

## MARCH 2022 NEWSLETTER

### **It Must Be Winter: Grown Men and Women in Helmets and Pads are Beating the Tar Out of Each Other with Wooden Sticks**

Many here in Adriel Hills hail neither from Colorado nor any other place where snow and ice are greeted each year like long absent friends. We didn't grow up with ice skates, snow skis, toboggans, and down long johns. But I doubt that any of us were as surprised by coming of winter as a young friend of mine from Miami who had never ventured further north than Georgia. He visited Colorado for the first time some years ago in mid-October and decided to drive his rental car up Trail Ridge Road in RMNP to hear the elk bugle. He parked at the visitor center, got out of his car, and saw white stuff in the air, seeming to fall right out of the sky. Mystified, he found a ranger and asked what was happening. According to him, the ranger said, "Why, son, that's snow. You should try to get out a little more often ...."

I grew up mostly in England, California, Taiwan, and North Carolina. Snow was occasionally available somewhere in those places, but my folks apparently decided it was best to avoid it. One of my first experiences with serious winter was my first year in college. My folks had just moved to St. Paul, Minnesota, and I flew to their new home for Christmas break. When I landed at the airport, I saw that there was deep snow everywhere, and, as my dad later said, it was "colder than a well digger's patootie" (or a word to that effect). It was so bad that my folks told me to take a taxi from the airport. Streets were still snow-clogged, but a city snowplow had almost cleared ours. As soon as I arrived home, my dad said, "Your first chore is to go find our car. It has an orange ball at the top of the antenna." By "find" he meant "dig out from under six feet of snow deposited by the snowplow." And by "go" he meant shovel a virtual tunnel a hundred feet from the house to where the car was parked. After those hours of shoveling, I had moved enough snow to last a lifetime. But not the locals. Their cars were festooned with bumper stickers saying, "Help stamp out summer!" and "Think snow!"

In honor of those with bumper stickers, every four years the International Olympic Committee hosts the Winter Olympics. It chooses frigid venues most folks have never been to - Lillehammer, Sapporo, Pyeongchang, Sochi, Dark Side of the Moon, etc. - in hopes that there

will be plenty of ice and snow, indoors and out. It offers dozens of winter sporting contests that seem to share one key thing in common – the potential for an icy death. If the contestants don't die from hypothermia while waiting to compete, they might well die by falling out of the sky on skis or a snowboard, being beamed by an errant hockey puck, being eviscerated by a razor-sharp ice skating blade, or missing a turn while hurtling headfirst down an icy run at 80 mph on a glorified oven rack. And those who survive could always be hit by a stray rifle bullet from the Biathlon venue. No wonder Kevlar is such a popular clothing accessory.

The Winter Olympics are as close as I get to enjoying blood sports, and I enjoy them much more than the Summer Olympics. To me, the sports are not just death-defying, they are exotic. No prosaic baseball, softball, mile run, soccer, or swimming. I can see (and even do) those almost anywhere and anytime. No matter how much I can appreciate athletes performing at the highest levels, it's always more interesting when they are doing things I have never done.

Which brings me to one former Winter Olympic sport I did try once, however inadvertently: Speed Skiing.

I learned to snow ski in 1980 at Mammoth Mountain in California. I took the obligatory beginner course, working my way one sunny morning from the bunny hill to intermediate ones. I kind of got the hang of it, at least enough for the instructor to not ban me from skiing in the interest of public safety. A short while later, I found myself at the top of a straight, steep slope. I could see people the size of ants at the bottom. Too stupid to be scared, I launched myself off the top, sure in the knowledge that my newfound snow skills would have me carving easy sine waves down to the bottom. Fat chance. Instead, I discovered what skiers call the "fall line" and "schussing" -- heading straight downhill at high speed. I was going way too fast to carve. In fact, I was going too fast to do anything but go faster.

At first I thought, "This is great! I can see why people say this is the most fun you can have standing up." But almost immediately, as I neared the base of the run and the people and buildings in my path grew larger, I was wondering if my affairs were in order. The only hope of avoiding death and dismemberment for me and the innocents below was by stopping. I quickly decided to use what my instructor called a "hockey stop" -- jump slightly, turn skis 90 degrees, lean back a bit, and slide to a stop in a cloud of powder, all while remaining upright and feigning control. So I jumped slightly, turned my skis, hit the snow, and then hurtled A-over-teakettle for fifty yards, with skis, poles, and loose accessories flying. Seasoned skiers call that a "yard sale." Nearby skiers, thinking they had just missed being hit by a flatlander comet, were kind enough to help me locate my gear, put me back together, and watch me slide down into the sunset and a hot chocolate.

A mere twelve years later, in Albertville, France, the IOC introduced Speed Skiing as a Winter Olympics demonstration sport. The rules were simple: ski straight downhill as fast as possible through a timing gate. But the IOC added a new rule, taking most of the fun out of it for spectators: crashing, with or without an accompanying yard sale, was disqualifying. Some

of the competitors were clocked at speeds over 125 mph. At those speeds, the skis glow red from friction and catch fire just as the skier's face freezes solid from wind chill.

Sadly, Speed Skiing was rejected as a permanent Winter Olympic sport. Maybe the IOC thought that yard sales with body parts would not make for family viewing. No matter. Speed Skiing survives, even if its competitors do not, outside the Olympics. The current records are 158 mph for men and 153 mph for women. Both record holders are Italian. (Italian or not, Mark Kenning might be able to introduce you to the sport at Snowy Range, where the speeds can easily exceed 20 mph. See below)

You might wonder which other popular sports the Winter Olympics has retired. I found four (and I am not making these up): **Winter Pentathlon** (cross-country skiing, pistol shooting, downhill skiing, fencing, and equestrian jumping); **Bandy** (hockey with a ball); **Dog-sled Racing**; and **Skijoring** (skiing behind a horse on a course with gates and jumps). I think they should bring them all back.

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I'm sorry to say that, once again, the Newsletter is without a resident profile. If you are inspired to contribute an article or be profiled, please drop me (Chris Wells) a line at [wells\\_dc@law.mercer.edu](mailto:wells_dc@law.mercer.edu) . The usual deadline for getting finished articles, announcements, etc. to me is the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month. If they will need editing or other assistance, earlier is better.

### **Need help with a small household task?**

Mark Kenning and Chris Wells are available to do minor handyman chores. Need grab bars installed, light bulbs changed, pictures hung, walks shoveled, stereos wired, holes drilled, nails pounded, planters repaired, someone to hold your ladder (or to climb up on one), or other minor tasks done *not* requiring a real pro or formal HOA approval? As always, services are free.

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Chris Wells: [wells\\_dc@law.mercer.edu](mailto:wells_dc@law.mercer.edu)

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## 2022 Book Club List (meetings are in Clubhouse on the last Wednesday of the month at 10 a.m.)

(Contact Betsy Towle at [mtowle0@gmail.com](mailto:mtowle0@gmail.com) if you have questions.)

**Mar:** The Book of Hope: A Survival Guide for Trying Times, by Jane Goodall

**Apr:** State of Terror, by Hillary Clinton and Louise Penny

**May:** The Henna Artist, by Alka Joshi

**June:** O Pioneers!, by Willa Cather

**July:** Slaughterhouse-Five, by Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.

**Aug:** 2021 Northern Colorado Writers Anthology: Charioscuro: An Anthology of Virtue and Vice

**Sept:** Talking to Strangers, by Malcolm Gladwell

**Oct:** The Hemmings of Monticello, by Gordon Reed

**Nov:** The Collector's Daughter, by Gill Paul

### Skiing Anyone?

Interested in downhill skiing during the middle of the week? Let's talk! (Skiers aged 70 or older ski free at Snowy Range outside Laramie!)

Mark Kenning (970) 889-5226

### Webb Space Telescope Update

Webb has settled successfully into its orbit around LaGrange Point 2 about a million miles from Adriel Hills. It began its three-month commissioning phase in February, which, among other things, involves aligning its 18 mirrors so that they act as one.

It's hard to grasp the "looking back in time" aspect of the Webb's mission. This example makes it more concrete: Imagine a planet *80 million* light years away from Earth with a very advanced alien species and super-duper telescope that could see objects on Earth in detail. If they aimed their telescope at us today, guess what they'd see. Because it took 80 million years for Earth's light to get to their telescope, they would see an Earth as it was 80 million years ago. They would see the Earth during its Cretaceous Period, populated with dinosaurs, with the North American continent just beginning to separate from Eurasia.

## Manager's Report

The sun is hanging higher and longer as the winter moves on and the earth gently turns. We are approaching spring in Colorado. That means the snow will continue into May sometimes. We can have some big dumps with heavy wet snow that can break trees like we saw last year. Let's hope for a better outcome this year.

We have a resident that has done some research on hot tubs. His research found that high temperatures can have ill effects on the very young and the very old. The recommended temperature for this age group is 100-102(F).

I find this information to be a good guide but the article also says that the most common temperature is 104. It's really a matter of being comfortable in the tub. Be safe!!

We will be headed to the quarry to get a load of buff stones for our landscape projects this year. This is a fun day for the crew as we walk around the quarry picking stones we need. We look for flat, stackable and beautiful stones.

As the temperature rises, we will be getting outside for more than just pushing snow. We will be out and about getting things ready for our upcoming golf course and irrigation season. This will be a full-time agenda until mid-June when we get the irrigation and all its valves, zones and sprinkler heads replaced or adjusted. This is a yearly ritual we go through with irrigation start up.

The landscape committee has been working hard on a grant for our property. We will be headed to Denver the first week in March to get the first stage of our grant proposal presented. There is a lot of leg work that has been done to get to this point. We all feel as though we are in a good place to get this grant. The grant we are after is a water saving equipment grant. If we get the go ahead, we will have installed new up to date irrigation controllers for the whole property and water saving sprinkler heads for the golf course. The latest water savings analysis we have received from the controller manufacturer has shown we can have a water savings of 37%. These controllers are used in the city of Fort Collins, Loveland, and Berthoud. These municipalities are a great reference point for this grant. It's exciting to think we can save this amount of water and control its flow with the newest technology. Let's all be water wise this spring and please look at your water usage as we can all do little things to help the cause.

Water, water, water -- please don't take it for granted!!!!!!!

And one final note...the holiday season is over. If you still have your decorations and/or lights up, please consider taking them down when we get a few days of warmer temperatures.

Danny

## Hospitality Committee Update

Newcomer Welcome: The committee plans to reinstate an old AH tradition of welcoming new residents with a basket (or something similar) containing info about our community and some goodies. Due to COVID precautions it may be a while before we can actually visit and get to know our new neighbors, but that's the eventual plan. We hope to include brief profiles of newcomers in future newsletters.

Community Activities: Volunteers are still needed for community social activities.

The following social events are on the calendar:

Golf Outing & Picnic	June 18
National Night Out	August 2
Soup Supper	October 9
Christmas Party	December 11

We want to have more community social events, but volunteers would be needed for them. We will continue to ask for volunteers to help with events as their dates approach. Just give any of us a call, text, or email if you missed the questionnaire and want to get involved or if you have new ideas for community activities!

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## Recycling Tips

- Three Basic Rules:
1. Recycle bottles, cans, paper, and cardboard
  2. Keep food and liquid out of recycling
  3. No loose plastic bags and no bagged recyclables

Bonus tip: Bags of dog poop do not go in or next to recycling bins. They go in garbage.

Marcy Lockhart

# MARCH 2022 CALENDAR

## Administrative and Management Office Hours

Administrative Office	M-F 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. or by appointment
Management Office Hours	M-F 8:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Lunch approximately 12:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

## Community Activities/Events

Clubhouse/Library/Pool	Daily 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.
Tennis	MWF 2 p.m. Or as otherwise agreed, weather & dry courts permitting
Pickle Ball	Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday 9:30 a.m. (beginner) Tuesday, Saturday 8:00 a.m., Thursday 7:00 p.m. (advanced) Or as otherwise agreed, weather & dry courts permitting Location: Tennis Courts
Book Club	Last Wednesday of each month 10:00 a.m. Location: Clubhouse
Game Night	Thursday 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. Location: Clubhouse
Wine & Unwind	Tuesday 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. Location: Clubhouse

## Maintenance Projects

1. Finish golf course stream cleanup from ash deposits.
2. Clean and organize maintenance workshop and yard.
3. Small landscape projects that the Landscape Committee has listed.
4. Clean and organize pump stations to prepare for irrigation season.

## Board of Directors' Meeting

Board Meeting	Tuesday, March 15th, 6:00 p.m. via ZOOM
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(Connection to zoom meeting will be available on the Board agenda the week prior to the meeting); agenda and Treasurer's Report will be emailed or distributed to pigeon holes for homeowners and posted on the website.