



## Special points of interest:

- MRC Fundraiser
- Annual Meeting
- Spring Cleaning
- Firewise

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## MRC to Host 2nd Annual Mountain Derby Daze

Please join Mountain Resource Center for a true iconic event of Americana at the 2nd Annual Mountain Derby Daze Fundraiser celebrating the tradition of the Kentucky Derby. This family friendly event is being held from 1 to 5 p.m. Saturday, May 6, 2017 at Anchorage Farm, a beautiful horse ranch located at 12889 South Parker Avenue., Pine, CO 80470.

The event will feature food, entertainment and events for children and adults. Local vocal artist Sharla Jackson will serve as emcee and sing the National Anthem. Playing one-of-a-kind rock, jazz and blues will be Ruth Israel & the band, *Once Removed*. Have your picture taken by Amy Johnson Photography with local Royalty and the horses at Anchorage Farm. Come ready to play games, enjoy our silent auction, have your face painted and compete to win prizes in Hobby Horse Races -- Riders Up! Creative Cuisine will serve Southern Derby fare, and there will be mint juleps, beer and wine. For the kids, we'll offer Shirley Temples. The Kentucky Derby race will be aired live at 4:34 p.m. MST as the event finale.

Tickets are \$45 for individuals or \$80 for couples, which includes food and one drink ticket per person. Children 3 years of age and under are free; cost is \$15 for kids 4-14. Additional drink tickets are \$5 each. Tickets can be purchased at Mountain Resource Center's front desk from 9 am to 1 pm and 2 to 5 p.m. Monday – Thursday or online at [www.mrcco.org](http://www.mrcco.org). Sponsorships are now available by contacting Mel at [mel@mrcco.org](mailto:mel@mrcco.org) or 303-838-7552 x 26.

And they're off! Wear your own derby hat creation or purchase one from a limited supply of decorated women's derby hats, available for \$10 at the event's Registration tent and enter the "Best Derby Hat" contest. Winner of the best Ladies derby hat is a gift certificate donated by TallGrass Spa, and the winner of the Men's best derby hat will win a basket donated by Millercoors.

Proceeds from this fundraiser will be used to support the services that Mountain Resource Center provides to individuals and families in our community. Mountain Resource Center is a community-based nonprofit organization with a mission to provide high quality, integrated health and human services that improve the lives of people in communities we serve. Mountain Resource Center relies heavily upon donations and volunteers from the community to meet these needs. If interested in Volunteer opportunities, please contact Shirley at [shirley@mrcco.org](mailto:shirley@mrcco.org). We look forward to seeing you at this FUNdraiser!

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## Next POA Meeting

The next POA board meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 9 at the home of Tom Duffy, 34175 Rock Creek Rd. at 7:00 PM.

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## Mark Your Calendars—Annual Meeting

The Elk Falls Annual Homeowners meeting will be held on Sunday, July 9 at 2:00 PM at the Elk Creek Fire Department, 11993 Blackfoot Rd. (atop Richmond Hill).

## Spring Cleaning With Natural Products

Somewhere I have a refrigerator magnet that has basically summed up my adult life: "My only domestic quality is that I live in a house". Now that I'm no longer working a full-time job (read 70+ hours a week) and my husband is semi-retired and working part-time I've found that a) we're around more to make a bigger mess of the place and b) I'll go nuts if I sit around watching lolcats, so one of my new missions in life is to keep the house moderately clean without destroying the septic system or creating an EPA Superfund site.

First, I'm not a chemist. Make sure you read the labels on anything you use and heed the warnings. I've spent a great deal of time reading and trying different recipes, praying that I don't come up with a new and exciting way to make Agent Orange or Napalm. Fortunately for me, there are a lot of good sources for ideas out there on the intertubes as well as print magazines. I've basically boiled down my cleaning closet to a manageable list of easily obtained products. If you don't mind using a little elbow grease and experimenting a bit to see what works best for you, you can save a bit of money and rest easily knowing that you won't be seeing a faint green glow coming from your leach field.

### The Ingredients

**Baking Soda:** This is a mild abrasive that won't scratch delicate surfaces, removes odors, is a great stain remover, and can also help soften loads of laundry. I get it in the 13.5 lb. box. You can find it generally at the warehouse stores (Sam's, Costco, etc.) or from Amazon.

**Borax:** This is a natural mineral that can be used as a laundry booster, a stain remover, insect repellent, and as a substitute for bleach. Be advised that it can be a skin irritant and shouldn't be ingested. Be careful around your pets and small children.

**Castile Soap:** This is an oil based soap and is an all-purpose cleaner. The liquid form is an excellent degreaser. NOTE: I grew up with Fels Naptha soap and I love it – it'll clean anything and I've always loved the smell. But I have read several claims that it may be the worst thing you can use if you have a septic system due to the soap's fatty acids. I regretfully decided to err on the side of caution and not use it.

**Citric Acid:** This is a naturally occurring acid found in fruits, particularly citrus fruits (duh!). It is commonly used as an additive in foods, skin care products, and detergents. It helps to dissolve stains and increases the efficiency of detergents and soaps.

**Cornstarch:** I'll be honest; I don't use cornstarch very often. I invariably clutz out opening the box and end up chiseling the stuff off of whatever it gets stuck on. It does work great to absorb oil and grease stains and stains on countertops. If you can get the @\$@ box open without flinging it all over.

**Essential Oils:** These are great for leaving a pleasant scent to cleaning solutions. I also put a few drops of essential oils on an old square of cotton t-shirt and throw it in the clothes dryer in lieu of a commercial dryer sheet. Oils tend to be expensive but a little goes a long way; I've had the same four bottles for the past five years and still have plenty for the foreseeable future.

**Lemons and Lemon Juice:** The acidic quality of lemons and lemon juice make them ideal for degreasing and as a natural bleach when combined with the sun. Scrubbing copper bottomed pans with a lemon will clean and shine the copper.

**Salt:** Salt is used as an abrasive for scrubbing and will also get rid of rust and mildew. If you have something burnt on the bottom of your cast iron cookware salt can be used to safely scrub off the crust and not damage the seasoning. I like kosher salt the best due to the much larger grain size.

**Toothpaste:** Toothpaste can be used as a mild abrasive (think soft gel scrub solutions). It can also be used to remove stains on white clothing and sneakers.

**Vinegar:** Vinegar is quite possibly the king of all-purpose cleaning solutions. It's a great stain remover, when mixed with baking soda makes a great foaming toilet cleaner, is perfect for cleaning hardwood floors (just add some to a bucket of hot water), and is also a great fabric softener added to the rinse cycle of your washing machine. Make a 1:1 mixture of vinegar and water in a spray bottle to clean windows and mirrors. If you have a waxy buildup left behind by commercial glass cleaners, add about a 1/4 teaspoon of castile soap to 1 cup each of water and vinegar.

**Hydrogen Peroxide:** This is used as a stain remover and disinfectant. It is also one of the most effective blood stain removers (don't ask me about replacing the top end of my Harley...) Mix a spray bottle with half hydrogen peroxide and half blue Dawn dishwashing soap to make a laundry stain remover spray that works great! Do I need to remind everyone not to ingest this stuff??

## Spring Cleaning (cont.)

**Washing Soda:** Washing soda is sodium carbonate, a salt of carbonic acid, and should not be confused with baking soda; it is a highly alkaline chemical compound that can be caustic and harmful to the eyes, lungs if inhaled, and can cause abdominal pain or vomiting if swallowed. If you just use it for cleaning and skip the ingesting it's a wonderful thing! It serves as a solvent to remove stains and unlike bleach will not usually stain. It will chemically bind to the minerals that make water hard, which will allow detergent to foam properly so clothes will come out clean without any residue. It can also be used to descale coffee makers and tile, strip wax off of floors, and clean mineral deposits off sinks and faucets. If you scrub with washing soda make sure to wear gloves. If you leave an open box of washing soda sitting around it will harden and you'll have to chisel the stuff out of the box. Literally. I used a hammer and a large, poor quality flat-blade screwdriver. Then you have to break up the clumps by hand. To avoid this, um, frustrating problem, store your washing soda in an airtight container.

### The Recipes

**Laundry detergent:** Mix together 1 cup Borax, 1 cup washing soda, and a grated 4.5 oz. bar of castile soap. Use 1 tablespoon per load, or 2 – 3 Tbsp. for a heavily soiled load.

**Fabric softener:** Add 30 – 40 drops of essential oil to a gallon of white vinegar. Shake well before each use. Add to the rinse cycle of your washing machine per manufacturer's instructions.

**Dishwasher Soap:** Mix together 2 cups washing soda, 1 cup baking soda, 1 cup citric acid, and ½ cup kosher salt. Gradually add about ½ cup of white vinegar. Adding the vinegar will cause the mixture to fizz and clump, so mix it well. Add a teaspoon of castile soap and 15 – 20 drops of lemon essential oil. Pack the mixture well into two ice cube trays and set the trays out to dry for at least 24 hours in a sunny spot.

**Oven Cleaner:** Mix 1 cup of baking soda with water to make a paste. You can also add ¼ cup of washing soda if you wish. Apply the paste to the oven surfaces and let it sit overnight. Wipe it off and rinse with clean water.

**Tub and Tile Cleaner:** Mix 1 2/3 cups baking soda, ½ liquid soap and ½ cup water. Mix thoroughly, then add 2 tablespoons of white vinegar. Apply the mixture immediately, scrub, and wipe. If you need some mild abrasion, add baking soda to the mixture.

**Mold and Mildew Cleaner:** Mix 2 cups of water with 2 teaspoons of hydrogen peroxide into a spray bottle, shake well, spray, and wait for a few hours before wiping.

**Hard Water Deposits:** Mix a tablespoon or two of kosher salt with enough white vinegar to form a paste. Apply the paste to the deposit by rubbing a bit and leave it for 15 to 20 minutes. Use a sponge or cloth to rub off any stubborn spots then rinse.

**Grout Cleaner:** A variation on the above tub and tile cleaner is 7 cups of water, ½ cup of baking soda, 1/3 cup or lemon juice, and ¼ cup of vinegar. Spray on the grout and leave for about an hour then scrub off with a brush.

### If You're Not Asleep Yet...

Congratulations! You have successfully suffered through my complete knowledge dump on natural cleaning products. I've had fun doing the research and experimenting with what works for us. Hope this gives those of you who want to give it a go a good start, or gives those of you who already have started down this path some new ideas. Have fun with your spring cleaning!

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## Elk Falls Completes Another Year of Firewise

Congratulations Elk Falls for successfully completing another year as a recognized Firewise Community. Our community program began in 2009 and has continued to meet the necessary requirements each of the past eight years.

We can only continue to receive this recognition with your work AND reporting time spent, out of pocket expenses and the type of work conducted. I have heard chainsaws, seen numerous bags of collected pine needles, noticed cleanup and stacking of slash. Please report this to Mike Hensick at [mthensick@gmail.com](mailto:mthensick@gmail.com). Contact Mike, either by e-mail or call 303-838-5493 if you have any questions regarding work or expenses that meet the Firewise criteria.

**ELK FALLS RANCH  
PROPERTY OWNERS  
ASSOCIATION**

President: David Crespo  
Vice-President: Tom Duffy  
Treasurer: Renae Braun  
Roads: Merle Lehmkuhl  
Secretary: Cyd Lantz

Next Board Meeting:  
Tuesday, May 9  
7:00 PM  
34175 Rock Creek Rd.

**We're on the web!**  
[Elkfallspoa.org](http://Elkfallspoa.org)



**Elk Falls Ranch Property Owners' Association**

**The Elk Falls Property Owners' Association is a non-profit corporation in good standing since 1965. The intent of the corporation is to preserve the integrity of the area and lifestyle.**

**The corporation was formed and incorporated for:**

- 1. The promotion, improvement and protection of property values in the area represented by the Association by maintaining the area as a highly desirable single dwelling residential neighborhood possessing features of extraordinary value and improvement, maintenance and**
- 2. The repair of all roads and all ongoing maintenance within the area represented by Elk Falls Property Owners' Association.**

**Recipe of the Month: Slow-Cooker Beef Shanks**

**Ingredients:**

4 cross-cut, bone-in beef shanks (about 2 1/2 pounds total)  
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper  
1 cup plus 2 tablespoons flour, divided  
1 1/2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil  
1 medium onion, diced (about 1 cup)  
2 carrots, peeled and diced (about 1 cup)  
1 stalk celery, diced (about 3/4 cup)  
2 1/2 tablespoons tomato paste  
4 medium cloves garlic, finely chopped (about 4 teaspoons)  
1/2 cup dry white wine  
1 cup low-sodium chicken stock  
1 1/2 teaspoons balsamic vinegar  
1/2 teaspoon dried oregano  
4 sprigs thyme  
2 bay leaves  
Pinch ground cloves



**Serving Tip:** Combine 1/2 cup fresh finely-chopped parsley, 1 tablespoon grated lemon zest and 2 teaspoons minced garlic in a small bowl. Garnish the shanks with the mixture before serving.

**Directions:**

**For the Shanks:** Pat shanks dry using a paper towel. Place 1 cup flour on a plate. Season beef with salt and pepper and dredge in flour, shaking off excess. Heat oil in a large Dutch oven over medium-high heat until lightly smoking. Add meat and cook without moving until well browned on first side, about 5 minutes. Flip and cook until browned on second side, about 4 minutes longer. Transfer to a slow cooker.

Add onion, carrots, and celery to the Dutch oven, reduce heat to medium, and cook, stirring occasionally, until vegetables begin have softened, about 7 minutes. Add tomato paste and garlic. Stir and continue cooking until fragrant, about 1 minute longer. Add wine and scrape up any browned bits from the bottom of the pot using a wooden spoon.

Transfer the contents to a slow cooker and add stock, vinegar, oregano, thyme, bay leaves, and ground clove. Season with salt and pepper and cook on low until meat is tender, about 6 hours.

Remove and discard thyme sprigs and bay leaves. Skim fat from the sauce and transfer 1/2 cup of gravy to a medium saucepan. Whisk the remaining 2 tablespoons of flour into the reserved gravy until no lumps remain. Add the rest of the sauce to the saucepan. Whisking frequently, bring the sauce to a rolling boil over high heat and cook until the sauce achieves a gravy-like consistency, about 4 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper.