCCESS! VICTORY! MISSION ACCOMPLISHED! Whatever!!! Thanks to all you volunteers who so graciously spent your time and energy to give something back. And a special thanks to those summer Sherpas: MATT, STEVE, PAT, AND JAMIE—without whose rotating in and out for two weeks with backpacks of food and other provisions, along with building trail, we wouldn’t have eaten or finished our goal. Arden, Ben, and I also helped with these arduous tasks. And a big cheer for Arden for his articulating all his wonderful stories and poems around the campfire each evening, and thank goodness for “99”!

Crew 10—Sitting (left to right): Brendon Egan, Rand Jenkins, Kari Malen, Richard Roth, Glenn Kepler. Standing (left to right): John Roth, Roy Kepler, Nathan Roth, Jamie, Tom Ferriter, Pat, Carole Colletti, Greg Lane, Virginia Lane, Arden Anderson, Ben Ramage, Jason Carmichael, Eric Lubell, Jack Rogers, J.J. Kleckner.

Crew 12—Matt, Marie-Jeanne Lombardi, Jamie, Julie Chose, Grady Monk, Lauri Wardell, Roger Gomas.
It was a privilege to have worked again this year with teens from the Daniel C. Oakes High School here in Douglas County. The crew worked on The Colorado Trail/Continental Divide Trail north-west of Saguache in the Rio Grande Forest. The crew was able to put in two switchbacks and complete 2400 feet of tread. The tread was made three feet wide because of the slope of the hill. This part of the trail reconstruction was begun last year by another group of students from the Daniel C. Oakes High School, at Lujuan Pass. After next year’s crew, the trail will be completed to the top of the hill, which is about two miles of trail.

The crew was made up of the following:
15 teens:
Mark Arias, Sean Barden, Melissa Blanchette, Mike Brown, Dustin Clerk, Adams Craig, Lee Harrison, Michelle Holt, Jason Korte, Dixie Manzanares, James Odette, Eric Trikel, Ryan Wells, Cliff Whitetree, and Amy Wright.

2 sponsors:
Jeanie Craig, Greg Simons

1 cook:
Mae Smith

Here are some remarks from the crew.
“Fifteen students from the Daniel C. Oakes High School set off on a trip which none of us will ever forget. Seven nights and eight days on The Colorado Trail was our destination. This trip taught us all a little lesson about ourselves, about what we have in us, and a bit about life. Every day we worked was a struggle in our own minds and a struggle physically. It would have been so much easier to quit, yet so much more meaningful to succeed . . . . The choice was ours to make, and we all finished our job to the best of our ability. It wasn’t an easy task—every morning seemed a little colder, every day a little longer, and all the work seemed a little harder. Now is our last night and I believe everyone feels some sadness about leaving, but very proud of what we accomplished. We learned a lot about each other and ourselves, and none of us would ever want to forget what we’ve learned on this week of work on The Colorado Trail.”

Michelle Holt

“Daniel C. Oakes High School, under the direction of teacher Greg Simons, is grateful to the CTF for instilling the true work ethic in our students. It’s hard labor, but the students leave the trail-building week with a true sense of accomplishment, self-esteem building and great life-long memories.”

“As a parent-volunteer chaperone and an activist for our school, I am truly impressed at what CTF has done for our students.

Mae and Phil Smith are good role models for our teens, and their love for Colorado shines through in all they do. Their volunteerism is a great example to us all.

Thanks again CTF, and Mae and Phil!”

Jeanie Craig
The Cascade Creek 1 trail crew, led by Lynn Mattingly from Jamestown, Colorado, was quite an experienced and diverse crew this year. We ranged in age from the teens to the 60s. Volunteers on this crew included the following:

John Brookman, from Fort Collins;

Marilyn Eisele from Littleton;

Steven Kin, Peter Owen, and sons Peter and Will Owen, from Midland, Michigan;

Collette Lottor, from Longmont; Paul Van Beusichen, from Denver; Denise Wright, from Morrison; Merle and Uta McDonald and Larry Mack, from Colorado Springs; and two beginners to CT trail work, my father Rod Hicks and me (Kathleen Hicks), from Colorado Springs. During the week we were also joined by Larry Johnson (of the U.S. Forest Service) and Ted LaMay.

We met and shook hands on Saturday in Durango and soon after began the drive into the mountains to prepare for our backpack in to the campsite. The drive was quite a feat in itself; however, after a rough and bumpy hour and a half, we made it. After collecting our pulaskis and hard hats, we each set off to backpack in to our campsite near Rolling Mountain Pass, roughly 4.5 miles in. Between a total of two hours to four hours of hiking, members of the crew had reached camp, began setting up tents and wandering about. Not too much was going to come out from this first night as, already, we had a case of altitude sickness, the flu, and a recovering eye injury, among a few of our volunteers. Sounds like our crew may have been jinxed, but it didn’t stop us from some great trail work and good times throughout the week.

This crew’s purpose was to rework the trail between the end of 1994 crew work, east of Cascade Creek, up to join the trail work coming down from Rolling Mountain Pass. We started below Rolling Mountain Pass, working our way down. Over the course of the week, we successfully put in two new switchbacks, and six water bars, and hauled out more than enough rocks! Throughout the week, it was quite common to hear “Rock Bar!” every five minutes or so as another rock would need to be hauled out of the ground. Often enough, a team of about four volunteers would pull together to gut out a boulder that would leave a gaping hole in the trail. Larry Mack seemed to earn his name as rock man (in my book), and I don’t think my father will forget him saying, “If it moves, I’ll kill it.”

By Thursday we had managed to work our way out of the rocks and into the roots. So, if it wasn’t one thing, it was another, and right beside us all along were those biting flies! By the end of the week, we had managed to rework lots of trail—some new, some old.

Two unique events managed to make this crew’s experience in the mountains even more enjoyable. On Tuesday, one of the horse rangers, camping out not far from our site, brought in a couple boxes of fresh Colorado peaches. The peaches were GREAT—they lasted throughout the week and made for a wonderful dessert. Many thanks go to the rangers whose generosity was very appreciated! Later Tuesday evening we were greeted with a warm thanks for our trail work from two through hikers, Emily and Matt Calspell, from Honolulu, Hawaii. The two of them and their llamas had been on the trail since June 27 and expected to be hiking for another five days. We had a great time photographing and petting their llamas as well as listening to them talk of their journey. Emily and Matt set up

Continued on page 17
Crew 15 camped a couple of miles east of Ann’s Pass in the Collegiate Peaks Wilderness to build another section of the Gunnison Spur. Gene Cash’s Crew 11 the week before had selected a beautiful site—wildflowers, views of Huron Peak, a rushing stream, even a neighborhood moose—and organized a great camp setup.

Crew members gathered at the trailhead midday on August 10 for the three-mile backpack up to camp. The only problem was that Philip Haaf’s backpack coming with him from Germany had been lost along the way by Delta Airlines. But that afternoon CT’s Phil Smith and the Forest Service’s Steve Sunday saved the day by teaming up to get the wayward pack from DIA all the way to camp.

Our crew of 17 included people from five states and Germany. Eight were veteran crew members, and nine were first-timers. Sunday was the day for our traditional safety orientation, a hike to inspect our work site, and a hike on up to Ann’s Pass where we had lunch on the Continental Divide and a view of the completed trail down the other side into Taylor Basin.

Crew 15’s assignment was to build a high, dry trail through a wide, wet, and soggy willow bog that is inundated each spring by heavy runoff from snowfields above. This was a surprise because we thought we were coming to work in the higher trees and possibly even above tree line. But we read the architectural plans provided by the Forest Service, learned about constructing rockboxes, and set to work.

The task called for removal of about 10 inches of willow roots and muck to get down to solid ground, lining the 36-inch trail with boulders to hold it in place, laying in at least 6 inches of rocks and covering it with at least 6 inches of good soil. The job would have been a whole lot simpler if dump trucks could have brought in many cubic yards of boulders, rock, and dirt. Not likely in a wilderness. So in addition to building the rockboxes, we had to find and haul all the materials.

Crew members soon found their calling, and we worked like a well-practiced team. Doug Burtard became our “boulder supplier,” while Bob Flaws dug in as “dirt pit man.” Grey Owl Barrett (OK) was “bucket brigade captain,” assisted by “gravel haulers” Angie Bamberger and Philip Haaf and “dirt hauler” Corrine Kock. Mike Snow and Ian Flaws were our “stump choppers,” while Kevin Harris (MO) was a “Pulaski operator” and Mark Harmon (OR) our “general handyman.” Honora Wolfe often functioned as “boulder roller,” while Carolyn Burtard used her artistic skills as “rock placer.” Dan Wolfe (NM) was a standout “muck digger,” and Kiah Harris (MO) was No. 1 “boulder wrestler” in making the rockbox walls. We had able assistance through Thursday from four summer Forest Service employees.

With good weather, hard work, and a team spirit, we completed the job by Friday morning and spent the rest of the day cutting and building ¼ mile of new trail on up into the forest. We were pleased with what we had accomplished, but we couldn’t have done it with such dispatch without a strong base camp support crew: Coleader Bob Hughart, camp engineer, and cook Marylin Greeneisen.

On Wednesday, Kiah “led” Kevin, Ian, Mike, and Philip to the top of Huron Peak, first 14er for all but Mike. Others went to the hot springs, toured the ghost town of Winfield, hiked the ridges, or identified wildflowers.

We had interesting and entertaining evenings around the campfire—harmonica serenades, Chinese storytelling, jugglers, stand-up comics, and a special Jalapeno popcorn that exploded all over the camp.

Most members of the crew probably would agree that Crew 15 had a productive, enjoyable week in helping build the Gunnison Spur. We especially wish to thank Loretta McEllhiney and her coworkers of the U.S. Forest Service’s Leadville District for their tremendous support.
What a superb location for a backpack camp! Nestled in a deep valley, we overlooked Ice Mountain, the three Apostles, and Illinois Peak. A cascading waterfall below the cook tent completed the melodic sound of a wilderness camp. A steep backpack heightened the number of high altitude sickness cases so that Dusti Denesha and Shannon Snow left camp by Monday. A couple of others revived and enjoyed the rest of the week. Our hats off to Pat Carden for executing delicious meals to a hungry group. Our international group included Ruth Thomas from England (who climbed extremely difficult Ice Mountain on Wednesday) and Philip Haaf from Germany, spending his second week at the Lake Ann camps. Dr. Dan Wolfe also completed two weeks of trail work in the area. The work consisted of building trail from where Jon Greeneisen’s group had left off to building trail in the scree slopes and marking the trail with cairns. The crew became great rock movers, and for every boulder moved, another 15 rocks had to be transported to fill into the hole. Work above timberline was slow but rewarding as a trail was developed into the rock-covered mountainside. The last day and a half were spent building incredibly engineered rock cairns by J.J. Kleckner to great heights. From the top of Ann’s Pass, the cairns were visible into the tree line. Members of the crew that engineered the lasting epitaphs were Myra Winfield, Lee van Ramshorst, Jerry and Jonelle Roberts, J.J. Kleckner, Jim McIntosh, Barbara Markwood, and Beverley Gherardini. A memorable week, lasting friendships, a superb crew!

As a first-time volunteer, I am inclined to add a quick synopsis of my personal experience on the crew: The piece of Colorado that we worked on for a week was indescribable in many ways. In a general sense it was beautiful. The blend of scenery that we were among and the everyday responsibilities and hassles of society that we were not, made for an experience I will always remember. I found the work to be hard and at times grueling—at the end of the day I came back to my lumpy, uneven tent with numb toes from poor work boots, sore arms and shoulders, and I discovered muscles in my back I never knew I had. During the day it would have been easy to forget I was a volunteer and not in a labor camp had it not been for the pleasant conversation among fellow workers. The work truly was rewarding; however, the greater experience of the week was being among a team of good, interesting, and inspiring people. I think more of the people I met that week than the trail I helped build and overall I think to myself “I’m doing this again!” Special thanks to the Owen boys for fun times and, of course, to Lynn Mattingly for great leadership and a great experience!
Boy Scout Troop 471
by Bill Lewis

Well, the hiking season is coming to an end. The Eddiesville to San Luis Pass section was fortunate this year to have Troop 471 BSA helping maintain section #32. Cary and I went in early in June. Cary got lucky and watched a beaver in the Cochetopa trying to flush this bull moose from its pond. Then in early August, I was headed up from Creede to San Luis Pass to meet 471 and also came across a cow and her calf. Here’s a nice letter and photo of the troop, leaders, and CT.

Thanks,
Bill and Cary

On August 5–10, 1996, eight members of Boy Scout Troop 471 from Northglenn, CO, hiked a section of The Colorado Trail from the confluence of Stewart Creek and Cochetopa Creek to the Creede trailhead, and back again. During their six-day backpacking adventure, they worked with contractor Bill Lewis, who is responsible for maintenance of that section of The Colorado Trail. The boys and their adult leaders helped Bill clear the trail of debris, set trail markers, and build stone bridges across the streams. The purpose of their trip was to meet the requirements of the BSA backpacking and camping merit badges, and to offer a service to outdoor enthusiasts who visit the area.

One of the highlights of the trip was a short visit to the town of Creede, CO, where the troop saw the mining museum carved into the side of the mountain. They also toured many of the nearby historic mines. Another highlight of the trip was climbing to the summit of San Luis Peak, thereby earning membership in the BSA Fourteener Club. The boys and their leaders felt that their adventure in the La Garita Wilderness was an experience that they will never forget. The scenery was spectacular, the weather was perfect, and their wilderness experience was unsurpassed. Thanks to the Colorado Trail Foundation for helping to make their adventure so memorable.

Report submitted by Mike Blick
Backpacking Merit Badge Counselor
Troop 471 BSA

Troop 471 BSA on The Colorado Trail in the La Garita Wilderness, northeast of Creede on August 8, 1996 (left to right): Neal Steffonich, Chris Miranda, Sean Bradley, Dion Steffonich, Mike Blick, Johnny Bates, Sven Nelson.
Not shown: Joe Steffonich.
Forest Service Letter of Appreciation

August 22, 1996

Joseph J. Slack
Colorado Trail Foundation
875 11th St.
Boulder, CO 80302-7514

Dear Joe:

I would like to sincerely thank you for the work accomplished on The Colorado Trail this past June. The expertise, time, and energy that you donated for the trail work was a tremendous success. The South Platte District is extremely pleased with the amount accomplished and the enthusiasm displayed. Please accept my apologies for the tardiness of this thank-you letter!

This rehabilitation and repair was necessary to protect the trail and its surrounding resources. Your group’s hard work will be appreciated by all those using the trail for years to come. The horse riders and hikers will now find their trek a more pleasurable experience thanks to you.

I hope that the work was rewarding for you and that you will visit the District for your own pleasure and for other projects. Again, thank you for your assistance. It should be a source of pride and satisfaction.

Sincerely,

Pam DeVore
District Ranger
South Platte Ranger District
Morrison, CO

Report from a New Friend

The following is an excerpt from a letter that was received by the CTF in September.

Enclosed is my check for a donation as a Friend of The Colorado Trail.

Since I live in Buena Vista, I am very familiar with The Colorado Trail that runs through our Collegiate Peaks. Three years ago I started a men’s hiking group that hikes each Thursday year ‘round. Our group of 5 to 15 men have frequently covered the entire trail from Half-Moon campground to Route 50 west of Salida. There is also a women's hiking group on Wednesdays that frequents The Colorado Trail. Their number is twice as large as ours. Many of us in Buena Vista direct friends and relatives to The Colorado Trail, and summertime visitors from other states are referred there by our Chamber of Commerce Hospitality Committee.

I would like to know more about adopting a section of trail in this area and how we can help with signs as well as publicizing the values of the trail.

Yours truly,

Franklin Steiner

The CTF loves to hear from users of The Colorado Trail. Frank, your letter has been sent to the Adopt-A-Trail coordinator for a reply. Keep up the good work, and thanks for your support. A new handout on the CT is being prepared and will be distributed to Chambers of Commerce and Tourist Bureaus as soon as it is ready.

Tread Lines Fall 1996

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Bicycling The Colorado Trail from End to End
July 1–7, 1996
by Brian Vorachek

The Colorado Trail as an adventure trail can be many things to many people. Its beauty and strength are that it will challenge you in ways you can’t imagine.

My challenge was to ride the CT as fast as I could and in the best style. For me that was End-to-End, Durango to Waterton Canyon, fully unsupported. I planned on riding the CT in five days with a two-day cushion if I had problems. The trail was a little bit harder (well, . . . much harder) than I thought it would be. I started the CT in Durango at 11:00 a.m. on July 1 and finished in Waterton Canyon at 2:00 p.m. July 7th, which was a day and half longer than I had planned. To ride it as fast as I did, I had to keep my gear to a minimum, have good weather, and be physically and mentally ready to put in long days. I rode an average 13 hours a day and rarely took breaks except for water and food. Many times it was a push, pull, drag, carry the bike over difficult terrain, steep grades, loose grades, rock fields, and snowfields. The key was to keep the bike moving and never give up.

I did my ride on a Cannondale M900, aluminum frame, 23 lbs., 24 speeds. I had no bike problems except for wearing out two sets of brake shoes, had no flats, and no bent rims, or broken chains. To have any major problems or injuries would have meant disaster, so I was very conservative in cornering, speeds, and keeping my bike under control.

Everything’s a little harder when you are carrying the weight of gear, food, and water. I have experience in long-distance events; for example, I have bicycled from Anchorage, Alaska, to Key West, Florida, in 100 days; I backpacked the Pacific Crest Trail in five months; and I have been a technical rock climber for 15 years with a background of doing speed ascents of Alpine and big walls in Colorado, California, and Nevada. The CT was by far the most demanding physical adventure of my life.

To say that I enjoyed the scenery along the CT would be a misstatement. If you asked me what part of the trail I remember the most, I would tell you about a path three-feet wide that had my full attention. I wouldn’t recommend riding the trail in the fashion I did; it was physically brutal, and mentally it was a major test of will, but to establish the fastest recorded time on a bike was a great thrill for me.

Congratulations, Brian!
Dear Merle and Uta,

Thank you so much for your nice letter, and the wonderful surprise of the completion certificates . . . really made our day. We also enjoyed reading “Tread Lines”—sending in money today to keep them coming. We have almost adjusted to being completely back, although Matt has only been home for four days, as he had a job he immediately had to work on the Big Island. Since I commute there once a week, we can see each other, but it doesn’t quite feel like we’re home yet. I was experiencing waves of claustrophobia, just being indoors again. Not that I wanted to set the tent up outside, but I find the re-entry aspect very interesting. The psychological and personal development side of going long-distance backpacking, as well as other endurance type of activities, is so important—not a whole lot of attention is directed toward it in the sporting or the psych literature.

I really miss the cool alpine air, as we have been having very hot and humid temperatures. This time between September and October is the most uncomfortable—with respect to the weather. On Oahu, the volcanic fog is drifting our way, which makes the air smoggy, but the sunsets spectacular!

We miss the llamas, our “boys”—really want to have some space on the Big Island where we can get a couple. There are a few llama owners, although they are primarily pets or agricultural animals. I know that we would be packing them regularly, to include moonlight picnics with gourmet meals. Something to work on. If anyone would like to get information from us about llama packing on the CT, you can give them our P.O. Box 22712, Honolulu, HI 96823 address, and these numbers: Matt (808) 988-2944; Emily (808) 988-4458 (work) or (808) 988-9708 (home). We would be happy to help them out, or at least share experiences. Maybe we can submit a little item in the newsletter about what it’s like to take llamas on the trail.

Hope all is going well on your end. Drop a line when you can. Thanks again for your support.

Emily Calspell

We are looking forward to your story, Emily!

Completion Awards

Completion Awards

You finally did it! You fulfilled that lifelong dream and completed The Colorado Trail! You’ve celebrated and now you want a memento to commemorate your accomplishment.

Customized, dark-walnut completion plaques and 200-mile and 300-mile pins are available to help retain the wonderful memories.

Call Paul Berteau at (303) 745-3490 for more information.
Dear Trail Crew Members,

Last year my article started by saying, Ham Is Back! One of the reasons I gave for taking it off the dinner menu was because I couldn’t find the canned hams. Well, I began to wonder if I was going to be able to keep that promise. I found about half of what I needed (17 crews need a lot of hams), and the “well ran dry.” The stores order them for the Christmas season only, and it is now March. If they had any, they were left from that order.

I had not gone into a full search mode yet; I was getting ready for my daughter’s visit from Texas. The day she got here, she called from the airport saying she was going to visit in town, was there anything I needed—what a great daughter.

“Well, if you just happen to go to a Sam’s, look for hams. I need 20, and I’m getting desperate,” I said, half jokingly.

Lo and behold, here she came home with 20 hams she’d found up in Westminster. What a Kid!

Since she’d done so well with that “assignment,” I said the King Soopers strike had fouled me up on getting my beef logs as I couldn’t talk to my contact. I haven’t seen them in Sam's or Price Club. The stores I’ve called said they come in later, for summer.

Yup, she did it again. She found them off in the far reaches of western Denver, rounded up the 16 I needed, and herded them home.

I made her an honorary member of The Colorado Trail Foundation and said I owed her a sweatshirt. It really did save me a lot of miles and time.

The other exciting news from the Food Committee is that we received very generous donations from three new companies: Krusteaz—30 lbs of pancake mix; Hoody’s, now the Original Nut House—85 lbs. of peanuts and 60, 2-oz bags of two types of trail mix; Mrs Sutler’s Snacks—300 individual bags of trail mix. The pancake mix and the peanuts/trail mix, a combined weight of over 130 pounds, were mailed from the west coast. Now that’s a donation!

I hope you enjoyed the trail mixes and their variety. It has been a personal challenge to find a company that would donate trail mix. It has taken four years; then to get two such donations in one year, well, I thought I’d died and gone to that big trail up in the sky.

Unfortunately, we lost Bankor Nicholls East, which was most generous in their donations of Pet Food products, a line which they no longer carry. We will sorely miss them.

All the companies that donated or helped out this year are listed on page 7. Please check it out and support those companies that supported you!

I hope you enjoyed your crews, and yes, I’m still looking for feedback. I very much appreciate the honest feedback I did get from several of the leaders. I haven’t gotten any ideas for different lunches yet. Got any??? The dinner menu isn’t set yet, so there is time to offer suggestions for that too. Hope you had a good summer.

Pat Nagorka
(303) 841-2777

P.S. You people must be doing a good job of recycling those lunch bags. I think more came back than I sent out! Congratulations for a great job.
A well-known saying is “You cannot go home again.” Of my home where I was born and lived for 23 years, that is true. The area changed. The house was blown up in a drug war several years ago. My late wife’s family home has been only a foundation for years. Yet each summer, I go home. Home is where one is comfortable and accepted as is. That is a COLORADO TRAIL CREW.

GOING HOME

On July 17 as I parked near the Durango Ranger Station, Herschel Smith and grandson Mike were in the next space. Joe Slack and grandson Sean parked across the street. Steve and Kitty had checked in. Lois Cochran and family were walking up as Rangers Larry and Mark from previous years came to greet us. It was home with family that mostly dates back to the beginning of Sliderock Trail. That night, Joe had each person state why they were there. I said, “I am responsible for four besides myself because when you are proud of your family and home you invite friends to enter.” Son-in-law Steve was on his second crew with us. He brought along his daughter Cassia (one of my four granddaughters). I had day-hiked with her. Marney Jewell, whom I met in Australia, is a hiker, and we had day-hiked there and in Arizona. Matt is a friend of Steve’s, and we had hiked together and on an overnight in the Ozarks in the winter. We invited him. It seems that on hikes, the discussions lead to where have you hiked. That is the opening to sell people on volunteering for THE COLORADO TRAIL.

HOME AGAIN

A notice came that Gudy’s crew in late August was short-handed. I called, I went, for two reasons: (1) I had never met Gudy; and (2) a pack-in would be a serious challenge.

The ranger in Leadville said it was a mostly flat hike with a short difficult section at the end. Define “Flat.” I was about to stop for a long rest when Dan Wolfe stepped out of the trees to welcome me to the base camp. He was the only one I knew from previous crews. Difficult breathing for everyone as we built trail and, above tree line, rock cairns of over six-feet high. According to J.J.’s altimeter, we were at 12,400 feet. Definitely above snowfields. By Friday or before, another family formed at home on the trail. Everyone helping as needed without being asked. Orders were not given—people did what they could when something needed to be done, on trail or in camp.

Meeting Gudy became more than I expected due to the sidewall of one of my tires blowing on the one-track road. There was help from strangers and trail family, but it still took a long time to change tires because of the angle of the road. After several inquiries in Leadville, the service station next to the Leadville Ranger Station was the only one with the right size tire. (900 miles on I-70 is too far without a spare.) About 4:00 the dent in the wheel had been straightened and a new tire mounted. Gudy and J.J. were at the ranger station. I went over to ask about recommendations for motels west of Denver. I was tired and did not want to drive as far as Limon. Gudy invited me to her home. A pleasant dinner and evening with her and Dave. A good night’s sleep on the office floor and an early morning start east.

I will be coming HOME again in 97.
First we must comment on some differences we observed compared to Marshall Pass a year ago.

We noted far fewer bicyclists at Bolam Pass than at Marshall Pass. Those we did see in any numbers were with commercial cycling groups based in Moab, UT. They are “trekking groups” of from 10 to 20 cyclists, together with a sag-wagon(s) carrying food, water, shelter/personal dunnage, spare parts, and replacement cycles. Trips had itineraries of five to seven days, similar to the CMC or CT supported treks. We talked to the leaders of two of the three groups and indeed had dinner with one group. They seemed knowledgeable and aware of good trail and camping ethics. We did see several solo or paired cyclists, most out for a day starting at Molas Pass and going to Purgatory either via Bolam Pass or Hotel Draw. One group (four) were to be met at Hotel Draw and were then planning to go on to Durango the following day.

Secondly, there were a few day hikers. Generally they started at Celebration Lake and were going on toward Molas Pass. Dan met a group of four hikers ascending Hermosa Peak from the Lake trailhead.

We saw two to four backpackers a day, some of whom had started at Kenosha Pass or before. One group of two had started in Durango and were going on to Molas Pass. One was an experienced hiker having done the Pacific Crest Trail over several summers.

Dan hiked most days and felt that the trail from Cascade Creek to Hotel Draw was in good shape. He noted the lack of signage where the CT leaves the Tin Can Basin Road going toward Cascade Creek. Borrowing a sign (a duplication) he was able to correct this oversight. Also worth noting is the difficulty in always finding the trail as it goes from road to trail to road, etc., on the section from Hotel Draw to Orphan Butte, a caution mentioned in the guidebook.

Our thanks to you and the CTF for asking us to participate. A truly great opportunity.

Chalk Creek Trailhead CT Host Summary

The following is a summary of our week near Mt. Princeton at the Chalk Creek Trailhead. Julie Mesdag and Mike Nelson collected surveys and talked with hikers at the Trailhead and in the Boot Leg Campground. I will divide the summary into 2 areas, trail user feedback and host feedback.

Trail User Feedback:

- Coming from the south, Coney Peak was not marked well enough; user wandered a bit to find the trail.
- Jacobs book not up to date in terms of water sources. Some that hikers were counting on were dry.
- Really enjoyed talking with CT hosts.
- Keep trail marked, yet wilderness-like (as in hiker traffic only).
- Had to “get out of the way” of out-of-control cyclist coming downhill.

Host Feedback:

- Really enjoyed spending time with through hikers.
- Great feedback from users about the trail.
· Need water bars on northern approach to Hwy 50

· Confusion as to whether food was to be supplied by CTF

· Horse outfitters should be encouraged to clear horse droppings from center of trail—“minimum impact”

· Llama users seemed very considerate folks in terms of impact

· Yield directions posted at trailheads—horse/cyclist/hiker right-of-way

· Adopter signs in all sections, which are legible (like the one at Chalk Creek Trailhead—how do we get these?)

Gudy—of special note, we saw an owl sitting near the trail, and also visited the regatta site from the trail-a-bration. How about down in Durango at the start/finish trailhead for next year?

Our week-long stay on Marshall Pass surveying trail users was one of the highlights of our summer. We set up camp on the top of Marshall Pass just south of the main road so we were right on The Colorado Trail. We were surprised at the number of hikers we saw over the week. Most of them were day trippers. They had been shuttled from Salida to Monarch Pass where they started and would stay on The Colorado Trail to Silver Creek where they turned onto the Rainbow trail and returned to Salida.

We had filled our cooler with a variety of pop, and the hikers seemed to really enjoy the change. The hikers always seemed glad to fill out a survey and generally sit and visit awhile with us. All the hikers were very happy with the trail and quite interested in the history of the Pass. Bob has been all over the Marshall Pass area and its many trails over the years. One of his first trips into that country the train was still running over the Pass.

It is a pleasure to share time with people who are interested in seeing the trail preserved and how each one of us can contribute to that cause. Bob and I love the outdoors, and we have spent many hours in the mountains.

We are looking forward to continuing to help in any way we can.

Thanks for the opportunity,

Pat and Bob Balou
Gudy warned us that this would be the busiest place on the whole trail, but WOW we were overwhelmed. **The first day of the survey (Saturday)**, there were **150 bicycles and 50 hikers!!!** We had to put out a call to Jim and June Fenton, who were coming up in a couple of days, to buy us some more cookies and lemonade mix. The choice of cookies and lemonade turned out to be a good one, as everyone said lemonade was perfect and everyone likes cookies. That Saturday was by far our busiest day—but we often had three clipboards with surveys being filled out at the same time every weekend. During the week we went hiking on “our” section of the trail, Kenosha Pass, Georgia Pass to Gold Hill, with clipboard in hand. Some of the people we met this way were backpackers that had come through our checkpoint the weekend before. Many of the backpackers would either camp on the trail and take a day or two into Breckenridge to resupply OR take the free shuttle bus that runs by Gold Hill into Breckenridge to spend a couple of nights at the motel mentioned in the trail guide book. Some left their packs at the motel, took the shuttle over to Copper Mtn., hiked the section over the Ten Mile range back to Gold Hill, and took the shuttle back to the motel for the night (enjoying the freedom from their pack for a day).

This section of the trail is very worn and dusty as it is close enough to Denver that bicyclers will drive up for the day to ride from Kenosha Pass to part way up Georgia Pass. One woman said that she is having a ball bicycling, but she wouldn’t want to be hiking it now with all the bicycle traffic! Some don’t like the horsepuckies from the horseback riders that enjoying the trail. Some hikers said they would appreciate a warning from the bicyclers as they approach. On a whole though, everyone was enjoying the trail and very friendly and helpful to each other. Some were very interested in joining the Trail Foundation; some said they would like to work on a trail crew; and several wanted a trail sweatshirt like I wore.

We had the luxury of Lodgepole Campground with a well and pump for water, so Bob hauled two jerry cans of water to our checkpoint to resupply water to anyone that needed it, saving them the mile down to the campground from the trail crossing. We took a card table, cover, and ice chest to set up our “lemonade stand” checkpoint. I was kept busy mixing lemonade powder, ice and water in a pitcher to pour into disposable cups for refreshments. No one turned us down on filling out a questionnaire. All were very interesting and obviously enjoying themselves. Our first backpackers were a couple in their 60s from North Carolina taking their time and planning on doing the whole trail. There was another young man who was from North Carolina and had taken the label of “Little John” from when he had done the Appalachian Trail the summer before. He said there was a “Big John” coming along behind him, and that there were others hiking The Colorado Trail from hikers he had met on the Appalachian.

While hiking one day we were amazed at 5 bicyclers who were really bombing down from the top of Georgia Pass on the west side—one would think they would be thrown from the bicyclers! Bob was really impressed by all the left handers—when he started taking count, he figured they were 80% of those who filled out a survey form.

The mosquitoes and flies were really bad. People who live in that area told us this was the worst year they could remember. The bugs would really increase when the sweaty bicyclers stopped to fill out our survey and Bob used up 2 cans of bug spray spraying those who wanted it.

This was truly an interesting, positive experience. It is our sincere hope that this survey will be a big help in the care of The Colorado Trail.
Magnificent scenery, perfect weather, and friendly and cooperative trail users added up to a great week serving as trail hosts, and gathering 80 pieces of survey information, at the CT trailhead on Spring Creek Pass. We’d like to share some of our thoughts and observations about this experience.

The Spring Creek Pass trailhead on Highway 149 and the Continental Divide, located between Lake City and Creede, serves as a major factor in CT usage. Through travelers typically use this point as a resupply point and maybe a rest day, others use it as a start point for the east- or west-bound travel. Still others use it for day travels either east or west.

There is a Forest Service information kiosk and a small campground at the Pass, plus a parking lot for trail users. The campground made a perfect spot to park our Wilderness 5th wheel trailer for the week. We made up and posted three additional signs (in addition to the wooden sign given us) to inform trail users of the survey, and to direct them to our trailer, where we utilized the picnic table for survey form completion and handout material display. This approach worked most of the time, but occasionally we would venture out, clipboard with forms and handouts in hand, to interview hikers who appeared ready to head east rather than west (and thus might not pass by our trailer). The few times we left the Pass area, we left an instructional note with the survey packet, and, sure enough, trail users stopped by to fill out the survey.

The majority of trail users were backpackers making the through trip from Denver to Durango, in groups of one to four persons. Users would meet up with other groups along the way and more or less travel together by the time they hit the Pass. One user said that she hadn’t foreseen the CT would be such a “social experience.” During the week we seemed to become an information point—“Did so-and-so pass through yesterday?” “Please give this message to so-and-so who should hit here by tomorrow or the next day.” It was fun!

Women users seemed to outnumber men, with several groups of college or post-college groups of gals making the through trip. Users, in general, appeared to be a well-educated bunch. We had a couple of llama packers and one lady who showed us how she had used goats to pack her gear. We did not see any horse-packers. Day users were mainly hikers, but we also had some trail bikers and dirt bikers. Only one day hiker was irate and refused to fill out a survey. This was after he apparently had an encounter with dirt bikers, and assumed we had some regulatory authority over trail usage. Some 4WD vehicles also used the western portion of the CT, along with the sheep ranchers checking on their flocks and herders. They did not respond to the survey, though. We had a few users who were actually hiking the Continental Divide Trail where it overlaps with the CT at this point.

We found the latest edition of the official guidebook to be handy in answering questions, along with our personal experiences in having hiked the CT ourselves in the recent past. Trail signing, or the lack of it, provoked a lot of comment, but the general consensus seemed to be “Don’t make it too easy, let the spirit of adventure remain.” We didn’t attempt to do any analysis of the survey forms though. It will be interesting to read about an analysis in the fall issue of Tread Lines.

The pop (Pepsi) we handed out as thanks for filling out the survey seemed to be mostly appreciated by the younger generation trail users. The older folks would have preferred lemonade (which we didn’t have), or an orange (we handed out a few), or water. By the way, ages ran from 17 to 71.

The survey form itself didn’t generate much questioning. A few wondered what “mode” meant, and “when” had some

Continued on page 29
The Colorado Trail 1996 Survey Summaries

Editors’ Note: The CTF sponsored week-long CT user surveys at Jefferson Creek, Chalk Creek, Bolam Pass, and Spring Creek Pass in July of this year. This is a compilation of the survey results.

compiled by Julie Mesdag

User type: (292 respondents)

Foot Travel 185–58%
Bicycle 120–38%
Horse 3–01%
Motorized 6–01%

There were also six llama groups and one goat-packing group. The majority of foot travel passed through the Spring Creek Pass area. The majority of bicycle traffic passed through the Jefferson Creek area, and the motorcycle use was primarily at Spring Creek.

Number of Through Hikers: 42

Age range: (337 respondents)

Under 20 17–5%
in their 20s 93–27%
in their 30s 106–31%
in their 40s 72–21%
over 50 48–14%

Oldest user 74 years old

Home state: (Sample size 311)

Colorado 238–76%. Also represented: NM, IL, CT, VT, CA, TX, GA, MN, HI, MI, AZ, OK, WA, OH, WI, FL, KA, UT, NY, VA, PA, MD, AR, ME, NE, NC, & AL.

To what degree do users you meet on the CT display the following characteristics?

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<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Seldom</th>
<th>Often</th>
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<tr>
<td>Courtesy</td>
<td>1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environmental Ethics</td>
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<td>Outdoor Skills</td>
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<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Safety Skills</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>16%</td>
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167 respondents said they had used a guide book.

Official/Jacobs 59%
Denise 21%
Bike Routes 11%

Other information sources included CMC, Public Trails, CDT, NFS, CO Atlas, 100 hikes, Fielder, CO Wilderness Trails, Gazetteer, and US Army.
To what degree are the following things needed on the CT?

---------- Not Needed  Needed ----------

Better access to the trailheads.
33%  17%  24%  14%  11%

A handicapped access segment
22%  14%  16%  14%  17%  16%

Huts
33%  15%  12%  15%  16%  8%

Main Section Nonmotorized
5%  2%  4%  4%  11%  73%

Educational Programs
12%  9%  18%  21%  22%  17%

Information at Trailheads
4%  6%  11%  19%  24%  36%

Comments: There were many comments about the trail, most of them specific to keeping the trail in such a way to benefit the type of user who was completing the survey. The most common comment was the appreciation of the scenery, beauty, wildness, and serenity. This is a multi-use trail, and there are currently areas for all types of users—which is what makes the CT unique. Unfortunately for some, the whole trail cannot be used by all types of users. Several users noted that horse users should leave less of an impact (specifically—scat), and clean up after themselves. The motorized users requested it be motorized completely. This trail has something for everyone, and finding it is half the fun.

Personal input from Julie Mesdag (reviewer of the surveys): As I sifted through the surveys, it seemed to me that everyone loves the CT, no doubt about it. Rather than add amenities that make it like other trails, keep it the way it is, maintain it, and keep it well marked. There are many hut systems to choose from in this region, and the AT has a long-distance shelter-to-shelter type use. Overwhelmingly users did not want the trail to be motorized. Right-of-way signs, especially at railheads, would be helpful too.

Continued from page 27

users thinking time and others, date. We added a message to most of the forms telling the user to turn to the back side for completion. The few we missed didn’t turn the page over, so some of the forms are incomplete.

All in all it was a wonderful experience. Gudy stopped by and had lunch with us one day. We took a couple of day hikes ourselves—one to Jarosa Mesa to the west and another to Snow Mesa to the east. We also got to view the falls on North Clear Creek and the campgrounds there, but did not get a good look at any of the moose supposedly in the area. Saw some nice-looking bull elk though, and one evening had a delicious dinner at Southern Vittles in Lake City. We met some great, enthusiastic people that were really enjoying the outdoors and the CT.
Maintenance Week at the Educational Facility

by Merle McDonald, Crew Leader

Crew members were Dorothy Baker and her granddaughter Jennifer Klutsch, Sue Blackstock, Dick and Doris Brown, Irene Cazer (Co-leader and Kitchen Master), Elsie Dickert, Laura Farmer, Kathy Howard, Sharon Kniseley, Uta McDonald, Sue Palmer, Phyllis and Paul Skocypiec, Sally Snider, Ken Stagner, and Amy Young.

The Colorado Trail Foundation’s Educational Facility is a small log cabin (15 X 15 feet) on a mining claim 21 miles southwest of Lake City, CO. It was purchased late last summer, and this was our first opportunity to maintain it when the ground wasn’t covered in snow.

A driveway, about 200 yards long, was roughed in last summer by a bulldozer which was only suitable for 4wd vehicles. Also, since most of the land around the cabin is quite steep, activity outside the cabin was difficult. Our objective for the week was to smooth and improve the looks of the driveway, construct parking places for vehicles, construct reasonably level pads for small tents, and construct a trail to the creek that we use for our water supply.

Eighteen volunteers showed up Saturday afternoon with their own tools and eager to work. Another five were unwilling to drive the one-way shelf road to get to the cabin. Perhaps my description of the road was a bit over stated. Most cars should not have any problem driving to the cabin, but one must drive the last six miles quite slowly due to the uneven surface and many sharp curves. When meeting another car, one car usually pulls to the side and stops while the other car passes.

The cabin is quite nice with a wood heating stove, a three-burner propane cook stove, three small solar powered lights, and a vault-type toilet. Water is obtained from the creek about 100 yards west of the cabin. The cabin is planned to be used as a kitchen while everyone sleeps in their personal tents around the cabin. Due to the steepness of the terrain around the cabin, some level areas for tents were constructed. The cabin cannot be seen from the road, so special instructions are needed to find it the first time.

Most of the volunteers were CT veterans and pitched in immediately to work. It was obvious that there was much to be done. Everyone moved tons of rocks and dirt from Saturday noon until Tuesday night. By Wednesday, the area was becoming livable, so we took the day off to do some hiking in the very beautiful area. The flowers were unbelievable in American Basin and spectacular in Grizzly Gulch. The view from the top of Handies Peak was breathtaking.

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<td>Text by Randy Jacobs, Color Photographs by John Fielder</td>
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<td><strong>Along The Colorado Trail</strong> by John Fielder and M. John Fayhee</td>
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| Poster, 17 x 24 inches, with trail segments marked.     | $10.50  |
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Colorado residents add 4.3% tax  
Subtotal:  
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Winston Churchill

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