

## **HIGH PARK FIRE**

In the 1940s we had a pastor for the Livermore church named Al Fonken. When I went to high school I lived with his family in Fort Collins.

He had a son my age and we roomed together. H.A., or Rick as we called him, and I have been like brothers ever since. He is now a retired doctor.

The Fonken family owned a beautiful forested 450 acre property, with a cabin his parents had built, at Poudre Park. They had recently placed it under conservation easement.

Everyone's birthday got celebrated up there and it was a tradition that every Christmas our families would go out and cut a Christmas tree.

One evening last spring Rick and his wife Elaine smelled smoke and decided they better leave, a very good thing, because within an hour the fire swept through burning all the trees and the cabin to the ground.

This was Rick's favorite place on the planet. He spent as much time there as he could. They were luckier than many to have a house in town, but they are devastated at the loss of this really special retreat.

Now there is only a pile of rubble that was the cabin and a lot of burned "match sticks" that was an incredible, lush forest. And for sure no more Christmas trees.

My brother's heart is broken and mine is for him.

DL Roberts