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March 2021

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Vol. 13, No. 3

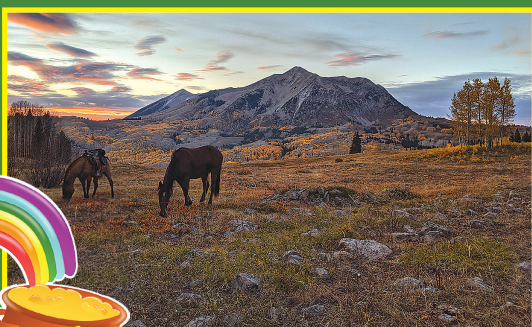
Welcome to Ute Country

**Cows run away from the storm
while the buffalo charges toward it —
and gets through it quicker.
Whenever I'm confronted with a tough challenge,
I do not prolong the torment, I become the buffalo.**

— Wilma Mankiller



PEEK INSIDE...



Mountain Mustang Memories



A Look Inside the Artist



Petroglyphs - A Poem

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On Deck



Jeff took the cover photograph on Hwy 9 in Hartsel last month. When we consider there were 25-30 million buffalo in North America in the 16th century and that they were hunted to almost extinction, leaving less than 100 by the late 1880s, it is an awesome sight to see the buffalo's resilience, now numbering 200,000. (Wikipedia). Most of them are on ranches; they have adapted to domestication, although I wouldn't try to walk up and pet one. What made them so resilient? Perhaps the answer is in the quote — they meet the world head-on.

Need some help facing the world head-on? Our March issue has articles of resilience throughout. *Yellow House Antiques* describes the artistic talent of four generations flowing through. *Growing Ideas* reminds us to choose our best face forward, just like we turn our plants to expose the beautiful side that had been facing the sun. *Life Enhancing Journeys* teaches us how WE benefit once we move through the process of forgiving others, making us more resilient. *The Thymekeeper* shares various techniques of making herb infused oils to keep us healthy and boost our immune systems; a healthy immune system makes us more resilient against pathogens of all types, so we can be like the buffalo and meet the world head-on!

Critter Corner features two of our boys because we have not received any of YOUR photos! Please take a moment to share your favorite photos with our readers! Email (utecountrynewspaper@gmail.com) them or snail mail them to POB 753 Divide, CO 80814 or drop them off at Shipping Plus in Divide M-F 9-5:30 p.m.

Thank you,
— Kathy & Jeff Hansen

A special thanks to all listed here for their professional work and time to make this issue possible. If you have any questions please contact the publishers.

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The Thymekeeper

Herbal infused oil

by Mari Marques-Worden

Have you ever thought of your salad dressing as medicine? Both oil and vinegar are considered solvents to the medicine maker so any herbs contained within would instill their medicinal properties into the liquid. The Italian spices typically contained in oil & vinegar salad dressing have anti-microbial and immune boost properties making the point, "Let food be thy medicine..." as attributed to Hippocrates.

It's worth noting that any herb can be infused in edible oil and used internally or externally whether with medicinal or cosmetic intent, or simply for flavor. Infused oil is easy to make and one of the most versatile mediums in the herb world. They can be used as a base for lotions, salves, massage oil, lip balm, soap, hair treatments and food! Your skin is your largest organ of absorption and elimination so anything you put on your skin should be safe to eat.

There is no hard fast rule regarding ratio of herb to oil, I like to use approximately 1 tablespoon of dried herb to one cup of oil. If you are just starting out, make small batches until you are more familiar with the potency of the herbs and the stability of the oil.

There are several carrier oils available, all with varying degrees of color, viscosity and reliability, and some with medicinal properties of their own. A little experimentation is in order to determine your preference. I like to use extra virgin organic olive oil when making salad dressing, but coconut oil makes for a great delivery system when mixed with powdered herbs such as turmeric. It also has antimicrobial properties and with its essential fatty acid content, helps keep your joints juicy.

My usual oils for external use are grapeseed, sweet almond, coconut oil and jojoba. For a more complete list see: <https://www.bulkapothecary.com/categories/raw-ingredients/bulk-natural-oils/>

How to make infused herbal oil - Folk Method

The folk method relies on the sun to naturally infuse oil.

1. Place herbs in a clean, dry jar, fill ¼ of the jar with dried herb, ¾ of the jar if using fresh. Make sure all herb parts are beneath the oil, especially if using fresh herb.
2. Fill jar with oil of choice making sure to cover herbs by at least 2 inches. If the herbs emerge above the surface of the oil as they soak it up, pour more oil on top to ensure the herbs remain covered.
3. Cap the jar tightly and shake daily if using dried herbs. If using fresh, cover with a paper towel or cloth and stir every day to release any gasses that bubble up.
4. Place jar in a warm, sunny windowsill.
5. After 2-3 weeks, strain the herbs out through a muslin cloth lined strainer and make sure to squeeze out as much as possible.
6. Pour into clean glass bottles.
7. Label your jars with the date, type of oil and herbs used.
8. Store in a cool, dark place. Some oils may keep for up to a year. I like to add Vitamin E at a rate of 1% to prolong the shelf life.

Tips: If you are using fresh herbs, wilt them overnight to reduce the amount of water in them. You don't want moisture in your oil or it will facilitate the oil turning rancid; something you don't want in or on your body. I've had much better luck using dried herbs when making herb infused oils. I've had the fresh plant oil turn rancid before it's ready to press out on too many occasions. For this reason, I like to use fresh herbs in small batches only that will be used in cooking frequently.



Herbed oils can easily become beautiful art serving a dual purpose for gift giving.

necessary) to ensure herbs are moving around in the blender.

8. Whiz until the blender jar is warm to the touch, approximately 5 minutes.
9. Place a muslin lined strainer over a heat safe glass bowl, pour herb infused oil through the strainer and squeeze out as much of the oil as possible.
10. Oil should keep a year or more when stored in a cool, dark, dry place.

There are countless herbs and uses for infused herbal oils. Rosemary makes a great hair treatment, arnica great for closed wound injury, plantain, calendula and comfrey to heal skin and many more. Experiment, get creative, and mix your own oil blends.

Save your unique bottles and turn them into beautiful herb infused gifts for the folks in your circle who enjoy cooking. Making art is another one of my favorite things to do with herbs and suspended herbs in oil are beautiful to the eye of this beholder.

Mari Marques Worden is a State Certified Herbalist and owner of The Thymekeeper. For questions or to be added to her class email list, contact: Mari at mug-syspad@aol.com or 719-439-7303. Mari is available for private consultation.



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The Thymekeeper



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Mountain Mustang Memories Lives intertwined
by Stefanie Skidmore

Horse packing is an art that is centuries old and, for the past several years, my favorite pastime during summer and fall. Riding and packing once wild Mustangs on these trips makes the experience that much more special. Among the unique and astonishing aspects of packing into the backcountry with horses and, in our case, a dog, is embracing how our lives merge into one. It's not separate beings all doing their own thing, it's different parts of an organism working together and depending on one another.

This phenomenon first emerges while preparing for a pack trip. When buying and organizing both equipment and groceries prior to a multi-day ride, it becomes evident that a large portion of the necessary gear and weight are dedicated to keeping the animals comfortable, fed and safe, and only a small percentage to doing the same for the humans accompanying them. We usually pack pelleted feed for the horses to supplement what grass they can find around camp and during our midday breaks. Depending on location, season and how wet of a year it has been, forage in the backcountry may be either lush or scarce. Bringing feed for our stock not only ensures that the horses can maintain their weight and energy level on a long trip, but also helps minimize the impact they have on the land we're passing through. After all, while the horses return to their respective pastures at the end of the trip, with humans providing for their every need, wildlife depend on the food sources available in their home and it is our responsibility to make sure that our fun does not become their suffering.

In the weeks and months (sometimes years) prior to a long ride, the planning, training and conditioning take place. The riders, horses and Denali, the goofy, adventurous, vision-impaired German Shepherd, need to possess the necessary skills and be both healthy and fit enough for such a challenging undertaking. Half day and day trips prepare the four- and two-legged travelers alike for backcountry adventures where we travel an average of 36 miles over the course of three days. We are planning even longer outings this year, which means preparing and outfitting a second pack horse to carry additional groceries, feed and gear. Saddle fit and overall health of horses and dog are important aspects to consider both prior to and during our rides. Regular hoof care (something I have learned to do myself), keeping and exercising the horses on rocky terrain, and protective, properly fitted hoof boots that we use as needed, help their feet and legs withstand the demands of multi-day trips on often tough, abrasive footing.

Once on a trip, the days revolve first and foremost around the animals and their needs. Sleepy humans stumble out of tents with the first morning light to hobble and turn the stock loose to graze. Once they've had the first few bites, the horses remember

that even better food is near and begin to head towards the panniers they know contain their pellets. To keep their noses from digging through and tossing gear around, the still hungry packer fills nosebags with cold hands and puts them on the breakfast-seeking equines. Amid all the commotion, Denali the Shepherd now awaits his food which, due to its potential to attract bears, is hanging in a tree together with the people food or is stored inside of a bear-resistant container that has been ratchet-strapped to a tree outside of camp. The horses, once finished with their morning rations, are usually ready to be taken to water for their first drink of the day, and after that will be content nibbling on grass and napping in the morning sun while their people warm up with freshly brewed coffee, cook breakfast and get ready for the day's adventures.

When planning the route and destination for our rides, considering accessible water sources for the animals is critical. Enough water for riders and dog is easily carried, not so much for the equines as they may drink upwards of 10 gallons per day when in heavy work. We stop often throughout the day, taking short breaks to enjoy the scenery, take pictures and let our mounts and Denali drink water and catch their breath. On these long trips, even the most forward and energetic of horses and dogs eventually figure out that it's wise to rest when given the opportunity and learn to take a quick power nap during stops.

It's usually early afternoon by the time we dismount and hobble the horses so they can graze while we eat lunch, relax and sometimes explore a bit on foot. Lunch is closely supervised by Denali who knows that on long trips he, too, gets a midday snack. On day rides out of camp, we head back to our home base after this, often arriving with the setting sun. Horses again are hobbled first, so they can graze and move about a bit on their own, before dinner prep starts. While tiny stoves boil water for tea and re-hydrating freeze-dried meals (we tend to put a lot of effort into cooking breakfast, less so dinner when everyone is tired from the day's ride, daylight is running out and the temperatures are dropping), Denali gets his food before the humans eat. Following dinner, evening nose bags for the stock are filled and put on the horses' heads. After that, all things that a fuzzy intruder might enjoy get stowed away for the night. It's usually thoroughly dark and



My packing family: Family to me, is less about being related by blood, looking alike or speaking the same language. I cherish the sense of belonging that comes from being part of a family, a community or cause. These guys, Littlefoot, Denali and Lacy (from left) and I have each other's backs and we've made many backcountry memories together. I do consider them family. photo by Stefanie Skidmore.

a bit chilly in the high country by the time the equines finish their pellets. The person who is slowest to get ready for the night and therefore still up (that's usually me) takes them to water one last time and ties each horse to a highline within earshot of camp, where they have learned to sleep and stand quietly until early the next morning.

Denali by then has long disappeared inside my tent and is usually sound asleep on the sleeping bag atop my horses' saddle blankets. I gave up on inflatable mats after one of his claws punctured a hole in it the first trip I took him on. Because German Shepherds are heavy and take up a lot of space inside a sleeping bag, he and I have compromised, and the loyal pooch now sleeps on his own blanket next to mine. His is big enough to also cover him if he gets cold, so we spend our nights in the backcountry sleeping quite comfortably, yet always on alert for unusual sounds that may announce a horse in trouble or wildlife approaching. A headlamp is always within reach, and I keep a knife handy in case I need to cut a horse loose in a bind. Pack trip nights may not be the most restful, but to me there's nothing better than waking up to the sounds of nature, the shuffling of our horses' feet and their bright eyes and pricked ears as they await their morning meal, and then enjoying a colorful mountain sunrise while warming my hands on a cup of coffee, miles from anywhere.

Stefanie Skidmore is a Mustang trainer and advocate located in Guffey, Colorado. To learn more about her work with wild horses, about adopting your own Mustang or for help with a horse you already own, you can contact her via email at stefanie@wildhorseoutreach.org, call/text her at 719-377-8587 (cell) or check out the website wildhorseoutreach.org.

Obituary

Luke Hooageboom, Sr.

Luke Hooageboom Sr., 82, of Lake George, CO passed from his earthly life to his eternal life in the early morning of Wednesday, February 10, 2021. Luke was born October 25, 1938 in Wieringerwaard, Fryslan, Holland to Willem and Faye Hooageboom.

Luke is survived by his wife of over 60 years, Margo Ann Hooageboom nee Field, his three sons William Hooageboom (Kathy), Luke Hooageboom (Sheila), and John Hooageboom; his brother Floyd Hooageboom (Cathy), his sisters Marian Nall (Don) and Margie Curtis (Doug), and his sister-in-law Peggy Hooageboom; his five (5) grandchildren his five (5) great-grandchildren; many nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends...and of course Diesel the dog.

Luke is preceded in death by his parents Willem and Faye Hooageboom and his brother Wijbe (Wybe) Hooageboom.

Luke will be interred at Lake George Cemetery in a private, family service. To read full obituary, please visit: www.MountainMemorialFH.com.

Full Circle Real Estate Group ribbon cutting
by Melissa Traynham

The Buena Vista Chamber of Commerce had the honor of welcoming Full Circle Real Estate Group to the Chamber family and to the business community in BV through a ceremonious Ribbon Cutting event at their office on West Main Street in Buena Vista.

Full Circle Real Estate Group is a complete real estate company that handles the full spectrum of all real estate transactions, from the initial stages of getting your property listed to sell, through to the end details of closing on your new home purchase or land deal.

FMI www.fullcirclebv.com.

You can also watch the video from the event on the Chamber Facebook page (facebook.com/bvchamber) and hear owner, Catherine Fisher, talk about her team and the services they provide to the community. We look forward to supporting the team and the business throughout the year!



Yellow House Antiques
by Flip Boettcher
photo by Flip Boettcher

Just around the corner, off the beaten path behind the Florence post office at 117 West Second Street, is a quaint little yellow house, which houses the Yellow House Antique store. The shop is managed by a mother, Deborah Boyd, and daughter, Melissa Acosta, team with 70 years of combined knowledge and experience of antiques, collectibles and textile design between them.

Deborah's mother was the original family hunter, seeker and finder of all things unique and wonderful, said Melissa. The women first had a shop at the Apple Shed Artists and Antique Cooperative in Cedar-edge, CO at the base of the Grand Mesa called Jordan McKinnon's.

Their second antique shop which they co-owned and operated was called Zenobia's Trunk located in Grand Junction. The women also have had on-line shopping, first with eBay and now Etsy.

Deborah also is an accomplished Teddy Bear artist, having many of her bears displayed permanently in museums and featured in Teddy Bear magazines. Deborah has sold many of her bear creations to happy arctophiles all over the world, said Melissa.

Melissa has a degree in library science and continues the family legacy of independent work, creativity and the study of the history of all things old, she said,



Protecting Chaffee County Water
by Jennifer Swacina

Unbottle and Protect Chaffee County Water joins groups across the US and Canada in condemning the sale of Nestle Waters to private equity firms, One Rock Capital and Metropoulos & Co. We are calling for the denial of Nestle's request for a 10-year permit extension and calling for a moratorium on future water mining permits. This \$4.3 billion dollar sale is an especially ominous development in light of Wall Street's accelerating interest in water trading.

The sale announcement raises many questions about what this means for communities currently entangled in legal hearings and permit negotiations with Nestle Waters. Will Nestle remain a part-owner of the company? In Chaffee County, specifically, will new owners follow through on permit commitments that Nestle had previously made — yet failed to complete — such as a conservation land easement? Are the buyers aware that Nestle failed to meet the required quota for hiring Chaffee County truck drivers, and that Nestle's latest proposal includes investing in a truck driver training program through Colorado Mountain College?

"Nestle has not proven to be a good neighbor, and the only thing worse than Nestle, is Nestle operating undercover," said Unbottle and Protect Chaffee County Water co-founder, Jennifer Swacina. "Our commissioners can, at their discretion, simply vote to deny this permit extension.

They have all the ammunition they need."

Unbottle and Protect Chaffee County Water stands in solidarity with other grassroots organizations in Ontario Canada, Maine, Florida, California and Michigan, who have been ringing the alarm about Nestle and water privatization for years. Joint statements have been released through The Story of Stuff Project.

"Nestle's motivation is clear: to shed itself of responsibility for the plastic pollution and environmental degradation its water extraction and bottling has caused and the damage these scandals have done to their brand and bottom line. It is also clear that a private equity firm, freed of Nestle's reputational responsibilities, will seek to cut expenses at the cost of the limited promises its predecessor made regarding environmental sustainability and community benefit. We call on elected leaders, regulators, advocacy groups and media in Canada and US to 'follow the money' and expose this deal to the highest levels of public scrutiny."

FMI visit www.Nestleave.org or 808-446-0077 or Facebook page: Unbottle and Protect Chaffee County Water or unbottle-protect.org. Currently, there are a couple of county commissioners meetings coming up that people can attend via Zoom — link found at chaffeecounty.org. At the meeting on March 9, Nestle will be presenting their annual report. The following meeting on March 16 will be a continuation of the 1041 permit hearing.

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Florence & Cripple Creek Gem Co.

by Flip Boettcher

With their soft opening in December 2020, the Florence & Cripple Creek Gem Co., owned and operated by Kathryn and Roger Duncan, opened their doors for business. The Gem Co. is located at 122 East Main Street in Florence.

The Gem Co. features unique, mostly silver jewelry with unique stones collected by the couple over the last 30 years, as well as unique stones sourced from all over the world, stated Kathryn.

The Gem Co. is named after the historic Florence & Cripple Creek Railway, built in the late 1890s up Ute Canyon (later called Phantom Canyon), to haul gold ore from Cripple Creek to Florence for processing in the mills. The building located at 122 East Main Street was also the Fulton Market in the 1890s, owned by town founding father James McCandless.

The Duncan's have been collecting rocks, cutting rocks and making jewelry ever since they met, almost 30 years ago. When Roger was 10, he bought his first rock saw with his paper route money. The next year he bought his first grinding and polishing machine.

Kathryn had been selling her refurbished, re-purposed furniture out of the store, but when COVID-19 hit last spring, furniture sales hit zero, but she noticed that the small selection of their jewelry kept selling.

Kathryn jokingly has said that they collect the two heaviest items, rocks and books, and it was time to part with some of them. With thousands of pounds of rough stone, thousands of cut gemstones, rock saws, polishers and a shared passion for making jewelry, it made sense to open a jewelry store. The couple look forward to being a source for jewelry in Fremont County, said Kathryn.

The couple are working on a Colorado line of jewelry featuring locally sourced

amethyst and rose quartz from Fremont County; Mt. Antero aquamarines; Lake George smoky quartz and amazonite; blue agate from Southern CO; Alma rhodochrosite; and Rocky Mountain gold for their gold jewelry.

Two of the worldwide stones the Gem Co. will feature are a recent Indonesian find with yellow and black swirls in it called Bumblebee Jasper; and K2 from the foot of the world's second highest peak in Pakistan, is a cool white granite with blue dots of azurite.

"We like to carry natural stones made by nature that are unique. We pick out each design personally; the stone has to speak to us. We only pick stones that have a great pattern and color, and when we cut them, we look for the best shape, size and pattern for that stone," stated Roger.

The jewelry is tastefully displayed in 1920s and 1930s radio cabinets refurbished by Kathryn. The cases on the walls are old wooden soda crates.

If you are a mineral collector the shop has quite a unique collection of rocks and minerals to view.

The Florence & Cripple Creek Gem Co. at 122 East Main Street is open Tuesday-Saturday 10-5 and Sunday 11-5. Phone



is 719-430-6935 and the email is info@fccgemco.com.

Also, one can shop the Purple Rose flower and gift shop which is located inside the Florence & Cripple Creek Gem Company for flowers to go with your gemstone purchase.

The Florence & Cripple Creek Gem Co. is interconnected with the Antique Warehouse for all your vintage lighting needs.

The Earth and your tax return benefit from mitigation

by Coalition for the Upper South Platte

Did you know that Colorado property owners can claim a subtraction on their Income Tax Return for some costs of completing wildfire mitigation on their property? Up to \$2,500, as 50% of the qualifying costs can be subtracted from tax years 2020-2024. Of course, you need to discuss this with your tax professional, but here's some of the details:

The property must be located in a wildland-urban interface (WUI). A wildland-urban interface area is an area where structures and other human development are built close to or within natural terrain and flammable vegetation, and where high potential for wildland fire exists.

The taxpayer must be an individual, estate, or trust. Corporations, partnerships, and similar legal entities cannot claim the subtraction. The wildfire mitigation subtraction is allowed for out-of-pocket expenses incurred and paid by the taxpayer primarily for wildfire mitigation measures.

Wildfire mitigation measures that qualify for the subtraction must meet or exceed any applicable standards established by the Colorado State Forest Service or the Division of Fire Prevention and Control, such as —

- creating a defensible space around structures;
- establishing fuel breaks;
- thinning of woody vegetation for the primary purpose of reducing risk to structures from wildland fire; or

- secondary treatment of woody fuels by lopping and scattering, piling, chipping, removing from the site or prescribed burning.

Qualifying costs include:

- payment to a contractor to perform wildfire mitigation measures;
- the cost of a chainsaw if purchased primarily for wildfire mitigation measures; or
- the cost to rent an all-terrain vehicle, truck, tractor or trailer if rented primarily to perform wildfire mitigation measures.

Form "Subtractions from Income Schedule (DR 0104AD)" along with receipts for qualifying costs must be submitted with the tax return.

For information about standards established by the Colorado State Forest Service and the Division of Fire Prevention and Control, see:

- Wildfire Information Resource Center - colorado.gov/pacific/dfp/wildfire-information-resource-center
- Colorado State Forest Service - csfs.colostate.edu/wildfire-mitigation/
- Colorado Department of Revenue information sheet - colorado.gov/pacific/sites/default/files/Income65.pdf

CUSP is available to help with a mitigation plan for your property. <https://cusp.ws> 719-748-0033.

Adopt Me

by TCRAS

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Musings Along the Way

What do I value?

by Catherine Rodgers

To me "ether" means a clear sky, a heavenly region somewhere up above the clouds. Oxford English Dictionary defines ether as an archaic scientific notion of "a very rarefied and highly elastic substance believed to permeate all space, including the interstices between the particles of matter, and to be the medium whose vibrations constituted light and other electromagnetic radiation." (Don't they call that "dark matter" these days?) In my theological inquiries, I would relate etheric bodies to the subtle energy body enveloping our physical and distributed through the chakras.

So, I have been amused by the rocketing values placed on bitcoin, ether and now Dogecoin — essentially electrons! Leprechaun gold! RAM memory is a bunch of capacitors which are leaky buckets holding charged electrons "1" or ON vs empty buckets "0" or OFF. Crypto currency is a fungible means of exchange of assets of like value. For greater clarity: "Launched in 2015, Ethereum is an open-source, blockchain-based, decentralized software platform used for its own cryptocurrency, ether. It enables SmartContracts and Distributed Applications (DApps) to be built and run without any downtime, fraud, control, or interference from a third party." - Investopedia

Somehow, nerds, who primarily exist in an abstract world, have applied fantasy game rules to monetize the invisible with no specie backing. (Specie is metallic money in all its forms.) These brilliant IT geeks have convinced others that electron blips with incredibly long, unique digital numbers identified in a blockchain ledger are worth... something. For example, \$48,620.40 for 1 Bitcoin. Ether is \$1923.00. Dogecoin is up to \$0.06 from a penny since Elon Musk started plowing in millions. (On a side note, Tesla doesn't make money on its cars. It profits by selling carbon emission offsets — another intangible.) Other forms of money such as paper money or credit instruments like checks, money order, credit cards are slips or digital texts backed with a promise.

Promissory or bearer notes evolved from Chinese flying cash which Marco Polo introduced to Europe. These banknotes were used by the Knights Templar and Hebrew financiers during the Crusades rather than transporting gold on camels for months through bandit ridden deserts. One of my favorite books is the historical mystery *A Conspiracy of Paper* by David Liss that explains silver

exchange, paper money and the South Sea Bubble better than I ever can. The point is money and what we buy with it are becoming more ephemeral as we shift into a digitalized world. The question remains, what do we value?

Drifting to sleep musing about fairy dust in the ether-eum, I had the most wonderful dream or delirium. Even then I wished there were a recording device to directly transmit my dream images to this page. Alas! The instant dynamics and iridescent luminosity of this dream stuff which my mind infused with value are hard to describe. I had some invisible currency. The voice over narrator told me that I could exchange this for anything my heart desired: here was a diamond ring, which transitioned to a large oil painting, which delightfully became a magnificent home with a view. Why, it was easier than saying "Rumpelstiltskin!" Can I interest you in an orange Melo Melo pearl from an irritated snail? The narrator continued to intone that it is my gaze which gives value to these objects — each taking on a glowing radiance from my attention. I saw the 147,341,858.382 ounces of gold bars stacked in Fort Knox and cried for the many mountains which had been leveled for this hoard. Can we exchange the gold to get the mountains back? Please replace the overburden and restore the forests and the pure streams! In my dreams!

Clearly, the land has far more value in my eyes. To me, Victor is more precious than gold. I have always treasured my free time more than the paltry sums offered for my hours. My worth is not limited by my money and I have learned to draw my good to me. As I live and breathe, every minute that I remember to remember God becomes precious — doesn't really matter what I'm doing. This instant becomes filled with the ineffable Presence. All my needs are met. "By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible." Hebrews 11:3 "For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God..." 2 Peter 3:5. Not long ago these beliefs were facts which shaped our narrative, precipitated forms into our lived experience. Once again we are learning to shape the invisible.

Awakening, I came across an INC article about Mark Cuban's blogmaverick.com on how we assign value. "What is a

store of value? It's something that some number of people assign value to and are willing to pay for and then hold on to, hoping that circumstances increase the value of that item," he writes. "Gold bugs would tell you that gold is a store of value because of its history as the foundation for currency and use as...a hedge...manufacturing and jewelry ...It's all narrative," Cuban declares. "There are plenty of other 'precious metals' ... There is nothing unique or special about gold other than enough people believe the story to buy gold." A Bitcoin is an example of a digital store of value, Cuban says. So is an NBA Top Shot Moment, or Bepple's NFT digital art or a stock share in a company like GameStop. He asserts that the notion that share prices are based on some logical calculation of intrinsic value is just a myth, a sales pitch, a self-fulfilling prophecy. With digital assets the power is decentralized, not dictated by the top down. A small group working together can influence the direction towards a future they choose — they can see different values in different things. The INC article author, Minda Zetlin concludes, "Good or bad, up or down, it all comes down to the narrative, to which story people most believe. Find a way to control the narrative, and you can pretty much control the world." Can I find a market for ectoplasm? Anyone?

In Thailand harming an ordained monk is a religious taboo and legal offense. Hence Eco-monks have been ordaining trees since the 1980s, choosing the oldest and largest trees which dominate the grove. The monks recite the appropriate scripture, often from the Pali Canon, swath the tree in monk's orange robes, and read prayers that coalesce faith, ecology, and conservation. Thus, the ordination extends this sacred status to the tree. This has dissuaded some illegal logging and clear cutting. In 1996, a private foundation announced plans to ordain 50 million trees in honor of the 50th year of the reign of Thai monarch, former King Bhumibol Adulyadej. "That kind of marked a shift, because it really showed how effective these things were. And so, the state began to co-op the practice" said Dr. Susan Darlington, a professor of Anthropology and Asian studies at Hampshire College and author of "The Ordination of a Tree."

In Eufaula, Alabama and Athens, Georgia there are two oak trees that own themselves, having been deeded the land they grow on. In several places around the globe (India and New Zealand), rivers

"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

— Matthew 6:21

have been declared legal persons with rights of protection. "In Maori culture, tupuna, or 'ancestors', live on in the natural world and it is the community's duty to protect both the landscape they inherited and those who came before them. Humans and water are especially believed to be intertwined — a traditional saying is, 'I am the river, the river is me'. Having the river recognized as a legal person means harming it is the same as harming the tribe." (Kate Evans, BBC March 2020). Water protectors are surging everywhere.

Several folks I know have been doing various water ceremonies lately. Blessing the rivers and seas. Building light towers along the beaches for protection. Asking the whales and dolphins for assistance in reclaiming the sanctity of our blue planet, singing to the water as if it were sacred. As if our oceans were tears from a people far across the galaxy sent through the ether to instill life on our planet. Thus, I am made more aware that my body is mostly water, the same saline chemistry as the oceans, made by the Logos from the invisible. We know that the word is creative. Thanks to Dr. Emoto we know all water, including our bodies, are impacted by vibratory intention. Every ocean molecule vibrates with cetacean song — a series of elevated chirps and bellows and downward-spiraling moans. Is this warbling a language of the stars? Are our hearts singing of love and joy to manifest abiding the peace and harmonious wholeness we treasure? Placing our attention on the future we want, what do we recognize as good and thus imbue with value?



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Tom Finnegan and the Silver Spoon

by Gilrund the Historian



Tom Finnegan was a hardworking Irish farmer that wanted only to live a good life and enjoy the produce of his farm. As he was walking home from working in the fields of his farm one day, he saw something shining in the afternoon sun at the side of the path on which he was walking. As he came closer to the shiny object, he saw that it was a large silver spoon.

"Now what would a silver spoon be doing out here?" thought Tom as he reached down to pick up the shiny object.

The spoon was covered with mud and dirt and was worn on the end that would go in your mouth. It looked like it had been used to dig in the earth, like a tiny shovel.

Tom looked around the pathway to see if there were any other pieces of silverware. He thought that perhaps someone had dropped a whole set of silverware and he could gather all the pieces up and take them home.

But there were no more, so Tom put the silver spoon in his pocket and continued down the path toward home.

Later that night, Tom spent a little time polishing the spoon until it gleamed like brand new, except for the very end that had been damaged by the digging in the earth. He placed the spoon on the kitchen counter and went to bed.

Later that night Tom was awakened by a noise in his kitchen that sounded like a ringing bell. Tom got up and walked down the short hallway to the kitchen door and opened it a little to look in the kitchen.

The moonlight shining through the window showed a little man that stood almost two and a half feet tall. He was dressed in a green shirt and brown pants and shoes. He was about to pick up the silver spoon that Tom had found that afternoon.

The spoon was bigger than the little man's hands and he was having trouble lifting the spoon. He dropped it again and it made the bell like sound that had awakened Tom.

Tom knew just who the little man was, he was a leprechaun. But what did he want with the silver spoon?

The leprechaun had just picked up the spoon and was walking toward the edge of the counter, when Tom quickly opened the kitchen door and shouted, "Where are you going with my silver spoon?"

The little man dropped the spoon and turned to see who had spoken, just as Tom rushed into the kitchen and grabbed the spoon in his hand.

"That's my silver spoon!" cried out Connor the leprechaun, as he tried to grab on to the end of the silver spoon.

Tom pulled the spoon out of the leprechaun's hand and stood back looking down at the little man.

"Not anymore," said Tom, "I found it out

on the pathway this afternoon, so it is mine now. It was muddy and dirty then, but I polished it up like new and I will add it to my silverware. What would a leprechaun want with a spoon this big anyway?"

Connor wouldn't answer as Tom waited and waited.

Then Tom said, "I know why you wanted this spoon. You were using it to bury your gold, weren't you?"

The little man's face got red as he knew that Tom had discovered his secret.

"Just give me my silver spoon!" Connor demanded.

Tom smiled as he held the spoon out in front of the leprechaun.

"Not until you tell me where you've hidden your gold."

The little man looked at Tom and knew that he would have to tell Tom what he wanted to know if he wanted to get his silver spoon back.

"I can't tell you,"

answered the leprechaun, "But the silver spoon can direct you to the gold. You must hold the spoon in the moonlight and ask it where it was used to bury the gold. Then hold on to it and it will direct you to the gold."

Tom knew that leprechauns were tricky folk, but he also knew that they had to tell the truth if you kept your eye on them, so he took the silver spoon back into his bedroom and locked it in the nightstand until he was dressed. Then he took it out and went back to the kitchen where the little man waited on the kitchen counter.

Tom walked outside and held the silver spoon up into

the moonlight as the leprechaun, who had followed him, watched. Then Tom said, "Where is the gold that you buried?"

Tom felt a pulling in his hand as the spoon tried to move off to toward the pathway that went by Tom's house. Tom and the leprechaun walked in the direction that the spoon led on down the pathway into the darkness of the night. Soon they were at the edge of the forest and on into the dark forest they walked as the silver spoon led them. The silver spoon shined in the little bit of moonlight that the trees allowed to shine down to the path, as on and on they went.

The forest was very dark, but Tom could see as the moon light shone

through the thick branches, lighting up frightening looking things that watched him as he walked. The Leprechaun saw the things too and he walked closer and closer to Tom as they followed the path that the spoon had led them to. Soon they were out of the forest and walking through a large meadow filled with green grass and flowers.

Tom heard the singing of tiny voices as they walked into the meadow. He carefully looked around and saw fairies flying in a circle. That was where the singing was coming from. It was a fairy ring dance, or so the leprechaun told him.

Tom had heard of such things before; but had thought that they were just stories that were told to children to entertain them before putting them to bed.

Tom blinked his eyes again and again as they walked across the meadow, but the fairies were still there dancing and singing as they flew over the circle of tall grass



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and flowers. He wanted to join them, for the singing was enchanting and the way that the fairies danced was wonderful to see.

But the silver spoon was leading him away from the fairies and on across the meadow. So, on they walked toward a large hill that loomed off in the moon lit distance.

After a while they came to a small river. Tom could see no way to cross it. There was no bridge and few rocks large enough to step across on. What were they to do?

Tom looked at Connor and said, "I'm sure that you have come this way many times. How do we get across?"

Connor smiled and said, "You must fly." Tom looked at the little man and said, "You know that I cannot fly. But I have heard that your folk have magic, so you will have to get us over the river."

Connor was angry; he was angry that he had lost his silver spoon and he was angry that this human knew so much about leprechauns. What was he going to do? He wanted to keep his gold, he wanted his silver spoon back, but most of all he wanted revenge on this human that had control over him.

So, Connor thought of a plan, not a really good plan, but a plan. "I will use my magic to get us over. Touch my hat."

Tom put his hand on the top of Connor's hat and they both rose into the air and started floating over the river. Just as they reached the middle of the river, Connor quickly moved his head and Tom's hand slipped off Connor's hat. Tom fell into the river and Connor flew on across the river and laughed as Tom floated away, still holding the silver spoon up into the air.

"I still have the silver spoon!" shouted Tom as he drifted off.

Connor realized that his plan really wasn't a very good plan. What was he to do? He wanted his silver spoon back!

Connor ran after Tom as fast as he could and quickly caught up with the struggling man and used his magic to lift Tom out of the water and onto the shore.

Tom was angry at first, but quickly realized that Connor had learned a lesson and so had Tom. They could not trust each other!

They continued walking on toward the high rocky hill, still following the silver spoon in Tom's hand. Soon they were there and started up the side of a rocky hill until they came to the entrance to a large cave.

It was dark in the cave, but the silver spoon wanted Tom to go inside. Tom didn't want to go inside the cave, for it was very dark and he couldn't see where to walk.

"You go first." Tom told the leprechaun.

Connor took a little candle out of his pocket and lit it with a tiny match, then started into the cave with Tom right behind him. On and on they walked, in one tunnel and down

another, turning left and right in the little bit of light that the tiny candle gave, until at last they came into a large cavern.

Tom could see that the little bit of light that the leprechaun's tiny candle gave, was made brighter by the shining walls of the cavern and that the cavern was filled with gold of all sorts. There were coins and plates and cups and goblets, piles and piles of them.

Tom was so excited by what he had found that he put down the silver spoon and started picking up the different golden things that he saw.

The first thing that Tom picked up was a golden spoon and then a goblet, then a necklace which he put around his neck. Then a golden crown encrusted with precious gems, he put on his head. He picked up a small sack and watched as he poured out the gold coins and listened as they rang in the cavern when they hit a golden platter they fell onto.

Tom's laughter filled the cavern as he tossed the gold coins and goblets and other golden things that he found while he walked quickly around in the cavern.

"I'm rich!" he cried as he played in his newly-found wealth, "I'm richer than the town Mayor, I'm richer than the Baron, I think that I might be richer than the King himself."

He jumped to his feet and danced as he thought the fairies had danced and sang a song that he made up about how rich he was.

Golden things of all sorts flew about the cavern as Tom danced and sang and played in his great wealth.

Connor stared wide-eyed as he watched what Tom was doing there in the cavern. It was too much for the old Leprechaun. Never in his long life had he seen a human do such a thing before.

Connor was quick to put down his tiny candle and then to grab the silver spoon and run out of the cave as fast as he could. He would find another place to hide his gold and be very careful not to lose his silver spoon ever again.

Is Tom Finnegan still in that cavern running his hands over the golden things that the silver spoon led him to all those years ago? How long did that tiny candle last? Did Tom ever find his way out of the cavern? Who knows?

So, if you ever find a silver spoon on the pathway on which you are walking, leave it there, or you may end up like Tom Finnegan, very rich, but very lost.

~ The End ~

Chuck Atkinson enjoys writing fiction stories and treasure hunts for the children at his church. We are pleased to have him contribute to the only fiction in our Ute Country News.

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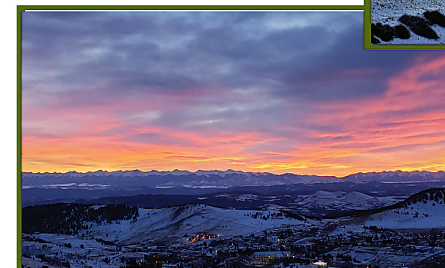
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A Look Inside the Artist
Ken McGowan, artist
by Mary Shell

Everyone in Fremont County knows Ken McGowan. He is an inspiration to all artists and all who have taken art classes from him. Diverse is a perfect word to describe Ken. So many artists find a niche in the art world and stick with a specific subject or style of creating art, never venturing into new things. Ken McGowan is one of those artists who is not afraid to try something new. He creates art for himself first, disregarding what others would think. It's that approach that causes great art to be created. Out of the box thinking is paramount to creating great art. The fear of negative reviews can be devastating to artists and can hinder their creativity. Looking at Ken's artwork I see absolutely no fear, just pure creative thoughts that he acts upon. The result is fantastic art. As a lifelong artist myself I understand how important it is to abandon precision for expression. His diversity of mediums and subjects tell me he ventures into new possibilities. As he said in this interview, he fears the risk of becoming stagnant as a painter. As an art teacher he is there for his students guiding them all the way through projects leaving them with understanding and fearlessness. He shares his passion for art.

How long have you been painting?
I have been interested in art as long as I can remember. Drawing came first. I didn't have an art teacher until I reached 9th grade. From that point on, I dived head-first into painting.

What's your favorite subject?
Recently, I have been focusing on landscape and still life although surrealism and whimsical subjects also interest me.

What is the most difficult thing to paint?
Resisting the temptation to repeat yourself at the risk of becoming stagnant as a painter.

Who, if anyone, encouraged you to create?
Firstly, my parents. Later peers who enjoyed my irreverent sketches encouraged me and lastly, many great teachers pushed me to stretch and grow as an artist. Now my wife and family are important motivators for me artistically.

Who inspires you?
John Singer Sargent, Rene Magritte, Salvador Dali, Frida Kahlo, Soon Warren and many others.



What is your favorite medium?
Watercolor and acrylic.

What inspires you to create?
A sunrise or sunset, a trout in a clear mountain lake, an interesting reflection...

What's in the future for you?
I hope to stay curious and eager to continue this journey of creating through art. I have been a teacher all my adult life and I hope to continue to share my passion with others.

What would you like to create that you haven't tried?
Probably a self-portrait.

What do you fear in creating?
The temptation to repeat yourself at the risk of becoming stagnant as a painter.

About Ken McGowan

I am a fourth generation native of Leadville, Colorado. I received a BA degree in Fine Art Education from the University of Colorado, Boulder, and a MA degree in Special Education from the University of Northern Colorado.

I have taught for more than 40 years. Many of my former students have pursued art careers including graphic arts and art education.

Art has always been a central focus in my life. I enjoy painting and drawing. I also give lessons, teach workshops, paint murals, and accept commissions. Watercolor, acrylic, and silhouette paintings are my primary focus.

I strive to represent images in a refined, symbolic, surrealist, or realistic way, often with the use of borders to create unity. I view each painting as a challenge and an opportunity to learn and grow as an artist.

Ken McGowan's art can be viewed at www.kenmcgowanart.com and at the Artists' Gallery, 416 Main Street, Cañon City, CO and on Facebook.



Trooper Tips
A rather blustery drive
by Master Trooper Gary Cutler

As Winnie the Pooh stated, "It undoubtedly looks like a rather blustery day." As that silly old bear stated so many years ago, it still rings true. We have seen a lot of blustery days this year, with some gusts reaching as high as 116 MPH.

Wind can affect your travels in many ways. The one that comes to most people's minds is how it can and often does topple big rigs pulling trailers. Even though you may not be driving a semi, you do need to be aware of them in a windstorm.

If you are feeling wind gusts while driving, it could mean that a particularly strong one can hit the semi and tip it over. You need to be careful with them while following or passing them. Watch to see if the semi is having trouble maintaining its lane. It could mean something more dangerous is in the near future. Spend as little time around them as possible in case a gust hits it while you are near.

This goes the same if you are pulling a

trailer. Lighter trailers, especially empty ones are more prone to dragging the tow vehicle off the road with it when hit by a gust of wind. Also, make sure your load is secure, especially in windstorms. Items that you normally wouldn't think will blow off your trailer may indeed fly off and possibly hit a vehicle or go into the roadway and cause another vehicle to crash.

Those of you who don't pull trailers or drive semis are not off the hook. Particularly strong winds can move your car into the oncoming lane of travel. I'm sure you've felt your vehicle moving around and sometimes finding it hard to maintain your lane. Again, be cautious of windstorms and especially ones with strong wind gusts. If there is a report of possible strong winds, try to adjust your travel plans. Get where you're going safely.

"Oh, Pooh, there's more to life than just balloons and honey." As always, safe travels!

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Josh

This is Josh. He is sad and lonely because his owner died and his other best friend, a 15-year-old chow got a home, but not Josh. He is a Shepherd/Husky mix, only 6 years old, neutered and current on all vaccinations. Josh weighs about 60 pounds. He gets along with other dogs; he's a sweet guy. He has not been around children or cats. To set a meet and greet with Josh call 719-587-9663 or visit us at Petco on Saturdays 11-4 p.m.

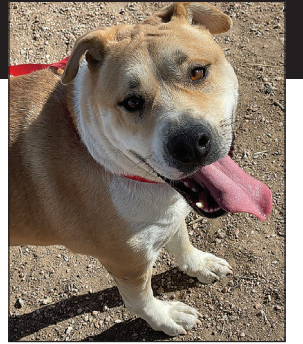
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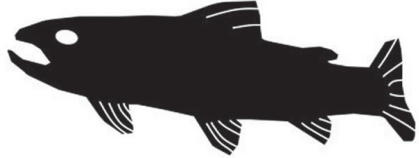
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Life-Enhancing Journeys

The value of forgiveness, part I

by Barbara Pickholz-Weiner, RN, BSN, CACIII, MAC, EMDRII

When you recall an experience where someone abused, betrayed, deceived or humiliated you, most of us would prefer avoiding thinking about it; however, your body responds to the memory instantaneously, unconsciously, without your permission. When revisiting the incident, notice how your body will often react with tightening muscles, a racing heart, a knot, butterflies or nausea in your stomach, sweaty palms, dry mouth, clenched teeth, etc. This physiological feedback indicates that your survival brain has been triggered simply by thinking about the past event or person. This is, therefore, a signal that the emotional pain remains in control of your inner mind. One effective method to remedy residual emotional pain is to learn how to forgive. Forgiveness can reduce anger, resentment, and the desire for revenge. Forgiveness is defined as a conscious, deliberate decision to release feelings of resentment or vengeance toward a person or group who has harmed you, regardless of whether they actually deserve your forgiveness. It is important to remember that forgiveness does not mean forgetting, nor does it mean condoning or excusing offenses, more it is the understanding of the extraordinary healing power in taking steps to forgive someone who you believe has wronged you. Forgiving is a decision that gives greater physical and psychological health to the forgiver. Letting go of your resentment by forgiving the offender can reduce blood pressure, cardiovascular stress, anxiety and depression. This article will focus on forgiving others. Part II will explore ways to forgive ourselves.

“Mistakes are always forgivable, if one has the courage to admit them,”
— Bruce Lee

Forgiveness is a choice, yet I have to admit that letting go of the pain can be really difficult. A long time ago in what feels like another universe, I experienced a betrayal that felt so deep and hurtful that I was unsure if I would ever recover. This betrayal concurred while I was caring for my dying mother which only exacerbated the pain. Initially, I felt like a victim asking myself rhetorically, “How could she do this to me? I supported her...I befriended her...” Then my hurt turned to rage and I wished for her to suffer in the worst way possible for the rest of her life! A beautiful friend encouraged me to move past my wrath, not by denying my right to the resentment, but instead by trying to offer the wrongdoer compassion and benevolence by sending love and light to-

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wards this person who I viewed as a traitor. My friend continually reminded me that my fury and sense of betrayal would hurt me more than my anger could hurt the betrayer. It was important to free myself from carrying that kind of hatred and judgment. When I realized how fleeting life could be, I asked myself if I were on my deathbed would I want to be holding onto any anger or resentment? The answer was a resounding NO! I wish I could say I got over this outrage quickly but, truth be told, it was really difficult to let go of my resentment, and it took me several years to fully neutralize the emotional pain from that devastating deceit. Now when I see this person who betrayed me, all I experience is a sense of pity for who I know her to be — a dishonorable and untrustworthy person. I remind myself that she has to live with herself and, gratefully, I can see that she is no longer a part of my life. Now I feel free and the hurt is merely an old memory from which I learned valuable lessons.

“As I walked out the door toward the gate that would lead to my freedom, I knew if I didn’t leave my bitterness and hatred behind, I’d still be in prison.”
— Nelson Mandela.

Forgiveness is beneficial for us, yet that does not mean that it is easy. Forgiving others is essential for enhancing one’s life.

“We must develop and maintain the capacity to forgive. He who is devoid of the power to forgive is devoid of the power to love,”
— Martin Luther King Jr.

Remembering experiences of someone who has hurt you, while it can still be painful, is now nothing more than a thought or feeling — just a memory from the past. Thoughts of resentment, anger, and hatred can be debilitating and disempowering if you continue to let these thoughts occupy space in your head. By allowing yourself to release these thoughts, you will experience more peace. As previously expressed, forgiveness can be very difficult, yet it is possible to achieve when we have the right tools, along with the willingness to put in the effort. Here are basic steps involved in the path to forgiveness:

1. Understand what forgiveness is and why it matters
- Forgiveness is about extending civility to those who have harmed us even if they do not “deserve” it. Rather than finding excuses for the offending person’s behavior or pretending it never happened, forgiveness is about embracing the benefits for the one who forgives. Working on forgiveness can help us increase our self-esteem and give us a sense of inner strength and safety. Empathy is connected to forgiveness so when we forgive, the neural circuits responsible for empathy increases.

“The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong.”
— Mahatma Gandhi.

- There are times when we are deeply hurt, yet instead of focusing on the betrayer, we tell ourselves lies such as, “I am ruined” or “I am not worthy.” Forgiveness can heal us and allow us to move on in life with meaning and purpose.
2. Strengthen your forgiveness-ability
- Practice incorporating regular forgiveness trainings into your daily life. Start this practice by avoiding talking disparagingly about those who have hurt you (even though it may seem tempting). It is unnecessary to say nice things; however, when you refrain from talking negatively, it will enhance your more humane side.
3. Avoid self-blame or taking the betrayal personally
- Always guard against blaming yourself. You did not deserve the betrayal and you certainly do not need the added burden of condemning yourself. Being betrayed by others is not your fault.
4. Avoid allowing the betrayal to define you
- No matter how badly you were treated, or what others may say about you, remind yourself that you are a worthwhile person, and that you have value. Regardless of how much distress you are in, understand that you are more than this emotional pain you are suffering.
5. Know that the pain does end
- When we are caught up in resentment and anger, it seems like this will be a part of our lives forever, yet the pain does diminish. Pain, emotional and physical, will be unable to crush you as you stand strong despite your circumstance. Standing in the pain can show you how strong you really are.

Think about other times in your life in which you suffered a deep heartache or betrayal, when the tears came easily before they eased off. At times it may seem like this agony will never end, but of course, it does. Remind yourself that the anguish of past experiences was often temporary, and the same is likely true today. Consider working on positive self-regard and your inherent worth as a person as these may help ease the psychological effects of betrayal. When you learn from your experiences, you can be restored and even revitalized. I have heard some people proclaim that it is impossible to pardon another who has harmed you, yet we all know this is a possibility. People who forgive eventually do find a way to safely reopen their hearts. Forgiveness is a process that takes time, patience, and determination. Be gentle and comforting by offering yourself kindhearted acceptance. When you release bitterness and put compassion in its place, you have liberated yourself to create an incredible life. “Forgiving isn’t something you do for someone else. It’s something you do for yourself. It’s saying ‘You’re not important enough to have a stranglehold on me.’ It’s saying, ‘You don’t get to trap me in the past. I am worthy of a future.’” Jodi Picoult. Barbara Pickholz-Weiner, RN, BSN, CACII, MAC, EMDRII is the program director of Journeys Counseling Center, Inc. At Journeys we teach you tools, skills and help you discover resources to live the most effective life possible. We guide, support and coach you along the path you desire, to become the best version of yourself. To contact Barbara, call 719-687-6927 (office) or 719-510-1268 (cell).

Where is Katee this month?

At DayBreak - An Adult Day Care Center!

Katee says that there has never been a more critical time for us to help make sure that no one has to choose between feeding themselves or feeding their pets. She wants to thank everyone who is continuing to support the Pet Food Pantry with donations so that her canine and feline friends can stay at home with their families. She knows that they will comfort their owners during this difficult time. You can drop off donations at TCRAS, Blue’s Natural Pet Market or The UPS Store located in the Safeway Shopping Center. You can also donate online, www.PetFoodPantryTC.com. Thank you for your support. Katee is thrilled to be back at Day-Break Adult Day Care Program



(www.daybreakadp.com). She enjoys being petted and making seniors smile!

Adopt Me

by Ark Valley Humane Society

Fluff

Fluff is a sweet old man who is searching for a companion to travel with as he enjoys his years of retirement. His retirement plans really didn’t include a trip to the shelter, but he’s making the best of the situation and dreaming of sunnier days. Fluff is hoping that his family enjoys cuddling and napping in the sun as much as he does! He is a 16-year-old male, domestic longhair mix who is FIV positive, so he’ll need to be an indoor only cat and go to a home with other FIV positive cats only (and he does love other cats!). He has also lived with dogs in his previous home and would do well with other cat-friendly pups. This loving boy is proof that cats can live quite normal lives in quality, duration and happiness despite an FIV positive diagnosis. If you think your home could be the special place Fluff is searching for, fill out an adoption matchmaker at ark-valley.org or give us a call to learn more! 719-395-2737. This space donated by the Ute Country News to promote shelter animal adoption.



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Fremont petroglyph panels, Dinosaur National Park and surrounding areas.

Petroglyphs

by Steven Wade Veatch

Desert varnish drips down rocks marking time.

Spirals, stars, animal shapes, sacred symbols, pecked on rocks from centuries past—reveal a silent song and the shaman's path.

A breeze whispers through sagebrush while a sunbaked lizard rests on a rock. A hawk, flying high, disappears into the canyon where echoes of ancient chants draw me to where I belong.



Growing Ideas

Best faces forward...plants and people

by Karen Anderson "The Plant Lady"

March greetings gardeners and friends. It's good to be with you again after the deepest of winter months and since we high altitude gardeners are not quite ready to activate our 2021 growing season, I would like to encourage you to spend some quality time tending to your houseplants.

I normally do not suffer from *cabin fever*, even in a pandemic, as my life indoors during the winter and early spring is filled with the joy and care of a superabundance of houseplants. In addition to watering, feeding, trimming, transplanting and changing locations to meet their needs, one of the most rewarding tasks for me and the plants, is to turn them around so that their *best faces* are forward. Since they are always inclined to bend and grow toward the light, their backsides are exposed to the public and we all know how unattractive that can be! You will be delighted to see what they look like on the other side and it gives the plants the chance to balance out their growth patterns.

While I am facilitating a landscaping project, I will always suggest planting trees, bushes (or anything really) with their fullest, most appealing *faces* directed toward where you will be enjoying their

beauty most often. You want to look at the healthiest side of your plantings, whether it is from the kitchen window or the patio or wherever you spend a lot of time; best faces forward.

Plants are dependent upon their keepers to turn them around, but we humans on the other hand have a choice and the capability to present our *best faces forward* even behind the masks. One of my past guilty pleasures was watching Americas Top Model with Tyra Banks. Tyra would teach her models to smile with their eyes. She called it 'Smizing'. We can say a lot



sciousness. So, try 'Smizing' in the mirror, put your mask on and go forth into the world with your most genuine intentions and your best faces forward.

A quick reminder: Happy healthy houseplants are always up for 'adoption' at Mountain Naturals in Woodland Park and the Outpost in Florissant. In addition, my Blessing Beads, Talking Sticks and other goodies are available at those stores, as well as at Shipping Plus in Divide. My Heritage Seed Collection will be coming soon to all those locations.

You are welcome to call me at 719-748-3521 or e-mail at plantlady@speaks@gmail.com if you have inquiries regarding the upcoming gardening season or any other questions.

Be well, be safe and wishing you peace, love and as always, happy gardening.

Check out these activities going on right here in this area. If you know of an activity we should include, please call us at 719-686-7587 or email us at utecountrynewspaper@gmail.com.

Readers: COVID-19 changes daily. Please follow CDC guidelines ([cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)) and your county's health department. Were you expecting to see your event listed and didn't? Please email utecountrynewspaper@gmail.com.

VIRTUAL

- 2 Cañon City Library hosting a virtual celebration for Read Across America and Dr. Seuss' Birthday at 2 p.m. FMI 719-269-9020. The event will be on our social media <https://www.facebook.com/CañonCityLibrary/> and website www.ceplib.co.us as well as our Youtube Channel <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-sptPAulabHn653n4nYGSA>
- 5 Foodie Friday — Food Trucks! 9 a.m.
- 8 Smart Start: How to Start a Business 10-noon.
- 15 Website 101: Lessons to increase sales & awareness 10 a.m.
- 18 The Business Model Canvas: Create a one-page business plan at noon.

COLORADO

- To see what status each county is in regarding Covid-19 restrictions, visit: <https://covid19.colorado.gov>
- 4 COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP Circle of Parents Kinship Connection 5-6 p.m. via zoom. Are you raising your grandchildren or kin? Do you feel like you are raising them alone? A place where you can find and share support. FMI AmyS@cpteller.org or 719-686-0705.
- 13 Free interactive Q&A session with Larry Stebbins, The Garden Father. 9-10:30 a.m. FMI jamie@cpteller.org or 719-686-0705 or The Harvest Center Facebook page.
- 31 Cooking Matters at Home March 31-May 5, 5-6 p.m. via zoom. Learn new ways to create quick, family-friendly, low-cost meals. Participants receive a \$10 Walmart Gift Card after each session. FMI Jessica@cpteller.org or 719-686-0705.

NAMI COLORADO: <http://www.namicolorado.org/>

nicolorado.org/

Suicide prevention: <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/> or 1-800-273-8255

SBDC offers a variety of webinars as follows:

5 Foodie Friday — Food Trucks! 9 a.m.

8 Smart Start: How to Start a Business 10-noon.

15 Website 101: Lessons to increase sales & awareness 10 a.m.

18 The Business Model Canvas: Create a one-page business plan at noon.

To register for any of the above, scroll past the "on-demand": <https://clients.coloradosbdc.org/Events.aspx?mode=4&area=Alamosa&zip=&miles=25¢er=2400&topicnum=0&days=360&sort=L&layout=0> or email info@centralsbdc.org.

BUENA VISTA

19 BV HOPE meets via zoom. FMI 719-395-6938 or buenvista-hope@gmail.com or BVHope.org.

VITA's free tax help service is available in BV! The IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program provides free income tax return preparation and electronic filing again this year, provided by the Rotary Club of BV. This is done in the Aspen Room of the Community Center on Tues and Thurs 12-4 p.m. through April 13. Call or text 719-293-1857 for an appointment. Bring 2020 tax records,

2019 return, photo ID and Social Security cards for yourself and all dependents. If child-care expenses are to be claimed, bring the provider's tax ID or SSN. A voided check is needed for direct deposit, the fastest way to get your refund.

~OUT AND ABOUT~

2019 return, photo ID and Social Security cards for yourself and all dependents. If child-care expenses are to be claimed, bring the provider's tax ID or SSN. A voided check is needed for direct deposit, the fastest way to get your refund.

CAÑON CITY

LIBRARY

3 Free Legal Clinic 2-5 p.m. Call 719-269-9020 to sign up.

• Babies On Our Knees on Mon at 10:30 a.m. for 24 months and younger.

• Chess Club for all ages every Wed 2 p.m. in the Carnegie Room (physically distanced).

• Story Times and Craft on Tues and Thurs 10:30 a.m. in person!

• We now offer EBSCO, a powerful online reference system accessible with a current library card. This offers our patrons access to resources for research and information on College admissions test prep, career test prep for teaching, nursing, military, electrician, plumbing and more; resume building; read-alike for your favorite books and more!

• This Summer's Learning Program theme is "Tails and Tales." We are asking for and accepting quilts and other handmade items for our silent auction. All funds raised will support the Summer Learning Program events and prizes. Items accepted through May and auction begins in June.

• Youth programs

• 1st Fri Lego Club 3-4 p.m. All ages welcome!

• 2nd Fri is Breakout Club 3-4 p.m., ages 11-17, where youth can work together, think and solve

puzzles, learning as you have fun and interact.

• 3rd Fri StudiOH Tech Club 3-4 p.m., ages 11-17, where you can create with our maker space, 3D printer, CAD program, video and voice editing.

Registration required for all events. The Cañon City Library is located at 516 Macon Ave. FMI 719-269-9020.

CRIPPLE CREEK

26 Commodities will be distributed 9-2 p.m. at the Aspen Mine Center. FMI 719-689-3584.

• GED classes 1-3 p.m. Mon and Wed. (no class 22 or 24). FMI AmyS@cpteller.org or 719-686-0705.

DIVIDE

6, 27 Little Chapel Food Pantry. Distributions via drive-through by last name beginning with:

A-H 3:30-4:30

I-Q 4:30-5:30

R-Z 5:30-6:30

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

13 St. Patrick's Day Playgroup 11-noon at Pikes Peak Community Club. Join us for a Wee Bit O'Fun! All tiny shamrocks & little leprechauns invited. Create rainbow and glittery holiday crafts, enjoy a snack, and a fun indoor movement activity. Space limited. FMI Jessica@cpteller.org or 719-686-0705.

• Mondays in March (no class March 15): FREE Yoga with Leah 10-11 a.m. at Pikes Peak Community Club. Limited class size. Doors lock at 10 a.m. Bring your own mat and props. All levels welcome. FMI Jamie@cpteller.org or 719-686-0705.

• GED Mon and Weds (no class March 22 or 24) 1-3 p.m. FMI AmyS@cpteller.org or 719-686-0705.

FLORENCE

8, 10, 13 The Blue Spruce Gallery is hosting a spring "Apparel" theme show. The artist chosen theme is "apparel." Theme shows encourage artists to be creative and have fun with the work. All artists are encouraged to enter the show — we are looking for a wide variety of work, including 2D and 3D. Deadline for work to be at the gallery is March 8. Show opens on March 10, with a reception on March 13. Cash prizes as well as ribbons in several categories. Entry forms at Blue Spruce Gallery 205 Wes Main St. or www.bluespruceart.com. FMI 719-748-1339.

not need to bring anything. FMI or to reserve your space 719-748-5004.

LIBRARY

11 Free Legal Clinic 3-4 p.m. Call 719-748-3939 to sign up!

FLORISSANT

14 Healthy Immune and How to Effectively Treat a Viral Infection 1:30-3:30 p.m. Read more on page 3.

20 Indian Creek POA's 4th Fire Mitigation Workshop 11-3 p.m. Meet at 3576 Pathfinder Road. FMI Don Moore 719-839-0860 or tihreed@gmail.com.

GRANGE

4, 11, 18, 25 Potluck and music at 6 p.m. We will keep the number of people at half capacity.

13 Pine Needle Basket/Glass Painting Class 9-noon. If you want to learn glass painting, please bring some glass to paint on. If you are learning how to make a basket, you do

not need to bring anything. FMI or to reserve your space 719-748-5004.

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GRANGE

4, 11, 18, 25 Potluck and music at 6 p.m. We will keep the number of people at half capacity.

13 Pine Needle Basket/Glass Painting Class 9-noon. If you want to learn glass painting, please bring some glass to paint on. If you are learning how to make a basket, you do

not need to bring anything. FMI or to reserve your space 719-748-5004.

LIBRARY

11 Free Legal Clinic 3-4 p.m. Call 719-748-3939 to sign up!

FLORISSANT

14 Healthy Immune and How to Effectively Treat a Viral Infection 1:30-3:30 p.m. Read more on page 3.

20 Indian Creek POA's 4th Fire Mitigation Workshop 11-3 p.m. Meet at 3576 Pathfinder Road. FMI Don Moore 719-839-0860 or tihreed@gmail.com.

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Saturday, April 3, 1 p.m.
Sunday, April 4, 3 p.m.

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