

# Outhouse has pair flushed with anger

## No need to move mountain, they say, just offensive toilet

By Charley Able  
ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS

LAKEWOOD — Steve Holben is on a crusade against toilets on the top of Mount Carbon.

He has offered to chain himself to a \$25,000 city-owned privy, an offer that became the subject of an editorial cartoon published by a weekly newspaper.

He has called city staff at home to press the issue and he has lobbied the City Council.

Holben and his wife, Maggie, also have dipped into their wallets, spending thousands of dollars to preserve the mountain's sweeping view.

"We are not asking for any financial support. But, as an indication of how serious we are, we've spent about \$4,000 of hard money so far and, in terms of time, we're probably up to about \$40,000 of our time," Steve Holben said.

And he remains adamant about having the structure moved to another site.

"This issue is not going away," Holben said. "Our concern is that those toilets are going to be there long after the people responsible for putting them there have gone on."

Holben was also contacted by police after he told a city employee the outhouse "was such an eyesore that it wouldn't surprise me if somebody burned it down."

Asked if he meant that as a threat, Steve Holben said: "Not at all. I'm 58 years old, I am a successful businessman. I'm not a radical."

Holben's crusade started in May after Lakewood's Community Resources Department decided to place an outhouse atop the hill at the city's new Homestead at Fox Hollow golf course.

The city refuses to budge and says the outhouse will remain where it is.

"We wanted to have something that would serve the golfers, but at the same time, we wanted to also include the bicyclists and walkers" who use the path leading up Mount Carbon, said Bill Jewell, the city's manager of Regional Parks and Golf.

Jewell said the top-of-the-mountain location was flat enough to build on and its proximity to the 13th tee and a nearby trail best suited the purpose, Jewell said.

"It just didn't make sense to put it anywhere else," he said. "It became the logical place."

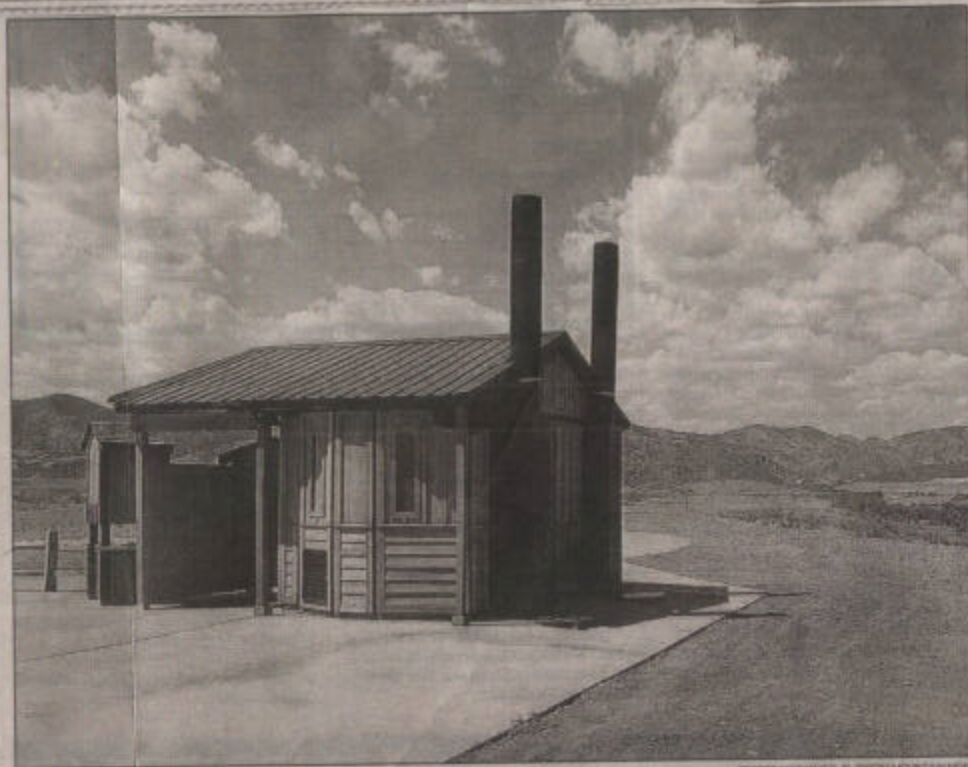
Jewell said the rustic design of the outhouse, which also overlooks Bear Creek Lake Park and the golf course, was chosen because it fits in with its surroundings.

"For an outhouse, it is pretty good-looking," he said. "We have not gotten one call, other than the Holbens' complaining about the outhouse."

"The lack of complaints tells me it is pretty acceptable."

The outhouse — which has separate facilities for men and women — sits atop a pair of 1,000-gallon holding tanks that must be emptied twice a year.

A vent pipe provides an escape route for fumes, Jewell said.



GEORGE KICHWEL, JR./ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS

**This outhouse** built by the city of Lakewood atop Mount Carbon has angered Steve and Maggie Holben. "This issue is not going away," Steve Holben said. "Our concern is that those toilets are going to be there long after the people responsible for putting them there have gone on."

"There's no smell in them whatsoever. We have, I believe, nine of them throughout the park and the golf courses, and we have never had a smell issue with any of them over the last seven years," he said.

But Maggie Holben said the smell from the latrine ruined the spot where she and her husband enjoyed frequent picnics.

"Now we picnic on our deck. My husband still bikes and cycles up there, but toilets turn me off," she said.

Maggie Holben described her husband as a conservative Republican, not an avid activist.

"You wouldn't call him an activist. He's not an environmentalist even," she said.

Steve Holben said he doesn't

want Lakewood to be the only community on the Front Range with an outhouse in its viewshed.

"Douglas County doesn't have any toilets in front of Daniels Park; Boulder doesn't have any toilets in front of Chautauqua Park," he said.

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