

Autumn Neverland

By Diane Parker

I went on a hike with the Windsor Garden hiking club. I like to car pool, riding in the back seat so I can relax and let myself wander into "Neverland."

I was especially excited because we were driving up to Kenosha Pass in South Park to hike on the Colorado Trail. This week was expected to be the perfect time to view the changing of the "true gold" of Colorado ... the color changing of the aspens in the Rocky Mountains. South Park and Lost Park are, in my opinion, some of nature's best and most awesome, spectacular landscapes. The aspens in this area are old. Once white and pliant, the bark has given away to a crusty old gray. The leaves on the trees which were once a vivid green designating a leafy summer coat were now evanescent hues of a variety of golds.

There is harmony in autumn. The days have cooled down and the world becomes busy preparing for winter. The sky seems bluer, clearer, and the air becomes crisp. It is the time for the canning of fruits and vegetables. School has started. There's newness in the air. Autumn is truly what summer pretends to be, glorious, subtle and refreshing. Dawn arrives later in the morning, while the sun sets earlier in the evening. The leaves are tarnished with dust, and for one splendid moment, will go soaring in the blueness of the sky. The earth burns with the colors of orange and gold. The leaves become frost-crisp and break away from the tree limbs and fall.

Autumn is timed for the back country dirt roads and I want time to stand still. Why is it some people think of autumn as a sad season? Nature is merely falling to sleep. Winter passes but does not want to let go. I think that is when autumn steps in and taps spring on the shoulder and gives it a jump start to begin the new life process all over again. I love to walk and hear the crunch and rustle of leaves with each step I take. The acoustics of this season, no matter how hushed, are as crisp as the autumn air.

In the entire circle of the seasons there are no days as delightful as those of a fine September day in Colorado. The trees are speaking to the earth and the golden leaves drop and bestrew the back roads and mountain trails.

I can feel and smell the breath of winter in early morning and late evening. The days are filled with a mellow warmth. I relish the golden sun warming my skin. I'm so glad I live in a world where there are autumns!

It's the time when everything bursts into its last beauty, as if Nature has been saving it all year for the grand finale!