

ponderosa pine needle differences. This is important to consider, because pine needles just lying around on the ground could, just like leaves, be flammable, so knowing the time frame for decay into benign soil is vital. For each compost test pile, they "... mixed 122 pounds of needles with 110 pounds of coffee grounds, 67 pounds of freshly cut grass and 23 pounds of dried leaves from hardwood trees" They took the temperatures of the compost piles, kept them moist, etc., and recorded those kinds of details for future use of the information for everyone. Obviously, the recipe can be cut in half or even tenths for small garden areas or container gardening.

The mixtures were placed in home-use GeoBins; in six to 12 weeks, all three treatments resulted in usable compost with a final pH level very close to neutral. The older, shredded needles "melted like butter" and were

ready in six weeks, newer shredded needles reached higher composting temperatures and decomposed faster than whole needles, which also readied in a quick three months. Ingredients can be chosen based on local availability to homeowners, obviously in smaller proportions where needed.

Local blooms and crops for mid-summer

In July, we usually transplant our favorites as plants in the beds or containers: ornamentals, tomatoes, peppers (these nightshades need 120 days seed to harvest), and herbs. Our local growing season jumpstarts mid-June from cool to hot, but I just planted the sweet corn, beans, and squash (Native American "three sisters garden") utilizing the Olla watering system we placed in April.

Many flowers and most leafy greens can't take summer heat, but sunflowers, cornflowers, cosmos, nastur-

tiums (yummy in salad) and marigolds from seed or plantlets are OK for a late summer bloom-fest.

Start deck or patio gardening

Here's instant plantable soil for squashes, just wind the vine up a pole, and a friend reported this as her "three sisters garden container version": With drain holes low on sides, layer container with 3 inches each of shredded paper, leaves, kitchen scraps (1 inch only), top with pine needle straw or wood chips and water well. Add your squash seeds same day and the microbes will get to work making soil as the seeds grow. Keep an eye on watering—containers dry out fast.

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Art Matters

Confessions of topophilia



By Janet Sellers

Topophilia—From the Greek *topos* "place" and *-philia* "love of"

Topophilia—"placeness"—is the affective bond between people and place—a strong sense of place—often mixed with the sense of cultural identity among a community. The fields of architecture and real estate use the idea for commercial gain, as it powerfully indicates the environment, people, and community as well as the ecology of a place to optimally create a community. The popularity of living in a place creates value, and value creates an increase in attention as well as dollars generated for commerce. Currently, cities and towns throughout the United States have come to realize that public art helps create this environment of topophilia as optimal living for a place to come home to, the love of a place to settle and make one's life.

This love of place is something that is studied by national organizations such as the art giant Americans for the Arts, whose mission is to "build recognition and support for the extraordinary and dynamic value of the arts ... to ensure that every American has access to the transformative power of the arts."

Locally, our summers are filled with music, art, and laughter on summer evenings. We have our art galleries, concerts in the park, our Art Hop—a monthly festival of art and community—all amid the grandeur of the Colorado mountains and forests.

Next time you come into town, park your car or your bicycle and walk around. Enjoy the efforts that the community has made for you. See the flowers and the care and the interest that the shopkeepers and citizens have created. Enjoy the festivals and the walkability that is so rare nowadays. Walk through our small town, greet our shop owners and buy something there; smile at passers-by and lift your eyes to take in the extraordinary beauty and power of the Front Range embracing our community. This is a rare and wonderful place to live. Let's get out and enjoy it every moment we can with our other our fellow community members, and love our place.

July art events

Art Hop, July 19, 5-8 p.m., Historic Monument. The Art Hop is the third Thursday of each summer month in the art quarter between Second and Third Streets and Front Street and Beacon Lite Road. From 5 to 8 p.m., the town transforms into a festival filled

with art, artists demonstrating their work, authors with their books, live music, and convivial pursuits. Be sure to walk through the beautiful Sculpture Park at Jefferson and Second Streets. The park-like setting surrounded by ponderosa pine is a dream come true.

Bella Art and Frame July show, 183 Washington St., Monument

Bliss Studios and gallery, artwork and workshop of owner Jodi Bliss and guest artists. Art Hop monthly guest artists. Bliss Studios and gallery, 243 Washington St., Monument

Gallery 132, an artist co-op gallery for art and crafts, monthly events. 251 Front St., Monument

Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts, Monochrome Photographic Exhibition, through July 23, 304 Highway 105, Palmer Lake

Jefferson Studios, the gallery features the work of owner Daryl Muncey and others. Located on the Alley (from the Chapala building of 212 Second St., Monument)

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Above (left): Joe Beavers with his works at the Southwinds Gallery June 8. **(center):** During Art Hop June 21, art glass artist and photographer Gregory Hoff demonstrated his fire and glass technique for visitors



to the courtyard at Santa Fe Trail Jewelry. Hoff creates small glass treasures that can be made into jewelry. **(right):** Artists Daryl Muncey, left, and Bob Karraker, seated, engage visitors and talk about the art at the



new Jefferson Studios gallery on the alley, across from the Chapala building. *Photos by Janet Sellers.*

Snapshots of Our Community

Civilian Police Academy, May 29

Right The Monument Civilian Police Academy graduated this group of 18 local citizens on May 29. Officer and Community Relations Officer Andrew Romano taught most of the classes, but he was reassigned to cover patrol responsibilities, and then Police Chief Jake Shirk took over. Student Buck Lansford said, "What struck us most was how undermanned the Monument Police Department (MPD) is.... Most nights, there is only one officer on patrol." The classes covered information on police procedures, training, the local crime situation, videos of actual police shootings and discussion of their full contexts, practicing with live tasers, and spending time on the Air Force Academy gun range. **Pictured:** Front row, from left: Faith Clay, Tami Adams, Karin Morley. Middle row: Jared Clay (standing), Lindsay Leite (kneeling), Bailey Finn, Holly Fal. Back row: John Lewis, Joe Staten, Robert Bertola, Humberto (Bert) Brocato, Michael Heredia, Robert Simpson, William Brouenburg, Brynn Lansford, Buck Lansford, Donald Burgess. Not shown: Dwayne Cooke. *Photo courtesy of Buck Lansford.*

