



# UTE COUNTRY NEWS

FREE

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October 2023

P.O. Box 753, Divide, CO 80814 • 719-686-7587 • utecountrynews.com

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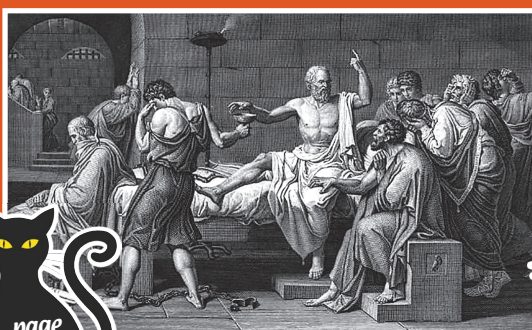
## Welcome to Ute Country



**"Sticky fingers, tired feet;  
one last house, trick or treat!"**

— Rusty Fischer

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Apothecary to poisons**



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**Fire Resistant Native Plants**



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**On Deck**

We simply had to stop to take photos of this Halloween display in Cripple Creek last year. Dusk was upon us, so Jeff played with various settings to bring out this spook-tacular image. As he was walking back to the truck, I saw a curtain move and heard a voice saying, "I think someone is taking pictures!" Allowing ourselves to get excited and participate in holiday activities tends to bring joy, create memories, and set forth a celebratory tone. Why not make the most of all that life has to offer in our magnificent mountains?

Our October pages have much to offer our readers around Halloween and enjoying life in the mountains. You will find information on the 29th Annual Emma Crawford Coffin Races in Manitou Springs, "Beyond the Grave" offers an exciting opportunity at Evergreen Cemetery in Colorado Springs, and Cripple Creek is hosting a Fall Festival. *The Birthday House* is an enjoyable fiction piece found in our center spread. Read two articles to be informed about prescribed burns in the Lake George and Cañon City areas. "Bolts of Tragedy" reminds us how dangerous lightning can be from an historical perspective. History buffs will enjoy another installment of *Curran Creek Characters*. *Life Enhancing Journeys* tackles the joy and fear of aging, something that is of interest to all of us, given there is only one alternative.

We know you are out there: you enjoy connecting with people and are seeking an additional income, and you know what "deadline" means. Please consider becoming a sales representative for *Ute Country News*, as we need a sales rep for the Woodland Park area. Stop in at Shipping Plus Mon-Fri 9-5:30 p.m. or email [utecountrynewspaper@gmail.com](mailto:utecountrynewspaper@gmail.com). Did any of your leaf-peeping pics include your pets? You may email them to [utecountrynewspaper@gmail.com](mailto:utecountrynewspaper@gmail.com), bring them into Shipping Plus Monday through Friday, 9-5:30 p.m., or snail mail to *Ute Country News* POB 753 Divide, CO 80814.

Thank you,  
— Kathy & Jeff Hansen

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## The Thymekeeper Apothecary to poisons

by Mari Marques-Worden

### What is an apothecary?

Besides a cool word, an apothecary is the equivalent of an old time pharmacy. One of the best representations of one from the 1800s that I've seen is located in "South Park City" in Fairplay. Back in the day what you could expect to see in an apothecary were rows of herbs in various forms, along with other remedies such as Epsom salts or hydrogen peroxide. You would see tools such as jars and funnels, carrier oils and band-aids for topical applications among other useful items, very similar to what I called a *drug store* when I was little and the pharmacies you see today.

### Per Wikipedia:

"In addition to dispensing herbs and medicine, apothecaries offered general medical advice and a range of services. Apothecary shops sold ingredients and the medicines they prepared wholesale to other medical practitioners, as well as dispensing them to patients. In 17th-century England, they also controlled the trade in tobacco which was imported as a medicine."

Apothecaries can be dated back to 2600 BC, possibly further.

### Patent medicine and the rise of the medicine show

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, "patent medicine" became very popular for a variety of ailments. Also known as proprietary medicines, they were mass-produced remedies created from homemade recipes/formulas. Many were concoctions of herbs and alcohol (tinctures), some contained nothing of benefit, while others contained substances like opium and cocaine which are also derived from plants. While I don't doubt that some of these worked like a charm for some ailments, the claims behind them were grandiose in nature and slanted toward being a cure-all. Chemical medicines did not come into use in the U.S. until 1925.

Despite the name patented medicine, these products were rarely patented or regulated. They were heavily advertised in the form of trading cards, and often sold by traveling salespeople. This could be considered the prelude to what became known as traveling medicine shows. <https://www.legendsofamerica.com/ah-patentmedicine/>

Traveling medicine shows originated in Europe but were popular in the United States from the late 19th century to the early 20th century. Medicine shows were a form of entertainment and advertising and were very popular in the rural areas where they served the community as one of the few sources of live entertainment.

They were traveling acts that peddled products with claims of miraculous cures for nearly everything that ails a person. They featured a variety of entertainers: Musicians, magicians, comedians, acrobats, and what they considered to be freaks of Nature.

Between the different performances, like the infomercial of today, a person posing as a doctor, who incidentally ran the show, would deliver a speech to attract the crowd and persuade them to buy their products.

Medicine shows only lasted a short time in the U.S. as people began to realize the hoopla behind them was often a ruse to stir their emotions and empty their pockets. It's no wonder herbalists have struggled to maintain any sense of legitimacy today. If the old time medicine shows were all you knew about herbal medicines, you would be skeptical indeed and have every right to be. After World War

I, medicine shows were on the decline as they ushered in a new age of media and advertising.

I would allege that as a marketing tool, catchy names and grandiose claims still exist to this day so, buyer beware. The shysters are still among us and I am sad to say I have experienced this locally on more than one occasion. Knowing who produces your remedies and how is key to achieving a good result.

### The shady side

Since the beginning of recorded history there is no question that plants have played a large part in human evolution on several levels. It is up to us how we put them to use and historically speaking, it wasn't all for good!

One need only to look a little further back in history to quell any skepticism about the effectiveness of herbs. Way back when, one of the most effective methods of ridding oneself of a problem person was to take advantage of what Nature freely provided, poison.

As humans, our history is chock full of stories of war and assassination but some of the most memorable murders came at the hands of highly skilled practitioners of death by poison using plants. With the right ingredients and method of application one could make short order of rival or foe and at one time in our history it was big business. There were notorious poisoners responsible for high profile assassinations including Emperor Claudius who died of poison mushrooms. Some were so adept at the art of murder by poison that they were "reserved among the instruments of state to serve the purposes of dark ambition," according to *Botanical Curses and Poisons*.

One of the most famous poisonings is that of Socrates. Socrates, accused of refusing to recognize the gods recognized by the state and of corrupting the youth. He was tried and convicted. The jury decided he would receive the death sentence and Athenian law prescribed death by drinking a cup of poison hemlock and succumbing to its effects. At his own hand he drank the hemlock and executed his death sentence. <https://www.ancientpages.com/2018/04/21/why-did-socrates-drink-poison-and-commit-suicide/>

If you are so inclined to dwell further, a more detailed description of the actual event and its aftermath can be found in Plato's dialogue Phaedo. Phaedo was present at the death of Socrates. To sum it up in a few words I would describe the incident as paralysis from the toes up.

In 82 BC, the act of murder by poison had become such a regular occurrence in Rome that it was declared a capital offense. "It became illegal to make, buy, sell, possess, or to give poison for the purpose of killing (though it remained legal to obtain it for pest control and medical practices), under punishment of deportation and the confiscation of property." — *Botanical Curses and Poisons* - Fez Inkwright

Note the exclusions: pest control and medical practices. This brings up an important point. The poison truly is in the dosage as they say. The coumarins produced by plants have blood thinning properties. Rat poison is made with them and blood thinning pharmaceuticals are derived from them. What is deadly poison to one is vital medicine to another; same plant, different preparation and dosage. Today we have a plethora of entertainment and advertising inundating us daily. We have access to pharmacies and herbal

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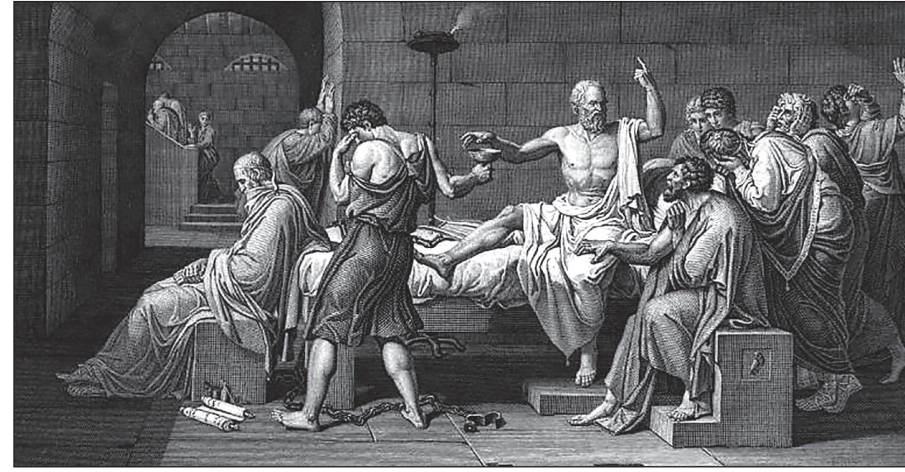
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## The Thymekeeper Apothecary to poisons

continued from page 3



One of the most famous poisonings is that of Socrates.

apothecaries alike although the latter are far less frequent. The truth is we all have our own herbal apothecaries in our own homes and yards. Many of the items used for cooking from spices to garlic and onions have medicinal properties and if you can boil water, you can make an effective inexpensive herbal preparation. We still have the option to gather, prepare and utilize many home remedies without all the hoopla!

As far as poisonous plants go, you probably have some in your house, cleaning your air as you read this, such as philodendron, peace lily and English ivy and more. There are a few in the wild in Ute Country but not that many. Familiarize yourself with these plants and admire

them from a distance. The plant is no more likely to jump up and poison you as the herbs in your kitchen are to tell you what they are good for.

Looking back in time is always helpful as a comparison to where we are and how we got here. Humans existed with plants long before patent medicines or chemical medications came onto the scene. Although there is a time and place for modern medicine, we have many remedies available at our fingertips and it's up to us what we do with the plants around us.

Mari Marques is a state certified herbalist and owner of The Thymekeeper. Contact her at mugsyspad@aol.com or 719-439-7303.

## Beyond the Grave: An evening with Bram Stoker

by Dianne Hartshorn

Join us for an unforgettable evening stepped in the enigmatic world of Bram Stoker, the genius behind the legendary novel "Dracula." Experience a chilling atmosphere as you explore the origins and inspirations that brought this enduring narrative to life. Meet Bram Stoker himself as he unravels the mysteries behind the tale of the undead, the Transylvanian Count who sent shivers through the hearts of villagers.

During the guided tour, you'll encounter captivating characters such as Mina and Lucy, who will share their eternal love stories. Dr. Van Helsing will also be present, delving into the otherworldly avenues that may explain Lucy's deteriorating condition.

Tickets are available exclusively through advanced online sales. Secure tickets for your group under one designated time slot. Each slot accommodates



Bram Stoker 1906

20 individuals. Refunds will only be issued if the hosts cancel the event.

Attendees must not arrive under the influence of alcohol or substances. Individuals found in such a state will be asked to leave without a refund. Dress appropriately for the weather, as this is a rain/snow event in Colorado.

Don't miss the opportunity to be transported into a realm where Bram Stoker's legacy and the allure of "Dracula" intertwine in an evening of unparalleled intrigue. Join us for this mesmerizing event at the historic Evergreen Cemetery. FMI <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/beyond-the-grave-an-evening-with-bram-stoker-tickets-696199360027>

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set an appointment. You won't be sorry!  
This space donated by the Ute Country News to promote shelter animal adoption.



## Pharmgirl The backroads

by Peggy Badgett

The urban Dallas landscape suddenly transformed into oil fields and cattle pastures; it was a relief to leave the city traffic behind. Immaculate fence lines and immense ranch houses filled my view for many miles. Then they disappeared. Faced with endless red dirt fields in every direction, I wondered what would happen if my car broke down. There was no cell signal to call AAA. Maybe it hadn't been the wisest decision to take the backroads on my way home.

I'd been dog sitting for my daughter in North Carolina and was slowly making my way back to the mountains. Discovering beautiful state parks and national monuments in Alabama and Louisiana had made the trip fairly pleasant but added extra driving. A respite from sitting behind the steering wheel was necessary, so I detoured to Richardson, Texas after a dear friend convinced me to visit her brother there. He and I watched birds in his back yard, walked his dogs, admired sunrises and sunsets at a nearby lake, and volleyed a tennis ball back and forth at the local court. The food had been amazing, and his hospitality wonderful, but the Rocky Mountains nudged me back on the road after three days.

I regretted passing a diner advertising unforgettable cinnamon rolls in a small town 30 minutes before. There must have been at least a dozen dusty ranch trucks in the lot, a sure sign of good coffee. My stomach protested and grumbled loudly over the static on the radio; it wasn't content with the stale chips I'd found under my seat. There was no hunger relief in sight. The next tiny village didn't even warrant a population sign as tumbleweeds rolled between houses with boarded up windows and badly leaning porches.

Further down the desolate road, white fluffs on twiggy stalks poked through the mud-caked earth. They certainly weren't corn or soybeans, and I pulled my car onto a gravel shoulder to investigate. After scanning for no trespassing signs, I cautiously ventured across the weed-choked ditch. The fuzzy material was soft between my fingers; it was the remains of a harvested cotton field! Looking furtively around me, I grabbed three shriveled canes, raced back to the car and threw my loot onto the passenger seat. How many laws I had broken? Were land owners allowed to shoot a person on sight for stealing cotton?

Relief flooded through me when a tiny gas station appeared between towering cement silos and a small rail yard just before the New Mexico border. I hid the smuggled cotton under my backpack and topped off the tank. The temptation to

jump back into the car was strong. But the memory of my regrettable non-

encounter with the Mississippi man burning leaves popped into my head. I had pulled off the interstate to investigate a state park but discovered it was an hour away in the wrong direction. The old man had sat in an aluminum lawn chair in his front yard on the edge of a tiny town, his dark brown eyes watching me idle at the side of a pot-holed two lane highway. Instead of stopping to chat with him, I sped away and missed out on what I'm sure were amazing stories. A cow bell rang over my head as I opened the door and entered the cutest

shop I'd seen in a long time. The owner looked up and grinned as he finished

**The owner looked up and grinned as he finished stocking an old time candy display. He told me how he escaped the big city and a stressful corporate career to own a small business catering to tourists venturing off the interstate.**

stocking an old time candy display. He told me how he escaped the big city and a stressful corporate career to own a small business catering to tourists venturing off the interstate. I purchased a bag full of unique gifts and healthier snacks to appease my stomach. The chance encounter left me smiling as I climbed back into my car. Taking the backroads on my journeys definitely took longer but showcased the hidden gems and people of our beautiful country. I placed the handful of cotton from the lone star state on my dashboard to remind me to stop more often and discover them.



Peggy Badgett watches birds and a Texas sunset.

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## PPSC vocational scholarships available

by Matt Radcliffe

Pikes Peak State College has received a generous gift of \$843,750 from an anonymous donor to establish the Spark Fund. This fund will fuel students pursuing higher education in any vocational field in the Pikes Peak region.

The fund was established to provide scholarships to students seeking vocational skills, such as boat building, construction skills, AutoCAD or other drafting tools, automotive repair, heavy equipment operating skills, computer skills, or nursing skills, which provide people with the ability to make a living with an honorable trade or providing funds for the organization to purchase equipment needed to use for vocational instruction.

"We at Pikes Peak State College Foundation are very honored to have been selected for such a generous gift," said PPSC Chief Development Officer Donna Nelson. "Though the donor wishes to remain anonymous, this gift will make a huge difference in the lives of our students today, tomorrow, and in perpetuity." Although the donor wishes to remain anonymous, we know they attended a community college, worked extremely hard to acquire their wealth, and want to pay it forward to others.

To qualify students must live in El Paso County, be a high school graduate or equivalent, maintain a 2.0 G.P.A., enroll

in a minimum of six credit hours per semester, be committed to completion of a degree or certificate, and complete an essay explaining what the scholarship would mean to them.

Scholarships will be awarded up to the amount of \$2,500 per year and are renewable for up to an additional year if students continue to meet the criteria. Students receiving the Spark Fund Scholarship can be at any point in their academic career and funds can be used for tuition assistance, books, or supplies needed to complete their program. The funds may be used in conjunction with matching dollars in order to get the maximum benefit for students.

"A gift of this magnitude is very exciting for the college because it allows us to provide financial support and needed equipment to students pursuing degrees that allow them to work with their hands." Said PPSC Foundation Board Chair Jordan Ayers.

The funds may also be used by the college to purchase supplies or equipment needed to facilitate classroom instruction. A portion of the funds will be used to create an endowment that will allow for the money to be used in perpetuity.

To learn more about this scholarship, visit [pikespeak.edu/spark-fund](http://pikespeak.edu/spark-fund).

## SP Ranger District's prescribed burning in Park County

by Lana Longwell

Fire managers of South Park Ranger District are preparing for prescribed burning in Park County. This includes up to 684 acres of broadcast burning, which involves the ignition of surface fuels with prepared units. The projects are Beaver, 7.5 miles SW of Lake George near the Echo and Beaver Valley Subdivisions, and O'Brien Two 1-2 miles W of Lake George along Forest Road 271. Burning may have begun as early as September and will conclude in late November. Exact dates are uncertain.

Ignition will take place when weather and fuel conditions are such that the fire behavior will be within the burn plan and substantial smoke impacts are unlikely to affect surrounding communities. Local fuel and fire managers will monitor weather and fuel conditions closely to ensure burning only takes place when those desired conditions are met. When burning does take place, it may continue for one to several days.

Vegetation types are predominately ponderosa pine and Douglas fir with grass, shrubs and aspen. Surface burning of the area is designed to reduce the amount of timber needles and woody debris on the forest floor and to remove a portion of small diameter trees and low-hanging



branches of large trees. In addition, prescribed burning helps to restore the health of open conifer stands and aspen groves by improving soil nutrients and resprouting grass and shrubs for wildlife habitat.

Smoke is a natural byproduct of fire, and some amounts are unavoidable. Expect smoke to be visible from Highway 24 and other areas during actual burning days. Smoke may linger in the air for several days after ignition is completed. Prescribed fire smoke may affect your health. FMI [www.colorado.gov/cdphe/wood-smoke-and-health](http://www.colorado.gov/cdphe/wood-smoke-and-health).

**Adopt Me** by SLV Animal Welfare Society

**Asia**

This is 4-month-old Asia. She is a mixed breed Chow/Terrier mix. Her dad is a full Chow and mom is a long haired Terrier, about 35 pounds. Asia will be a medium size adult. Asia gets along well with her fellow playmate puppies. She is spayed, current on all vaccinations, and microchipped. We hold adoption fairs 11-3:30 p.m. First Saturday of each month at 5020 N. Nevada Petco; all other Saturdays 7680 N. Academy PetSmart.

This space donated by the Ute Country News to promote shelter animal adoption.



## 29th Annual Emma Crawford Coffin Races & Parade

by Jenna Gallas

The excitement is building as the 29th Annual Emma Crawford Coffin Races & Parade beckons thrill seekers to Manitou Springs on Saturday, October 28, 2023. The spirited parade will kick off at noon, followed by the coffin races, promising an electrifying day for participants and spectators alike.

We invite all adventure enthusiasts to heed the call and be a part of this unforgettable event. As the deadline of October 20th approaches, we urge you to secure your spot and join the excitement. Whether you're an individual with a passion for the parade or one of the 70 teams ready to take on the thrilling coffin races, now is the time to sign up and make your

mark in this spine tingling tradition.

Registering is a breeze! Simply visit [manitousprings.org/enter-the-coffin-races/](http://manitousprings.org/enter-the-coffin-races/) to complete the convenient online application. Alternatively, download the form and mail it along with your check, made payable to MSCOC, to 354 Manitou Ave, Manitou Springs CO 80829. Teams can secure their racing slot with a \$100 registration fee, while individuals aiming to participate in the parade alone can fill out the dedicated parade application.

Join us in embracing the exhilarating challenge of the Emma Crawford Coffin Races & Parade. Let's bring this captivating tale to life and create memories that will be talked about for years to come.

## Dwayne McFall seeks third term

Fremont County Commissioner Dwayne McFall has officially announced he will seek his third term representing District 3 in the 2024 election.

McFall first took office following the 2016 election and was re-elected in 2020. He is very active on both the state and federal levels, advocating for the great people of Fremont County.

In his first term, McFall was able to secure Emergency Watershed Protection funds of more than \$1.2 million to help residents below the Hayden Pass burn scar after the 2016 fire. Several landowners were able to take advantage of the funds to restore and fortify their property that had been washed out from floods.

McFall also was part of a presentation team that applied for a successful underfunded courthouse grant. The funds were used to build out the newest and final courtroom in the judicial building.

The Pathfinder Event Center is partly the result of a \$1 million DOLA grant that McFall presented to the Department of Local Affairs. The grant along with other funding, has been earmarked by the Commissioners for Pathfinder, made the event center possible. McFall has been



instrumental with the Pathfinder Regional Park buildout.

Working closely with Colorado Counties Inc. and National Association of Counties Public Lands Steering Committees, McFall is involved with the Bureau of Land Management and work groups for multi-use on public lands. This work is to help shape policy and law while still protecting agriculture use on these lands.

McFall is always willing to work with and for the people of Fremont County and is excited to continue fighting on their behalf.

**Adopt Me** by Ark Valley Humane Society

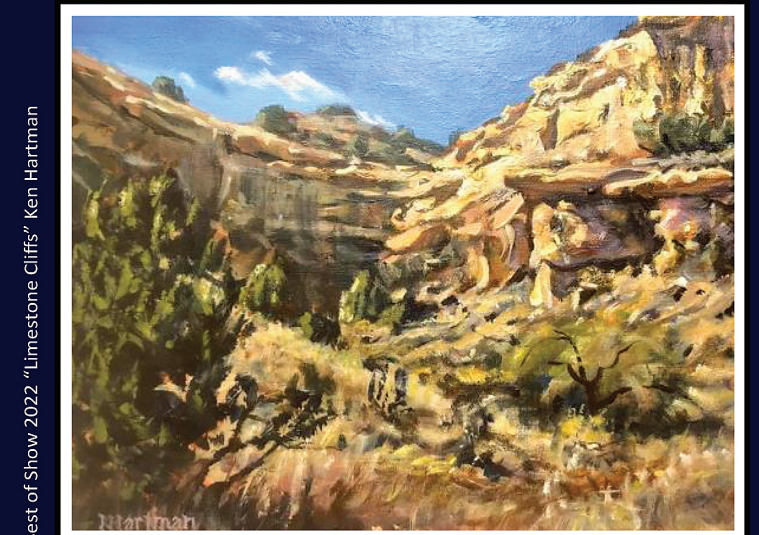
**Gemma**

Loving Gemma is a 6-year-old, spayed Boxer mix. She has proven to be a happy and goofy dog who loves treats. She is currently in a cozy foster home where she is doing great! She quickly figured out how to use the doggie door and is loving life outside of the kennel. Her foster family only has positive things to say about her. Gemma is a goofy and loving dog who has never met a stranger. When anyone new walks into a room she immediately gets the cutest zoomies in the shelter. She makes everyone feel incredibly loved! Gemma would prefer to be our one and only pet. To see if Gemma is the canine companion you are seeking call Ark Valley Humane Society to set up a meeting 719-395-2737.

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## "Paint The Town"



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Junior Achievement in Teller County  
Be a Game Changer

by Sherri Albertson

Too many young people leave school without critical life skills in financial literacy, work and career readiness, and entrepreneurship to reach their potential in life, but there's hope.

Junior Achievement (JA) is working on leveling the playing field, but we can't do it alone.

Be a Game Changer this school year and join Junior Achievement volunteers in our classrooms.

JA is a nonprofit organization offering school-based, classroom programs, led by community volunteers, with specialized curriculum for all of our students here in Teller County.

JA's educational materials and activities enable students to develop the skills they need to experience the realities and opportunities of work and entrepreneurship here at home and abroad.

Recent studies showed that 74 % of teens don't feel confident about their financial education and that four out of five parents wish they learned more about money as a kid.

A study from the University of Cambridge found that lifelong money habits are largely established by age seven! The researchers discovered that kids observe money behaviors and attitudes at a very early age — and they imitate what they see.

WE NEED YOU!



For 10+ years, JA of Teller County has made a difference in the lives of our students supported by our community, providing both financial resources and volunteers. Local business people and service club members, plus retired teachers, parents and neighbors volunteer

annually to present the JA programs.

YOU can inspire local students and build a brighter future for Teller County's youth.

Getting involved is easy and JA provides all the necessary volunteer training and curriculum materials. For more information on how to volunteer in the classroom, contact Sherri L. Albertson at 719-650-4089 or via email to sherri.albertson@ja.org.

All Together Now  
Thank you

by Kendra McFall

The Cañon City Public Library extends its heartfelt gratitude to all of you who have contributed to the success of our 2023 Summer Learning Program "All Together Now." Your support has been invaluable in making this program a true educational adventure for the children of our community.

We would like to express our deepest appreciation to the following companies and community members for their generous contributions:

- Austin Automotive
- Cañon City Lanes
- Cañon City Tire & Service
- Cold Stone Creamery
- Credit Union of Colorado
- Hometown Real Estate of Cañon
- New Horizons Ministries Thrift Store
- Pizza Madness
- The Rocks Auto Parts Company
- Royal Gorge Bridge and Park
- Sunwest Credit Union
- The Clean Company
- Yarned & Dangerous
- Zerby Automotive

Your commitment to the growth and enrichment of our community's young minds is commendable. This year we had a total of 480 participants with over 3500 hours read and gave over 400 prizes. It is through the kindness and support of organizations like yours that we are able to offer an engaging and educational program that encourages learning and exploration during the summer months.

To Fran Miller, Judy and Tom Gillette, your individual support has also made a significant impact on our program. Your dedication to the library and its initiatives is truly appreciated.

The combined efforts of our community and these esteemed companies have

allowed us to create an unforgettable learning experience for our community. Your contributions have provided resources, activities, and experiences that will undoubtedly shape the future of these families.

As we move forward, we will ensure that your contributions are used to their fullest potential, enriching the lives of those who benefit from our programs.

To the quilters and crafters whose contributions to the summer learning program, whether it was through your generous donations of quilts or crafts, played a significant role in creating a vibrant and enriching experience for the families who participated. Your beautiful items not only added a touch of warmth and comfort to our library spaces but also served as a source of inspiration for young minds eager to explore the world of literature and creativity.

This year the library was able to raise over \$1,600 through our annual silent auction. It's through the support of individuals like you that we can foster a love for reading, learning and creativity among our youth. Your dedication to making a difference, your unwavering commitment to our library and your willingness to invest in the growth of our community are deeply appreciated.

We look forward to continuing our partnership and collaboration in the coming years. Your involvement enriches the lives of our patrons, both young and old, and truly embodies the spirit of unity and togetherness that our community is known for.

Once again, thank you for being an integral part of the Cañon City Public Library's Summer Learning Program. Your support strengthens the fabric of our community and inspires us to continue fostering a love for learning. We are honored to have you as part of our library family and to work alongside you to create a brighter future for our youth.



A Look Inside the Artist  
Lyrica Sojourn, portrait artist

by Mary Shell

Art is a very complicated industry to be in. Not only do you have to produce products that are pleasing to the public, but you, the artist, has to be just as interesting as the work they produce.

For years now I have been interviewing established and socially active artists. So, I decided to go to Facebook and search out the unknowns, the artists who create for pleasure. I got several responses and will be interviewing each of them. These are the artists whose work you would not find in mainstream galleries but are equally talented. Although not well known, these are the true artists...not looking for fame or fortune from their creations, just expressing themselves and having fun. Some have no desire to sell or show, or are too shy, or lack confidence. Some are just getting back into their art after long breaks. For whatever reason, I am calling them out and will be interviewing several in the next few issues.



ally play with color and style and whimsy by illustrating a comic or children's book would be wonderful.

What was your most difficult painting to make?

I'm not sure I even have pictures of it, but a family friend commissioned me to paint a portrait of their two daughters. I've always found people difficult to capture; something about finding the happy medium of capturing the spirit of something, the feeling and blending that with realism and attention to detail. That one took several iterations and edits. Maybe several hours of staring at a half-finished canvas wondering what I had agreed to.

Who is your favorite artist?

How to pick? I love the artists of Studio Ghibli for their ability to capture how something feels and translate it to visual imagery (is the water they illustrate photo-accurate? Not at all, but somehow it looks exactly like water feels). I love the bright, glowing cityscapes of Leonid Afremov with their heavy texture and soft edges. The "Happy Trees" of Bob Ross, the detail and realism combined with fantasy and fairy tale of Lily Seika Jones' illustrations... I collect favorites like other people collect books or rocks or mugs.

What is your favorite subject?

Horses. It has always been horses.

What's the secret to your method?

Procrastination, a dash of inconsistency, and a lot of experimenting. Also, I just try to have fun or create something



someone will love. Medium doesn't matter — try them all.

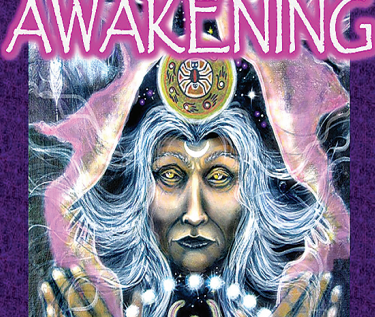
What's in the future for you?

Most of the painting I do now is for construction work at the finishing phase, but I hope to find the spark I used to have and just...draw again. What makes me happiest are requests from others: kids or friends or acquaintances. Finding those connections here in Fremont County, figuring out my niche again. I'd love to rebuild my art supplies and start offering pet portraits, frequent the local comic and coffee shops and just draw. Maybe even some murals down the line. I'm still drawing my future.

You can contact Lyrica at https://www.facebook.com/Braveponyart or on Facebook

Are you an artist and would like to be interviewed for this newspaper, please contact me at creatingfromthesoul@yahoo.com or at www.MaryShellArt.com.

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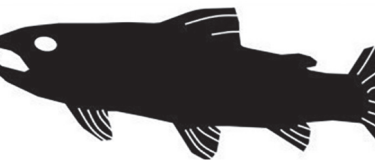
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# The Red Elephant Mine Crystal Peak Area, Colorado

by Steven Wade Veatch

For as long as I can recall, I wanted to experience what it would be like to find the legendary crystals and gemstones that Pikes Peak is famous for. In some places Pikes Peak Granite contains an incredible suite of minerals that formed magnificent crystals in cavities at least a billion years ago. Large crystals of white microcline or feldspar are common. Amazonite, a variety of microcline, is present in well-formed crystal groups in varying shades of blue, ranging from a faint pale blue to a brilliant blue-green color. The distinctive color is thought to be derived from varying levels of lead present in the amazonite when it formed, although this is still debated by mineralogists.

The amazonite from the Lake George area is distinctive because of its large, well-formed crystals, and its large size, and its intense blue color. Amazonite, named after the Amazon River, where unusual, rounded pebbles of this gemstone were found, was part of the Pharaoh Tutankhamen’s ring and was described as the third stone in Moses’ breastplate.

Smoky quartz crystals are associated with the amazonite crystal groups, and most of the smoky quartz crystals are flawless — ranging from pale brown to mid-night black, all with a stunning gem clarity. The smoky color is caused by radioactive elements in the granite. Slowly, over the millennia, the quartz darkens in response to the radiation. Purple, greenish, and light blue fluorite crystals also occur in this suite of minerals. These magnificent gemstones eluded me for over four decades.

One summer day, I asked my rock hounding friend, Dave Jackson, to go with me to the Crystal Creek area, which is noted for deposits of these gems, and to look around. The area is reached by following a two-track Pike National Forest road that begins at Lake George, Colorado then branches off at a towering raw granite formation known as Sheep’s Head, fords Crystal Creek, and then follows a steep grade to a ridge.

On our first trip there, I noticed the hillsides were perforated by numerous holes dug by previous prospectors. I thought that was a good sign that others searched here before us. After parking Dave’s truck, we man hauled our gear in five-gallon buckets the rest of the way. We each carried two buckets, one in each hand; one bucket was empty and the other bucket had our tools. The empty bucket was for the gems we might find.

We began our hike up the steep hill. It was a beautiful climb: granite boulders were spotted with various species of lichen; mountain mahogany dotted the landscape; and kinnikinnick grew near the top of the ridge, where a cool mountain breeze passed through the pines. Dave and I decided to go to where the pine trees edged a small opening in the ground and to dig under the dumps of several small, abandoned prospects.

My old friend Rich, a first-rate prospector, ran into us on that sunny summer day and showed us an old gem mine next to where we were; he knew this site would be a good one for us to work. Rich said, “I worked the area next to this spot with good results. I’m telling you this is a good place to dig.” Rich is one of the rare people in life whom you run into who are doing exactly what they were meant to do. Rich is an exemplar in the mineral world and spends most days outdoors working at his mines. His face and hands are weather-beaten — almost like leather — from a lifetime of mining, both as a profession and a hobby.

Discussions with Rich that day brought back to me a number of pick and shovel moments of chipping crystals out of a cave together six years before in the mining town of Ouray, Colorado and being

run out by the property owner. Rich and I did not know it was private property. Four years earlier we had collected blood-red agates on a hill of volcanic ash near Cañon City, Colorado. Exposure to the weather turned the ash into bentonite clay, and recent rains made it swell up with a surface slippery as ice. While trying to pluck red agates out of the bentonite with Rich, I tripped and slid down the hill on my back, getting covered with wet bentonite clay. It took forever to get the clay out of my clothes and inside of the car. Rich laughed for hours.

I was glad we ran into Rich that day and got his help finding a good place to

or open cavities provided a space for crystals to grow to unusually large sizes and line the interiors of the voids. Our prospect hole was in just such a granite pegmatite.

Rich’s directions paid off; after digging a few hours, Dave and I made a six-foot-deep excavation that we could both fit in. We took turns with the pick and shovel work. The pick would break up the granite. When the disintegrated granite became deep, one of us would shovel it into a plastic bucket and haul it to the surface to dump. It was cool and damp in our excavation pit, and the scent of fresh dirt and moist gravel was strong.

There is an abrupt change in the pegma-

fluorite crystals. One group of fluorite crystals clustered around the base of a gleaming smoky quartz crystal.

Our next step was to empty the pocket, about the size of a grapefruit, of its gem hoard. Each crystal and gem had to be carefully wrapped in newspaper for carrying it down to Dave’s old truck. This pocket was the sign we needed to continue working the gem mine. If there is one crystal pocket, there will be others.

Our digging and removing crystals from the pocket burned up most of that first day. The shadows were shifting in the forest, and the sky was filled with pastel colors. I took one last look to the west and watched

crumbled fragments and mold, invaded by roots of plants and covered by dead twigs and leaf litter fallen from the canopy of the trees above. It was time to stop thinking about a stump and return to the hard pick and shovel work of the afternoon.

After several hours of moving rock and gravel, we had a hole that was 10 feet deep — straight down. I found out just how hard this work is: breaking through granite by dint of force and muscle with a pick is not easy at this depth, the gravel and rocks have to be hauled to the surface in a bucket on the end of a rope. The deeper the excavation, the harder the work is — gravity is constantly working against us. In our deep hole, we opened up a pocket larger than a watermelon.

A treasure trove of mineral specimens lined the pocket. Some crystals had detached from the pocket ceiling due to local vibrations from earthquakes and freezing and thawing cycles over many winters and fell flat on the pocket floor. The pocket floor was filled with flawlessly formed amazonite crystal groups — most over nine inches across — on sections of pegmatite granite. There were clusters of 12-inch-long smoky quartz crystals radiating out in various directions. Most of the crystals were as black as midnight.

I took my jacket off and covered the crystals on the floor of the pocket so they would be protected as we removed the ceiling crystals and as we broke away more of the granite rocks above. Removing the crystals and gems requires care. Any rush to extract them could make an ugly chip or fracture. All the crystals were carefully removed by hand and then wrapped in newspaper to protect them. I carefully cleaned the pocket out with a wooden chop stick and whisk broom, and then sprayed the interior with water for a good view. At this point, the world’s problems melted away and we are focused on protecting these gems. We were the first ones on the planet to see these primordial, unique, and quite valuable crystals.

On the way out, the buckets full of wrapped gems in one hand and the buckets of tools in the other hand balanced us as we walked down the hill. Crystal Creek was flowing with a murmuring joy within its banks. Willows lined the creek until the road crossing where we drove through it. Some little birds were dipping at some of the pools of Crystal Creek. Deer were keeping an eye on our activities. Dave and I glanced at each other, and I said, “We sure hit it big, Dave; we made a big strike today.” Our excitement filled the gem fields.

On our last trip to the Red Elephant that summer, Dave’s truck was being repaired, and I was willing to risk my brand new Jeep on the forest roads and all of its hazards to get to our mine. I drove my new Jeep Cherokee up the road and got stuck. Dave and I pushed, pulled, swore, and sweated, but remained stuck on the old 2-track road in the middle of Pike National Forest. My biggest concern was what my wife would do to me if I banded up our new Jeep. Cell phones did not exist yet, so I could not call out for help.

Soon we heard the sound of another car, and it was headed in our direction. I could not believe we would run into anyone on this road on a weekday. It was Ray Berry, a member of the local rock club (Colorado Springs Mineralogical Society) I belonged to. Ray is another mineral exemplar. On his way to work his claim, he pulled us out in seconds with his winch.

Dave and I began to work the Red Elephant, and soon we were down to 14 feet when our pick shattered the typical granite and revealed graphic granite — a

sure sign we were close to a pocket of gemstones. We discovered several more pockets ranging in size from a softball to a basketball. Some of the pockets we found were located by following quartz veins to the crystal-lined pockets. The color of the granite also provides a clue that a pocket is nearby — reddish granite tends to bear more pockets. Other pockets that day were located by pure luck.

The entire Crystal Creek area has been yielding amazing gemstones for centuries, providing material for an expanding gem market and yielding specimens that provide clues to help scientists understand the nature of the Pikes Peak Granite. Today there is still gemstone mining activity over the entire Crystal Creek landscape.

This land also has meaning beyond the valuable gems and as a gateway to scientific understanding. I noticed an old cabin and a few outbuildings in the forest. The cabin is deeply weathered. Parts of the buildings are gone or caved in. The chicken coop, always an important homestead structure, is still in good shape, built

games in the aspen trees.

Currently, the area is an active gem mining site, and the place where I finally experienced the excitement of making a rich strike. On weekends, countless hobbyists work their claims. Some people work their claims all summer long.

It was the last day of our mining season. Leaning back on a ponderosa pine on the surface near the Red Elephant, I reflected on the season. After hunting the elusive

cally keep up with the hard digging. I learned about people: that Dave was fair and split the specimens we found evenly, and that Rich was a good friend to direct us to a site that he knew contained valuable gemstones. Rich did not have to provide that information. I also experienced nature on a deeper level. When I took a break from digging, I saw the cycle of life at the decaying stump. It was truly a season with nature, one without the technology that has invaded every dimension of



A view of Crystal Peak near Florissant, Colorado. The area is known for its gem mining sites, most are under claim. Photo date 2006 by S. W. Veatch.



Microcline feldspar variety Amazonite with smoky quartz from the Halpern Mineral Collection, CO, USA. This file is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.5 Generic license. Photo Date 2006 by Eric Hunt.

dig for gems. Dave and I followed his advice and began the arduous work of digging with picks, shovels, pry bars, old screw drivers, and rock hammers. When the pick struck the granite, it would vibrate in our hands, sometimes sparks would fly, and always the thud of the pick against the granite filled the forest. The granite would break up from the relentless pounding with the pick — leaving piles of crumbled granite. We shoveled the granite gravel into a bucket and then hauled it to the surface and dumped the gravel on the ground, forming a “tailings pile.”

In the Crystal Peak area, the gemstones and crystals occur inside of what is called a “pocket” or ancient bubble in the Pikes Peak Granite. This granite was formed just over a billion years ago as a melting, monstrous blossom of red magma pulled off the Earth’s mantle in a stately phenomenon forming a magma plume in that hostile and hellacious inferno. This molten plume made an unrelenting climb through the beleaguered crust, mixing the mantle and crustal material together and forming the Pikes Peak Granite.

Parts of the Pikes Peak Granite became pegmatite, a coarse granite that sometimes yields precious gems. The granite pegmatite is derived from magma in the Pikes Peak Granite that formed during the last stages of its cooling. At this point volatile components trying to escape the magma, were trapped in the granite as bubbles. As the granite cooled and contracted, the bubbles

tite as one approaches a gem cavity. The feldspar and quartz that form the pegmatite change in appearance near a pocket. The component minerals become elongated or contorted, revealing what look like small swimming tadpoles or cuneiform writing — a mysterious script with an important, yet coded message declaring gemstones are near for those who are clever enough to follow the clues and find them. This is known as graphic granite.

Suddenly Dave yelled, “Look at the granite, it is changing — it is graphic granite for sure! See that old pine tree-root? It has worked its way through granite cracks and disappears straight into the rock. There must be a pocket behind the root.”

“Let me take a look,” and I yanked out the root, and then took my glove off and carefully put my finger into the hole. I said to Dave, “Holy God, I can feel the crystal faces!” My throat tightened, my heart almost beat out of my chest, and Dave’s eyes were open wider than an owl’s at night.

The root sought out moisture in a small cavity, leading us to that discovery. We immediately switched to wooden tools: tree branches, wooden skewering sticks, and wooden mallets, to open up the cavity slowly, carefully, and methodically. Metal tools can nick or fracture the valuable crystals and gems. Once we enlarged the hole to the cavity, our flashlight revealed shining smoky quartz crystals; a gemmy, sky-blue amazonite — crystal group; and sparkling deep purple and light blue cubic

the setting sun redden the clouds over the boundless, tree-covered ridges; it was time to leave. Soon the dark blue of evening would spread, and it would be hard to travel along the old road in the dark. The moon was beginning its rise over Crystal Creek, and it was time to leave.

We came back the following weekend working the claim for a few hours and then having lunch near some fallen pine trees blown down by a violent summer storm. But on this day, the logs were our seats for lunch under a thick canopy of towering aspen trees. We each had a can of Red Elephant, an imported beer that has a great flavor and comes in giant cans and has a punch — it even made my lips numb. We decided to name our mining claim after the beer.

While relaxing and finishing my Red Elephant beer, I noticed a nearby decaying stump was full of life and realized that one day the forest would consume it. The stump was actually a dwarfed ecosystem. Many types of insects lived in the stump. A beetle stuck its head out from a hole it had bored in the bark. It left a pile of frass just below on a blanket of pine needles. I spotted a pill bug and a centipede, and noticed the different colors of moss and lichen that covered the stump. During the stump’s decomposition, new niches for life opened and old ones closed as the stump evolved from fresh-cut wood leaking resin to rotting wood dripping nutrients into the soil. The stump will eventually become



Amazonite and Smoky quartz diorama, located in the First-Level Rocks & Minerals Exhibit at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Representing an unspecified 'Crystal Peak' location in Colorado. This file is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International license.

as strong as Fort Knox. Eggs and skillet fried chicken were important to a family that eked out a living in this remote forest a century ago.

Before homesteaders, this quiet land once belonged to the Ute people. Chief Ouray and his wife, Chipeta, camped in tepees during the summer, and Ute braves hunted in the area. When they were not hunting, the men climbed hilltops with good views and made arrow and spear heads from stone. The women made clothing from deer and bison hides and attended to other duties. Children played


Pikes Peak amazonite for decades, I finally found it. I learned from this experience to never give up on something you want to accomplish. If you give up, you will never know what could have been. This is an important lesson for many aspects of life.

Then there is the hard work — the digging; digging deep into the ground that yielded the elusive gems. The digging that put me into direct contact with the nature of the granite gave me a deeper insight to the geology of the site and the architecture of Pikes Peak Granite over wider areas. I realized that I could physi-

our lives. I knew there was more to learn out there in the forest, and that means to continue digging, always deeper.

It was getting late on our last day of the mining season. We packed up our gear and headed down the trail, crisscrossed by deer tracks, to my jeep. With darkness fast approaching, we drove down the old forest-service road. As the Jeep forded Crystal Creek, a small herd of deer — waiting to get a drink — watched us from the trees. A hawk silently flew overhead, towards the setting sun.






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**Critter CORNER**



Echo - Barb Rily-Cunningham, Florissant, CO



Cat Masterson talking with friends - Jeff Hansen, Divide, CO

Have a cute critter? Send us your favorite critter photos and we'll feature them here in the Critter Corner! If you don't send your photos, you'll have to look at our cats every month! Indoor or outdoor pets or wild critters are what we're looking for. We will not accept any photos depicting cruelty or harming animals in any way. Email your critters to [utecountrynewspaper@gmail.com](mailto:utecountrynewspaper@gmail.com). Be sure to include the critter's name as well as your name.

# The Birthday House

by Gilrund the Historian

Jan was new to the neighborhood. Jackie was walking her around the block to meet the other neighbors and learn about the area.

Both the girls were 17 and in their last year of high school. Jan's dad had been transferred here with his job and mom was working as a paraprofessional in the elementary school just down the street.

The neighborhood was in a rural area and there were large places where there was just open land reaching up into the hills that formed the valley that held the village.

Jackie was pointing out some of the "really cool" meadows and the small stream that flowed just behind the houses. Jan pointed to an older building that sat farther back from the rest of the houses on the top of a small hill. It was a large old Victorian house of a faded white color. It looked to be in pretty good shape except for the trees and bushes that had gone wild from lack of attention. The large lawn was overgrown, and the flowers were blooming everywhere in the front of the house. "What's that place?" she asked as she stopped to look at it more carefully.

Jackie turned away as though she didn't want to look at the old house, as she answered, "Oh, you don't really want to know about that place. No one lives there and no one goes there either. It's not a good place. Let's go on down to the malt shop. I'm sure there are some other kids there."

"Wait a minute!" laughed Jan, as she stopped and continued looking at the old house, "Now I really am interested. Tell me about it. Why don't you like it? You won't even look at it. Is it cursed or something?"

Jackie stopped and looked at Jan as she answered, "I guess that you should know now that you are living here. It's called "The Birthday House" by everybody here. It has a sad history and, yes, it's sort of haunted."

The girls kept on walking toward the malt shop as Jackie continued her explanation., "You don't know the history of this place," She explained, "When this town was established, the Wilton's were the only people that lived here except for their servants. That was the Wilton's house that you were asking about. This town, my mom calls it a village, was where the servants lived that worked for the Wilton's. They were very rich and had anything that they wanted. My mom says that they were not good people. I guess that happens when you have too much money."

The girls were in the malt shop now and Jackie was greeted by Wendy, another highschooler that worked at the malt shop after school and on the weekends.

"Hi, Jackie, Hi Jan," Wendy said with a grin, "What will you have?"

"I'm needing a strawberry shake," replied Jackie.

"I'll have a chocolate malt," said Jan as she looked for a table to sit at while they talked.

"Comin' right up," said Wendy as she turned toward the ice cream freezer to start the orders.

Jackie and Jan sat at a table by a big window to wait and talk.

"Okay, now tell me more about the Wilton's and their haunted house," said Jan as she looked intently at Jackie.

Jackie answered quietly, "Well, my mom told me that the Wilton's were very wealthy, way too wealthy for their own

good. Now, you have to understand that this was back in the 1800s and things were different back then. You could do things and say things back then that you can't now.

Mom told me that they had a son that was out of control. His name was Thomas, and he was going to some high-class college back east and only came here when there was some sort of celebration. Then, he and the friends that he brought with him, would come to the house and spend most of their time drinking, racing the carriages, and giving the servant girls a bad time."

Wendy walked up and gave the girls what they had ordered as she said, "Be sure and tell Jan the part about Tom and Cindy. It explains everything." She walked away to wait on another customer. "Wendy hears everything!" grumbled Jackie after she took a drink of her shake. "So, it would seem," laughed Jan.

"Well, anyway, as I was saying, Thomas was not a good sort of guy. But one of the servant girls fell in love with him. I'm sure that he gave her plenty of reasons, too. Her name was Cindy. Mom told me that there were times when he would be alone with her for far too long and in secret places. You know what will happen in situations like that. The creep! Well, when Thomas left to go back to school, Cindy would be sad for days at a time and just mope around. Well, you know what finally happened. Thomas came to the house for his birthday, but this time he brought his fiancé with him. Well how do you think that made Cindy feel? She was devastated! All this time she thought that the "creep" loved her and here he shows up with a beautiful girl that he is going to marry!

"Mom says that he treated Cindy like dirt. Telling her to do things for the new girl that she could have done for herself, and the new girl, what was her name? Oh, I think it was Nancy or something like that. Anyway, they were going to be there for a week. Well, it was very bad for Cindy. Finally, Cindy said she was too sick to work and stayed home with her mother."

Jackie stopped to take a drink of her shake as Jan sucked on the straw of her malt and waited for Jackie to go on, "What that rat Thomas didn't know was that Cindy's mom was a..."

Jackie stopped talking and looked around the malt shop to make sure that no one else was listening, then went on in a softer voice.

"Cindy's mom was a witch!" she continued, "A real one too. Mom said that she could do stuff that no other witch could do. Well, you can bet that she didn't like what that jerk Thomas had done to her daughter. Well, she started thinking of a good way to punish him. Not just to punish him, but to show everybody else not to mess with the hearts of people.

"Mom didn't know what the spell was that she cast on the Wilton's, but things started to change for them. The money started drying up and they had to cut back on things. Thomas couldn't party like he used to, and his girlfriend left him for someone else that had more money. It got to the point that Thomas came home from his fancy college for his birthday for the last time and while he was here, he made a move on Cindy.

"Well, she was having none of that, and neither was her mom. So, during the

height of the party while everyone was laughing, drinking and partying like crazy, Cindy's mom cast the spell that is still on that house. Everyone that was there just vanished! Just like that! They were gone, never to be seen again... except, on the day of Thomas' birthday.

"The house is always empty except for that one night when it lights up and you can hear the laughter and then the singing of Happy Birthday Thomas. Then it goes dark again for another year. It lasts for about an hour, and that's all."

Jan stopped sucking on her straw and said, "So, when does this happen each year? I'd like to see it."

"In two days, actually. It's on the second of August and happens from 8:30 until 9:30. We could watch it at my house! We're almost just down the hill from the old place. Then you would know that it is for real."

"That's a deal!" replied Jan, "Can my folks come too?"

"Sure, why not. Hey, I'll check with my parents and maybe we could have dinner together that night and watch it after dessert."

The dinner didn't happen for various reasons, but the girls decided to spend the evening together watching the old Wilton house. As they sat on the porch of Jackie's house watching and waiting for the 8:30 performance to start, Jan had an idea, "Has anyone ever gone to the house to see what actually happens during the party?"

"Not that I know of," replied Jackie as she looked at Jan with a grin on her face, "Do you think we should do it? Do you think we'll be alright?"

"Don't know until we try it," said Jan as she stood to her feet and started to go down off the porch steps. Jackie was right behind her as they started for the old house.

It took them a few minutes to get to the house as they ducked through the trees, bushes and tall grass before they reached the front door. Jan grinned at Jackie as she took the doorknob in her hand and turned it. It turned easily and she pushed the door open to reveal a room that was lit only by the setting sun.

The girls walked inside the front room and looked around to see dust covered furniture from the past and a stairway, toward the back of the room that led to the upper floor. They walked around the room looking at the pictures and the furniture, touching various things of interest to them until they came to the stairway.

"Shall we go up?" asked Jan as she took the first step.

Jackie was right behind her as they heard an old grandfather's clock strike half an hour. Everything suddenly changed!

The room lit up with bright light and music was playing, people were talking and laughing. The two girls quickly turned and looked back into the large room to see several people dressed in Victorian clothes standing, talking and drinking as they celebrated Thomas' birthday at the table that held the large birthday cake with burning candles on the top. Then Thomas saw them and turned to walk toward them as they stood frozen on the stairs as he said, "Welcome to my birthday party, ladies. I don't believe that I have met you before."

He went on to introduce them to all his

family. He offered them a piece of the birthday cake and something to drink.

Jan and Jackie were shocked that this was actually happening, that these people were really talking to them and in the English of the Victorian time.

Jan took the offered drink, but not the cake. She drank it and found that it was a strong liquor. She stopped drinking and looked over at Jackie to see what she was doing.

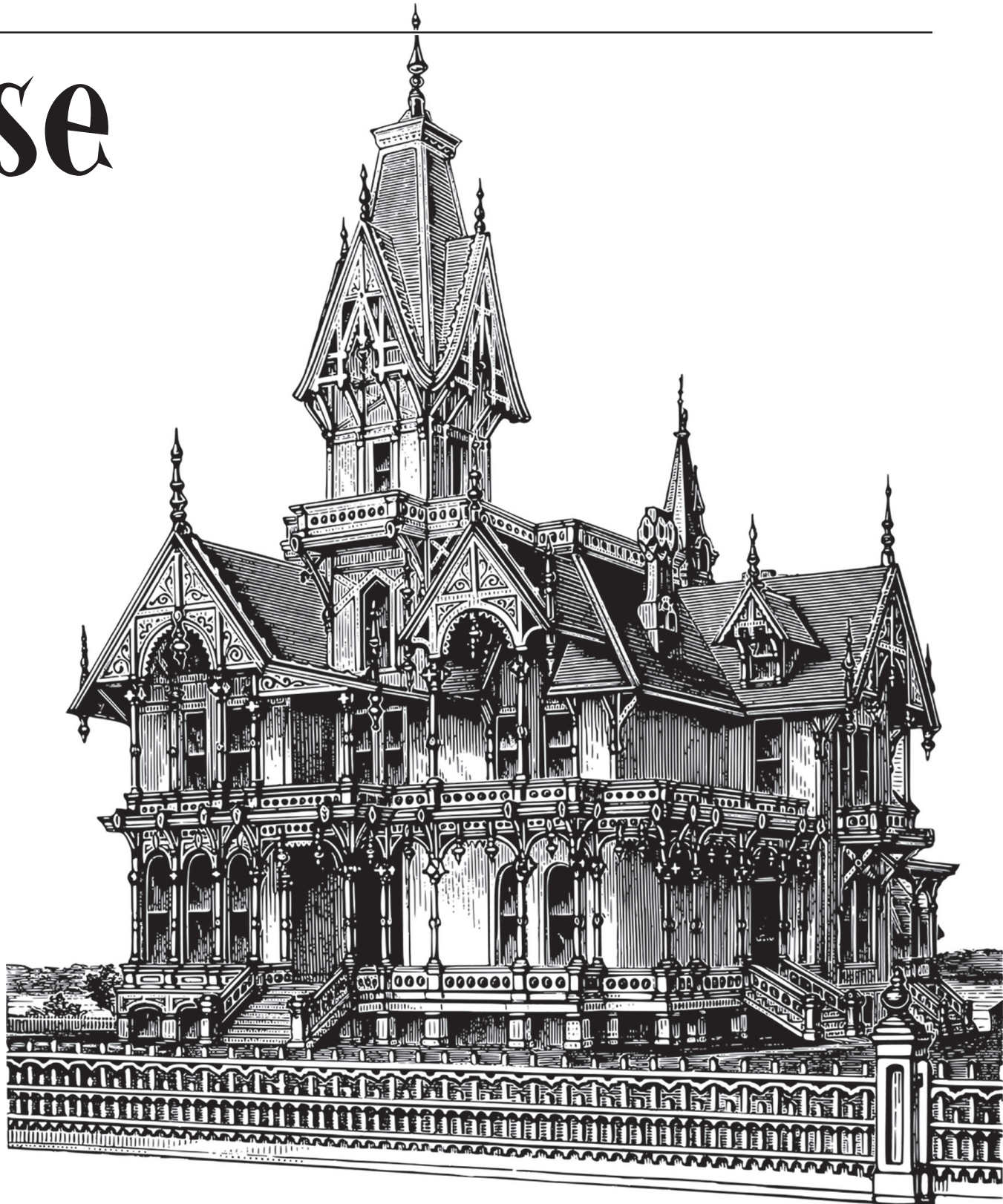
Jackie was edging toward the front door with a piece of cake on a plate in her left hand and a glass of some sort of drink in the other. Jan smiled as she stepped to get around Thomas and start for the front door to join Jackie. It was good to know that the party actually happened, but they both wanted out of that house and right now.

Thomas was still standing in the center of the room as he called out, "Let's all dance!"

The music grew even louder as the people in the room joined together and started dancing.

Thomas walked quickly to the two girls, who were almost at the front door holding out his hand, "Join me in a dance, Miss?"

Jackie never moved so fast in her life as she opened the door and ran out into the dim light of the front yard and into the trees that lined the driveway. She stopped when she noticed that Jan wasn't with her and looked back toward the old house. Jan wasn't with her or behind her. Thomas had taken her hand as she started



for the door with Jackie and pulled her into the room as the dance started.

Jan found Thomas to be a handsome young man and joined him in the dance. The music played on and on and they danced and danced. Stopping only long enough to walk to the table that held the refreshments for a drink and bit of cake. Then continue to dance the night away.

Jackie had slipped up to a window of the house and was looking in at Jan and Thomas dancing along with the rest of his family. She watched, looking for an opportunity to get her new friend out of the house, but none presented itself.

Jackie heard the old clock strike the quarter hour. "Oh no, I've got to get her out of there!" thought Jackie, "What am I going to do?"

Jackie watched as the dancing continued and Jan stayed in the arms of Thomas the whole time as they danced. Jackie looked inside at the old clock and knew that she had to do something quickly. She ran for the front door, threw it open and ran inside.

Jan and Thomas were standing at the refreshment table drinking as Jackie rushed up to them and grabbed Jan by the arm, pulling her toward the door.

"What are you doing?" exclaimed Jan as she staggered after her friend.

"Saving your life! Come on!" growled Jackie.

Jan kept looking back at Thomas as he watched the two girls run for the door and he called out, "See you next year!" He

was laughing and laughing as were the rest of his family.

The door slammed shut as the girls ran into the dark yard and toward the driveway that would lead them back to Jackie's house.

They still had a little way to go when they stopped running and walked on down the street to the house. Jan looked back and saw that the old house was dark again and stopped, "Look, Jackie, it's dark again. I don't get it. I was having such a good time. I wanted to stay."

Jackie was beside her and said, "You would have gone with them to wherever they go until next year and I don't think it would be a pleasant wait at all. Come on."

They walked on to Jackie's house and had a long talk with her mother.

When they had finished and Jan had gone on home, Jackie's mother said to Jackie, "You did a good thing tonight for your friend. You saved more than her life."

Jackie and Jan were best friends for a long time. The next year on August second, they went to the movies together with their boyfriends.

~ The end ~

Chuck Atkinson of Como, CO 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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# Life-Enhancing Journeys

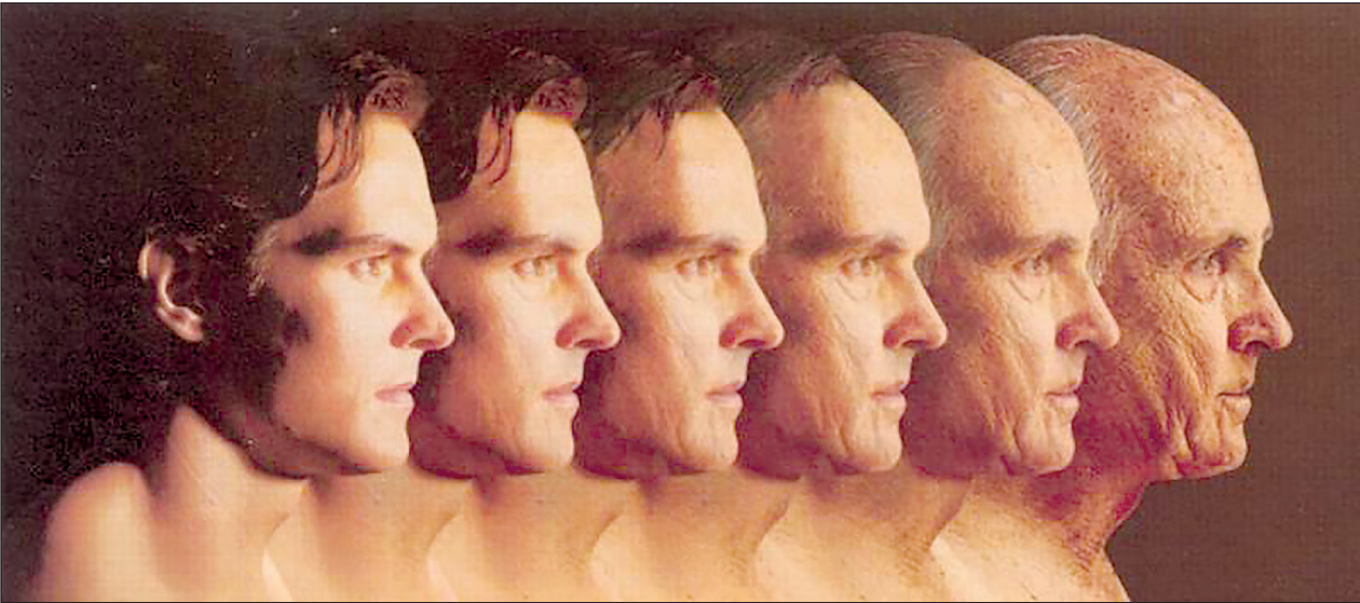
## The joy and fear of aging

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

What comes to mind when you think about aging: wrinkles and gray hair, crankiness, body aches, hard of hearing, trouble with technology, illness and death? Since the day we were born, we have all been aging. At a certain point, the thought of what life might be like in a couple of decades from now may feel worrisome, especially considering how our current choices might impact our future. How we think about aging affects us on behavioral, psychological and physiological levels, according to Becca Levy, Ph.D., Yale professor and author of *Breaking the Age Code: How your beliefs about aging determine how long and well you Live*. Many fears are a result of unkind attitudes about age and aging. Negativity about growing older is often a part of many cultural stereotypes that can lead to prejudices often reinforced by advertising, social media, the anti-aging industry and other external influences in the world. These types of media generate a trillion dollars of profits by creating fear around aging. “Aging gracefully” can involve creating a balance between our youth-obsessed society (which tries to sway us into a false belief that our value in society declines as we age) and the reality that the elderly need to be viewed as a wise and essential part of a healthy society. Marketers continually encourage our desire for youthfulness, reminding us that remaining young is our best way to remain relevant.

*“Life is a sexually transmitted disease that ends in death.”*  
— Mark Twain, author and humorist

What if, instead of seeing aging as something to fear, reverse or conquer, we were to appreciate these transitions while accepting some of the losses of youth? Even though there are real physical and mental changes that come with aging, you can view these simply as passages, without judgment or shame, and instead appreciate all that you have gained through your life experiences. How do we counteract this culturally based fear of getting older? An effective method is to adjust your perspective about aging. Studies revealed that elderly participants who regarded aging positively showed an improvement in both physical functions and had an enhanced self-image. A woman came to see me just before her 30th birthday, telling me she feared getting older. She said she was worried, “How will I get my needs met if I’m no longer young and cute? Nobody will care about me as an adult the way they did when I was a child.” Some people in this age group fear that taking on “adulting” responsibilities will lead to the loss of fun and freedom they enjoyed in their youth. This seems to be a common yet distorted perspective. “I was so worried when I was about to turn 40,” a man bemoaned. “I felt like I hadn’t accomplished enough...wasn’t healthy enough...hadn’t exercised enough...I thought my body was going to fall apart. It didn’t happen but I’m still worried.” A single woman in her 50s expressed her fear of being alone and isolated as she aged. (35% of Americans over 45 express feeling chronically lonely as identified in an AARP survey in 2018). Another woman in her 60s asked me about how to manage her fears of running out of money, believing that she might become penniless and homeless. A man in his 80s asked how to deal with his fear of depending upon others, scared of losing his independence. These concerns are valid yet are reinforced by cultural stereotypes and prejudices. What our lives truly look like as we age depends upon many factors,



including the way we live as well as our perspective, both of which are within our control. Many fears are based on worries about what may lie ahead and what we might lose, such as our independence, our loved ones, our concerns about sickness, pain and suffering, our mental abilities declining, and of course, loss of our own life. Most of us are committed to continuing to live so we want to feel energetic and capable for as long as possible. Many of us want to appear youthful and attractive, healthy and strong. We hope to maintain the ability to perform our activities of daily living, remain mentally clear, financially secure, have a functioning libido, continue to be a contributing member of society, to remain relevant, be able to take care of ourselves and be independent. We want to hold on to those we love. People on their deathbeds will tell you that the things that have brought them the most joy are primarily the close relationships in their lives. As painful as reality is, our bodies do wear out and we all will die. How we face the certainty that our lives are temporary determines the quality of our lives. What can we do to lessen our sorrow and pain? Starting now, we can help ourselves by being more open to loving and living more fully in the present moment. “When people face endings, they tend to shift from goals about exploration and expanding horizons to ones about savoring relationships and focusing on meaningful activities,” according to Laura Carstensen, Ph.D., Director of the Stanford Center on Longevity. Accept that death is a natural process and be grateful for your experiences and relationships by enjoying each day as much as possible (and make the necessary end-of-life arrangements to ease the burdens on others). To help deal with the loss of family and friends, give yourself time to grieve, consider joining a support group, engage in activities of interest, and believe that you can continue a life of meaning and purpose. Indian philosopher and spiritual teacher, Krishnamurti, shared that his approach to finding comfort as he aged was, “My secret is that I don’t mind what happens.” He expressed that by letting go of the belief that something was wrong with aging and dying, he was able to accept the changes he was experiencing in his life. Although we see death happening all around us, we believe it will never happen to us. “Our brain seems to categorize death as something that only befalls other people,” Ian Sample, editor of *Science* magazine. Altering your mindset can counteract the fear of aging. Creating positive messages about getting older starting at a young age could have some long-term benefits for yourself as well as for society. To reduce the probability of age-related diseases, it is no surprise that the recommendation is

to include physical activity in your daily routine, eat a healthy diet, avoid smoking, manage stress and get enough sleep. This will promote heart health, the number one killer of older adults. Although there are no definitive measures to prevent Alzheimer’s disease, the Alzheimer’s Association recommends similar lifestyle choices of physical exercise, a heart-healthy diet and staying socially connected. Through research spanning over 20 years, it has been found that older people with more positive views of aging performed better physically and cognitively than those with more negative beliefs, Dr. Levy acknowledged, “They were more likely to recover from severe disability, they remembered better, they walked faster and they even lived longer.” Another finding in one of Dr. Levy’s studies revealed that people in their 20s and 30s are generally plagued by more anxiety and depression than during any other period of adulthood. This so-called *fountain of youth* has been associated with lower levels of psychological well-being. The study noted that there are many pressures unique to this phase of life including establishing a career, connecting with a life partner and navigating financial issues, all of which resulted in more distress. Contentment drops during midlife and then begins to recover at age 50. Despite fears of aging, the reality is that data show that life satisfaction reaches its peak toward the end of life. Older people are happier and have better moods even when their cognitive and physical health is declining. This phenomenon has been referred to as the *paradox of aging*. Additional studies have affirmed that people who participate in social activities, such as attending places of worship, going to the movies, playing cards or bingo, or going to restaurants or sporting events, are linked to decreased mortality among older adults. One reason may be that involvement in these well-being activities increases social connection, deepens relationships, and reinforces feelings of belonging. Participating in cultural activities and rituals also helps keep the mind sharp. As I am writing about aging, I recall being visited by my 90-year-old grandmother who flew here from the east coast. When we were in the supermarket, a little boy turned to his mother while pointing at my grandmother and said, “...look at that old lady, Mama...” Without missing a beat, my grandmother responded to the boy and told him, “Young man, inside this very old body, is a happy young woman dancing.” I valued her response and learned so much from her. Freeing yourself from negative age beliefs is easier *said than done*. In the U.S., age prejudice (ageism) has been referred to as one of the most socially tolerated forms of prejudice. A 2021 United Na-

tions report suggests half of the world’s population favors ageist attitudes which makes it harder to embrace getting older. Rather than worrying about everything you will be losing as you age, try reframing your thoughts. Turn your attention to what is emotionally meaningful to you now. Let yourself enjoy those activities and the relationships that give you pleasure and make you happy. The hard times in your life will not go away, but they may take up less space in your mind.

Here are some concepts to consider:

- Never give up — Rather than viewing your mistakes as failures, learn from them and continue pursuing your goals.
- Take risks and know that you do not have to be afraid of failure; choose to see whatever the outcome is as lessons from which to learn. Be adventurous, bold, confident, stay courageous. It seems easy to take the safe route in life yet taking calculated risks reaps rewards. If it does not work out, modify it or move on to something else.
- Spend time with loved ones — Savor those relationships that are meaningful to you.
- Be confident and care less about what other people think.
- Release regret to keep us happier in our later years. People have more regrets about the things they *did not do*, rather than those things that they *did try*.
- Be true to yourself. Think and act in ways that align with your own values and feelings.
- Be as independent as you can be and ask for help when you need it.
- Avoid taking life too seriously or personally and have a good time.
- Live life with a “CAN DO” attitude — believe in yourself so you can become more capable than you ever expected. Live with optimism, love, gratitude, humility, and kindness toward others because a positive outlook will enhance your life.
- Consistently challenge negative messages with affirmative beliefs.

These techniques can be useful at any age. With age comes more comfort and security in yourself. Rather than clinging to youth, keep joy alive by caring for your inner self while also nurturing your connection to the changing world. In doing so, we balance wisdom with wonder, confidence with curiosity and purpose with passion.

Barbara Pickholz-Weiner, RN, BSN, CACIII, 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 719-510-1268 (cell) or email Journeyscounselingctr@gmail.com.*

# Fire Resistant Native Plants

by Coalition for the Upper South Platte

Our entire community joined the world watching in horror as the Hawaii wildfire engulfed Lahaina, Maui. Amid the devastation there was one white house with a red roof that survived the fire. A miracle? The property owner is uncomfortable with that description. Just lucky? Maybe. What about that house was different? The owner explained that they had recently replaced their roof with a metal roof, removed plants against the house replacing them with a stone buffer to deter termites. The Colorado State University Extension recently published a list of the top 10 fire resistant native plants for Colorado landscapes. These plants are not only fire resistant, but they will also reduce water consumption, help mitigate the heat generated by a stone surface, serve as habitat for pollinators and it looks great! Colorado State University Extension horti-



Blanket Flower

culture expert, Irene Shonle, shares her list:

- Blanket Flower showcases vibrant red and yellow sunflower-like flowers in the middle of summer.
- Prairie Smoke thrives in part shade and features delicate rosy heather-like flowers. The unique seed heads also catch the light, providing additional visual interest.
- Prickly Pear surprises with attractive flowers that bloom primarily in May and June. Certain varieties, such as the pheacantha, or Desert Prickly Pear, offer great fruit that adds interest throughout fall and early winter.
- Pussy Toes is a low-water ground cover plant with gray-green foliage. It serves well between flagstones or as an edging plant, maintaining its appeal even during winter.
- Yucca plants offer striking spires of white flowers in spring and are hearty under most growing conditions.
- The Sand Cherry is a ground cover with fragrant flowers in spring followed by edible black berries, providing sustenance for wildlife. The plant’s beautiful red foliage in the fall adds vibrant color.
- Penstemons are an excellent choice for any landscape design. Their vibrant colors and graceful blooms create a striking visual impact, attracting pollinators and adding a delightful splash of color to the garden. Options include orchid or side bells, blue mist, rocky mountain, and scarlet bugler.
- Cheyenne Mock Orange is a shrub known for fragrant springtime flowers. Compact varieties are available, ensuring a more fire-resistant landscape.
- Wine Cups plants create a stunning display of hot pink flowers that can cascade over retaining walls. They function as ground cover blooming over a long season. Their cheerful colors

beautifully complement gray-green plants like Pussytoes.

- Sulfur Flower is another ground cover plant with yellow-green flowers in the early part of the season. It not only serves as a host for many butterfly species but also provides a beautiful display when its leaves turn reddish bronze during winter.

Of course, no plant is entirely fire-

## Food Storage Order

by Lana Longwell

A food storage order has been put into place on the Pike-San Isabel National Forest & Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands. The purpose of this food storage order is to protect public safety by minimizing conflicts between humans and wildlife for the survival of the plants and to minimize fire risk. Find photos and additional information about these plants at: <https://engagement.source.colostate.edu/top-10-fire-resistant-native-plants-for-colorado-landscapes/>

support or, being eaten, prepared for eating, or transported in a motor vehicle. Bears are opportunists by nature. They generally feed on whatever is readily available in the wild. They have a remarkable sense of smell which can lead them to unnatural food sources such as refuse, human food in campsites, picnic areas, and on trails. Bears that begin to rely on human food sources tend to lose their fears of humans, become habituated, and in some cases aggressive. This creates a safety concern for humans and can be fatal for the bears. Additional information on approved storage containers can be found at [igbonline.org](http://igbonline.org). This product list includes containers suitable for both backcountry travel and vehicle-based camping. Please follow the manufacturer’s guidance on the proper methods to hang or secure food items to prevent bear access. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service provides bear proof storage lockers within several developed campsites, which are available for campers during their stay.

We cordially invite you to our upcoming events- see our full list of events at [awmi.net/events!](http://awmi.net/events!)

*Your time is now! / November 2-4*

Register today at [WomenAriseConference.org](http://WomenAriseConference.org)

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Have a fun and safe Halloween!

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## Cripple Creek Free Fall Festival

by Annie Valades

Crisp mornings and slowly changing leaves are beginning to display the arrival of fall in Colorado. There's no better way to top off your "leaf peeping drive" in the mountains than with a free Fall Festival featuring live music, professional wood carving displays, demonstrations, and sculptures for sale; a wide variety of vendors, food trucks, and attractions await. All events will be held on Bennett Avenue between 3rd and 5th Street and at the District Museum at the top of Bennett Avenue and 5th starting at 10 a.m. each day.

On Saturday, sign the kids up for a pumpkin carving contest on a first-come, first-served basis. Also, on Saturday, October 7th, ride the Gold Camp Victorian Society's Historical Trolley Tour and hear the history of Cripple Creek come alive during six 45-minute tours between 10-3 p.m. This historical tour is free, with a donation of \$10 suggested. Tickets will be available at the Train Car in the District Museum parking lot. If pie baking is your love, enter the baking contest on Sunday at 1 p.m. The top three winners will receive prizes! Enter in advance or on the day of. FMI on the pie contest, contact Treasurer@tmhc-ced.org.

The entire weekend will afford you the chance to shop at a variety of vendors. Entice your taste buds with hot beverages featuring delicious fall adult spirits as you make your way to various food trucks. Meet the Cripple Creek Donkeys in person! The Two Mile High Club, caretakers of the Cripple Creek Donkeys since 1931, and the City of Cripple Creek invite

you to "Fall Fest" on October 7-8. While here, commemorate the occasion with a keepsake photo at the custom-made fall photo booth!

"We're looking forward to this final salute to summer after what many say was one of the best Donkey Derby Day summer celebrations in history," said Brandon Westhoff, president of the Two Mile High Club. "Now it's time to celebrate the new season and all it has to offer."

Highway 67 from Woodland Park to Cripple Creek and over to Victor provides one of the most beautiful fall drives in the region. While you're in the area enjoying the Fall Fest, head over to Victor and meet Rita the Troll. Stroll through the Fall Festival on Bennett Avenue and enjoy live music at the District Museum from noon-5 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, featuring several local favorite bands, "The Locals" and "The Bushcocks," "The Tenderfoot Bluegrass Band" and more.

"We care for our donkeys every day of the year and appreciate the community support. In addition to enjoying our fall festival, we encourage attendees to visit all the local coffee and gift shops throughout the city. There's a lot to do in this area," said Wendy Wood, Vice President of the Two Mile High Club, "and we can always use more help taking care of these town mascots. If you want to join us, please log on to our website and volunteer!"

[www.cripplecreekdonkeys.com](http://www.cripplecreekdonkeys.com). FMI is available on the Cripple Creek Donkeys website and Facebook pages.

## Completing Trailhead Townhomes

by Sara Vestal

Habitat for Humanity of Teller County (HFHTC) is partnering with Elevation Community Land Trust (Elevation) to finish the remaining 12 units at Trailhead Townhomes. Elevation is a Colorado nonprofit whose mission aligns with that of HFHTC: to build affordable homes for those who could not otherwise own a home. This partnership will go into effect by November 1st to help HFHTC overcome the challenges faced during the COVID-19 pandemic.

HFHTC has encountered many unforeseen conditions in the past few years, making it challenging to keep the cost of building homes low. With increased costs of building materials, higher interest rates, decreased volunteerism, supply chain delays, and more, HFHTC cannot complete the Trailhead Townhomes neighborhood using the traditional Habitat model. Partnering with Elevation will place the land in a trust, decreasing the cost of the homes for homebuyers. Elevation will continue Habitat's vision of beautiful, energy-effi-

cient homes in completing the build-out of the subdivision. Like HFHTC, Elevation is committed to permanent affordability. Through the community land trust model, the homes will be affordable to the initial homebuyers and for generations of the Woodland Park workforce.

HFHTC is excited to partner with Elevation to better serve Teller County.

"My hope for this partnership is to lower the income qualification to make these homes attainable for more members of the community," said Sara Vestal, Interim Executive Director of HFHTC. Stefka Fanchi, President & CEO of Elevation, says, "The community land trusts will benefit Woodland Park by bridging the gap between renting and homeownership for low-income families, stabilizing housing costs and communities, and maintaining affordability for years to come."

HFHTC is grateful to everyone who has volunteered, donated, and supported Trailhead Townhomes and is looking forward to continuing to serve Teller County.

## Monkey See, Monkey Do

### You can Kindle Kindness, too!

by Readers of Ute Country News

We are happy to print the most recent submissions on kindness below.

- A woman was offered customer appreciation gift but was not able to partake in the gift. Her act of kindness was to let the giver know so that the gift could be available for someone else. Knowing the gift could be used by someone else, the woman showed an act of kindness by letting the giver know to open the door for others.
- Friends of a single mom with a 5-year-old wanted to do something special before the single mom went in for chemotherapy and they wanted to involve the 5-year-old. They created a "Wig Party" where every guest brought at least one wig; some mom might consider and others that were just plain fun or goofy, and some for the 5-year-old. Everyone had a great time trying on different wigs. To top off the party, everyone made a ponytail on the single mom's head and each person cut one of the ponytails off (those were saved for Locks of Love to be made into wigs for other cancer patients). Then the single mom shaved her head as everyone cheered her on! What a creative way to show compassion, concern and kindness for the single mom about to go through chemo! How cool is it that these women found a way to involve the daughter and make it fun to lighten heavy hearts. The additional act of kindness was the ponytails to Locks of Love.
- A neighbor was willing to help her elderly neighbor to fulfill an errand that was time-consuming, yet necessary. The neighbor was careful to help the elderly neighbor with the walker, order/pick up dinner and patiently waited for all the transactions to occur. Then carefully helped the elderly neighbor back in the car and drove him home. Helping

people who may be unsteady or have difficulty getting around, and doing so with patience, is a great example of kindness!

- An artist noticed how much I admired a piece of art and gave it to me! That is an act of kindness!
- I'm so grateful for my dad's neighbors! He took his dog for a walk but fell. The dog stayed immediately at his side in the back yard of a neighbor. The neighbor noticed the dog, went outside to see what was going on and found my dad next to his dog. The neighbor called another neighbor (we'll call this neighbor #2) who knows dad very well. Neighbor #2 took dad to the hospital, called me to let me know what happened and stayed with him all night. I couldn't get a flight out immediately, so Neighbor #2 continued to stay with dad until I could arrive. I just don't know what I would do without Neighbor #2! Looking out for dad and contacting me is an act of incredible kindness and compassion — thank you Neighbor #2!
- A neighbor helps an elderly woman manage a return and assures the elderly woman she can track the package to assure its arrival. The elderly woman experiences a sense of relief for the help. Helping your neighbor is an act of kindness.
- A customer brings in a beautiful chrysanthemum for a business owner, who is grateful and places it outside for ALL to enjoy! Sharing plants is an act of kindness and beauty.

*Please feel free to submit your own experience either sending or receiving kindness so we can keep this going and remind people what kindness is utecountrynewspaper@gmail.com.*

## Paint the Town show and reception

by Flip Boettcher

"Paint the Town" sponsored by the Florence Arts Council, is celebrating the event's 20th year Monday through Saturday, October 16 through 21. The event includes painting in and around historic downtown Florence, CO and several sites in Fremont County including Colon Orchard on selected days.

All work is done on-site by the artists during the week and the event is open to both 2D and 3D artists. It is a fun and artistic six days for the artists as there is, in addition to painting on site throughout Florence, a "Quick Draw" event at a mystery location on Saturday afternoon, and an artist reception/sale on Saturday evening with the opportunity to purchase incredible art of local scenery. The Saturday evening reception at the Bell Tower Cultural Center includes a free chili and soup dinner.

Over \$4,000 in prize money is donated by donors to individual artists. Best of Show this year again will be \$1,000. Other prizes include First, Second and Third place, Spirit of the West awards (3) and Body of Work, in addition to other committed patron awards.

The exhibition and sale runs October 21 through November 25. Information for viewers is available at the Bell Tower Cultural Center in Florence.

*FMI contact the Bell Tower Cultural center 719-784-2018 or drop by the Center at 201 East 2nd Street, Florence, CO.*

## Paving Project needs your help!

by Ken and Judi Hesselberg

The Little Chapel Food Pantry needs your help! The gravel lot makes it very difficult for those in wheelchairs and walkers to navigate safely, not to mention the volunteers trying to push carts full of food boxes across this difficult terrain. We can eliminate this issue by paving the parking lot. However, we anticipate the cost to be between \$70,000 and \$80,000 depending on material costs at the time of paving. We have raised approximately \$20,000 so far and we turn to our community for help. Any donation, large or small, would be greatly appreciated. You can donate via the website ([littlechapelfoodpantry.org](http://littlechapelfoodpantry.org)) or by sending a check made payable to Little Chapel Food Pantry to 69 County Rd 5, Divide, CO 80814. Be sure to designate the funds for the parking lot project. Thank you so much!

## Ice Castles bring winter magic to Cripple Creek

by Klaryssa Murray

photo by AJ.Mellor

A magical, frozen attraction is bringing Aits fairytale experience back to the Centennial State. After two seasons away, Ice Castles will return to Colorado in December 2023 with a new location in Cripple Creek. Cripple Creek is well known for its annual Ice Festival, scheduled for February 17th-25 in 2024, and is looking forward to the best winter season yet.

Ice Castles will begin building its immersive winter attraction in Cripple Creek as soon as late October or early November.

The acclaimed winter attraction features tunnels, caverns, towers, fountains, slides, and crawl spaces built entirely from ice using icicles that are grown, harvested, and hand-placed by professional ice artisans. The acre-sized winter playgrounds are illuminated at night by color-changing LED lights embedded inside the ice.

"We are excited to be back in Colorado this winter," said Ice Castles' CEO Kyle Standifird. "Our team is dedicated to creating an unforgettable experience in Cripple Creek that complements the natural beauty of the area while providing a unique and immersive experience for guests."

The Utah-based company will have three other locations this winter in Utah, Minnesota, and New Hampshire. The winter event company will also roll out a new attraction, Winter Realm, in New York and Wisconsin, featuring seasonal elements such as winter sleigh rides, ice skating and a whimsical light walk (location depending).

Tickets to visit the frozen fortresses will be available in December: [icecastles.com](http://icecastles.com).

## Orchard of Hope Foundation

### The Dungeon Body Art Studio

by Flip Boettcher

To celebrate Friday the 13th of October, The Dungeon Body Art Studio, located at 503 Main Street in Cañon City, will be offering some amazing Halloween patterns to be tattooed by all three of their tattoo artists, Richie, Jonnaalea and Shane, on the 13th. All proceeds benefit the Orchard of Hope Foundation.

The Dungeon wants to give to the Cañon City community of Cancer Champions right here in Fremont County, said Darcie Wige, co-owner of the Dungeon.

The Orchard of Hope does so much for the community of Cancer Champions, including taking those who cannot drive to their chemo appointments and

lots more. Sandi Allan has been the face of the Orchard for a good many years but has recently retired. Her family has endured the pain from cancer, and the loss of family due to its terrible grip on our very being, said Wige. "My admiration to her and all those who help the Orchard to continue to serve those effected by Cancer."

The Friday the 13th event at the Dungeon will be another benefit for this wonderful Orchard of Hope Foundation, said Wige. So come in to the Dungeon, get a tattoo and help support the Orchard of Hope. Even if you don't want a tattoo, you can still come in and support the Orchard. FMI 719-275-5050.



## Obituary

### Jody Penny



It is with great sadness that our family must announce the passing of Jody Penny, of Florissant CO. She was taken from us too soon by a brief yet devastating illness on August 22, 2023. She was born in Tennessee on February 26, 1957; however, her home is and always will be the Colorado mountains. While raising her kids in Colorado Springs, Jody yearned to be in the mountains as much as possible. She would often take her family to join friends to spend countless days and nights camping and enjoying the beautiful mountains with them. Jody was able to make her mountain life a permanent reality 24 years ago when she moved to Florissant CO, where she has touched the hearts and lives of so many over the years.

Jody was preceded in death by her father, Robert E. Brooks. With broken hearts, Jody is survived by her mother, Elizabeth K. Brooks; her Pardner (partner), Gary Szczepanik; two daughters, Gentry Shoemaker (Evan Chamberlain) and Melanie Lamer and one son, Elijah Penny (Kaley Graham); five grandsons, Kris, Carter (Hailey), Tyler, Jack and Damon; 2 brothers, Bob (Wendy) Brooks and John (Becky) Brooks; she also leaves behind countless other family and friends that will miss her more than words can express.

"Our grandma moves mountains!" as said many times by Jody's grandsons. In lieu of flowers, the family is asking that you consider donating to: St. Jude Children's Hospital- stjude.org

*"You belong among the wildflowers  
You belong somewhere close to me  
Far away from your trouble and worry  
You belong somewhere you feel free  
You belong somewhere you feel free"*

— Tom Petty



## NoFloCo & ICPOA donate to FFD

photos by Dennis Shorn, Florissant, CO

During the August the Florissant Fire District's (FFD) monthly meeting, Indian Creek Property Owners (ICPOA) and nearby community members came together as NoFloCo to donate an additional \$3200 to Florissant Fire Department for equipment and training. This is the second big check in as many months NoFloCo and ICPOA have delivered to the department. NoFloCo donated \$5220.23 to the department at their annual pancake breakfast.

It has been a busy summer for NoFloCo. They raised more than \$8,500 for FFPD, and the grassroots community-based organization has trained an additional six members in Firefighter 2 (\$130/L180/\$190), and 12 members as certified Wildland Chainsaw Operators (\$212), they have mitigated over 15 acres in six projects, and cut, split, and delivered five cords of donated firewood to three local fire departments to assist in fundraising all since July.

All the recent training has made NoFloCo the largest, best trained volunteer fire mitigation organization in the state. NoFloCo boasts more Type 2 Wildland Firefighters and certified tree fellers than any other volunteer group in Colorado, and perhaps in the nation.

## All the recent training has made NoFloCo the largest, best trained volunteer fire mitigation organization in the state.

NoFloCo was started in 2020 by Donald and Toni Moore as a committee of their Property Owners Association. Their idea was to make a difficult and boring, but very necessary job, a bit more fun by working together with friends and neighbors. The idea has caught on, and now "the posse" works in 11 subdivisions, has nearly 300 active members, and has completed over \$150,000 in mitigation at no charge for widows, the elderly and others across Teller County.

Board members of FFD had the fol-



NoFloCo Posse with check for Florissant Fire District NoFloCo delivers check to FFPD Board. (From Left: Rich Graham, Janet Franke, Mona Lietke, Dave Groat, Toni Moore, and Paul del Toro)

lowing to say in response to the recent donations:

*"NoFloCo has for years provided invaluable service to the community through education and action to mitigate fire danger throughout Florissant and the greater Teller County area. Don and Toni Moore have now been able to expand the community benefit through the generation of much needed donations to the Florissant Fire Protection District. We wish to thank the entire NoFloCo Posse for their hard work and dedication and their unwavering support of the FFPD community."*

— Board President Paul del Toro,  
paul.deltoro@Florissantfire.com

*"Great people doing great things, led by great people!"*

— Board Member Allen Schultz,  
allen.schultz@Florissantfire.com

*"NoFloCo is an amazing core of volunteers who selflessly help neighbors get that important mitigation done in a much faster time than a property owner can do by themselves. It's a daunting task to mitigate 5-acre properties, but NoFloCo*

*comes in and does it in a day, not only removing fuels too close to the home, but totally removing wildfire fuel from the area. Watching them work initially looks like a bunch of ants working independently, but a closer examination reveals the order of it and the methodical approach. Under the leadership of Don Moore, the chaos becomes an orchestration. Once you've helped to mitigate a neighbor's property, you just want to do more. Our community is blessed to have them, and their model should be reproduced all over the west where wildfire is our greatest threat."*

— Board Member Dave Groat,  
david.groat@Florissantfire.com

*"I wish every fire district in Colorado had the chance to work with a group like the NoFloCo Fire Mitigation Posse to help reduce the fuel that wildland fires thrive on!"*

— Board Member Judy Dunn,  
judy.dunn@florissantfire.com

To learn more about NoFloCo, visit their website at [www.nofloco.org](http://www.nofloco.org) or reach out to Don Moore at [runningman2625@yahoo.com](mailto:runningman2625@yahoo.com) or call at 719-839-0860

## Current Creek Characters - part XXVI The 4X Ranch - part XXVIII

by Flip Boettcher

The 1880 census lists Charles Lowe, 55 years, a farmer, living with Martha 37 years, wife keeping house and their daughter Mary Matilda, 8 years. The couple are living with Charles' brother Barent and his wife Ophelia near Fairplay.

In 1880 John Whisler, 38 years a farmer, his wife Matilda Olivia 33 years and baby Oscar 4 years living with Sikka 64 years, wife and Abraham 54 years in South Park, Park County. Sadly, in December 1881, baby Oscar, 6 years and 1 month, dies and is buried in the Greenwood Cemetery in Cañon City.

The Whisler/Scott family is most likely living on the old Soda Springs Ranch, now called the 4X Ranch after their XX+XX brand. The 4X Ranch probably included Sikka's 160 acre homestead as well as Whisler's adjoining 160 acre cash sale homestead. Sikka and Whisler proofed both their homesteads on March 20, 1885; Whisler's being certificate #818 and Sikka's #819.

The 4X Ranch was an overnight stop for freighters from Cañon City to Leadville on the Currant Creek Wagon Road, which by 1880 followed Currant Creek north by-passing the old Mill Gulch route.

On April 11, 1880, John Whisler, Abraham Scott, Charles F. Johnson and Jack (Andrew Jackson) Asher were witnesses on the final proof of Peter Alstrum's homestead, which adjoined Whisler's homestead on Currant Creek to the northwest.

A June 1880 *Flume* mentioned that JM Cole of Fairplay and John Whisler, one of Park County's well-to-do ranchers, left for the Gunnison country on Sunday morning.

Whisler was very active with the county elections, serving in 1882 with Wm. Beery and Wm. White at the Currant Creek precinct #6; in 1885 with WD Runner and Wm. Beery at the Currant Creek precinct #9 with the election being held at the Kester post office; in 1894 as election judges from Kester with LJ Runner and HH Hammond; and in 1898 with JM White and Joe Hartsel at the Freshwater precinct #9.

In January of 1883, the *Flume* mentions that Fehringer and Rink bought 25 head of Cotswold sheep from John Whisler. In June of that year Whisler, Aaron C. Davis, Joseph Sykes and Wm. Beery were witnesses for Charles Davis' final proof of his homestead, which touched the southeast corner of Whisler's homestead.

The upper Currant Creek area was known for its floods and pretty girls. I don't know about the pretty girls, but mid-August 1883 saw a raging flood on the creek. Ranchers in the area suffered the loss of crops, fences and even land, according to the August 30 *Flume* article entitled "Raging Waters."

A waterspout struck the northwest slope of 39-Mile Mountain filling all the gulches on that slope with tremendous torrents of water. A dry gulch at the AJ Bates' place brought a roaring stream 15 -20 feet high that engulfed his property. Bates barely saved four horses from drowning in his stable. The next day Bates found his wagon full of mud up to and above the box.

The torrent raged through the Smith place saving him the trouble of harvesting any crops this year and at Littleton's, the flood ruined his crops and much of his land, as well, the article stated.

The worst threatened was Mrs. Scott's place. The water surrounded the house and entered on all sides. Within moments everything movable was floating. Mr. Whisler, who lived there, had to carry his wife out of the house, which looked like it would go down with the flood. Fortunately, some debris caught and formed a dam that warded the waters off and saved the house. When the family re-entered the house, they found a 125-pound tub of butter floating about inside.

Farther down the creek, Charles Davis lost a string of fences 40 rods long (a rod



The Charles W. Lowe ranch south of Fairplay in the 1880s. The ranch was located east of Highway 285 and was the first ranch south of Highway 285 and Highway 9. Pictured left to right are Mrs. Lowe, Gussie (Augustus), Tillie (Mary Matilda). The men are Charles Lowe, Henry Seymour and Willard Randall. Courtesy of the Park County Historical Archives

= 16 ½ feet), 14 acres of potatoes and 4 acres of oats. Dell, Alstrum, Asher and Olaf Davis suffered some loss as well.

Whisler also served on the district courts as part of the jury or as a witness. An April 1884 *Flume* article stated that Whisler was registered at the Berg House in Fairplay along with Charles Davis of Currant Creek in attendance of the district court. In July 1885 it was mentioned that John Whisler received \$19.20 as a witness.



Baby Oscar's headstone in the Greenwood Cemetery — The headstone says, "Oscar Scott son of Mrs. M.O. Whisler - died Dec 16, 1881 — aged six years one month." photo by Flip Boettcher

In January 1898 Whisler served as a witness, along with local residents Gus Cohen, Wm. White, CB Dell, Mrs. BR Dell, Alf Dell, DF Goodnight, John Bender, and HH Hammond, in the Sipchen murder trial of local resident WD Crampton, who was murdered in 1896. Sipchen was found not guilty; the murder was committed by Wm. Case, a fellow with many aliases.

March 24, 1886, Martha S. Lowe divorced Charles Wm. Lowe in Fairplay. Martha changed her name back to Scott and mostly lived in Cañon City on the Scott property there. The May 1, 1886 *Cañon City Daily Record* noted that Charles Lowe sold his South Canon property to a Mr. Hanks and lived in Fairplay until his death.

In May 1886, the *Park County Bulletin* mentioned that TT Willey of Fairplay and John Whistler of the park were in Alma on Wednesday. An April 1888 *Flume* mentioned that John Whisler was "driving a horse about town this week — a recent purchase and a little beauty."

On October 18, 1893, Sikka Scott died and is buried near baby Oscar in the Greenwood Cemetery in Cañon City. One of Frank Rowe's early childhood memories was that the first time he saw a flower growing in a pot was at "Old Mrs. Scott's" house, which was at the junction of Highway #9 and the Guffey road. Rowe, an early resident and homesteader born in 1874, also remembers Mrs. Scott shaving hard twist black tobacco for her corn cob pipe and lighting it from a live coal from her stove. He said that the whole procedure took quite some time.

Sikka's husband Abraham and her daughters kept the Scott Ranch and an April 18, 1895 *Colorado Weekly Chieftain* article on the Town of Freshwater mentioned that "Mesars. Baxter et al., lessees of the Scott Ranch just south of town, expect to plat a town site within the next thirty days. The town site will commence on the south end of Freshwater and run southward one mile. With Clarksville on the north and Scottsville on the south we will be nearly as well provided for suburbs as Chicago."

Needless to say, Clarksville, which actually was a platted town site north of Guffey on Gold Hill, and Scottsville never happened; with the first discovery of gold near Freshwater, there were big plans for the town site, which never materialized for lack of a big strike of anything.

There is also a mention in an August 7, 1896 *Denver Times* about the iron and soda springs one mile south of Freshwater which are located on the ranch owned by Mrs. Scott of Cañon City and Mrs. John Whistler of Currant Creek.

In January 1896 Whistler is on a 40 acre cash sale land patent with John and Martin Bender located farther up the creek by Wm. White's property and in July 1897, John T. Whistler is the Park County postmaster at the Hammond post office located on HH Hammond's homestead and where the town site of Kester was located farther up the creek adjacent to John Bender's homestead.

To be continued...



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# Bolts of Tragedy

## A teen's fatal encounter in the Cripple Creek Mining District

by Steven Wade Veatch

On a fateful Wednesday, July 15, 1914, 13-year-old John F. Bowen visited his friends at the Kilpatrick Ranch near Gillette, Colorado. It started out like any other day for John — his past behind him, his future ahead, but unlike other days, this would be his last day on Earth.

Young John Bowen had lived an eventful life. He was born in Leadville on January 12, 1901, to Irish parents. John and his family lived in the Big Stray Horse Gulch in Leadville. His father, Thomas, worked in a Leadville silver mine. Certainly, his father had heard about the roaring Cripple Creek Mining District while working in Leadville. Unable to resist the lure of the Cripple Creek goldfields, Thomas gathered up his family and moved to the "World's Greatest Gold Camp." By 1905, he was working as a miner at the Free Coinage Mine and lived in Altman, one of the mining camps in the district.

On that fateful Wednesday, John prepared to visit friends at the Kilpatrick Ranch, near Gillette, Colorado. When it was time to leave for Gillette, he no doubt kissed his mother, Mary, goodbye, waved to his siblings, and shook hands with his father, who was by now, the town marshal. John quietly stepped through the door, went outside, and stood beside his donkey — ready to ride. He then hoisted himself onto the donkey's back, adjusted his grip on the reins, and gave a gentle kick. The donkey responded to John's command, and with the donkey's cautious step forward, they began their descent down a winding mountain road. He passed by several of the big gold producers (the Burns, Pharmacist, and Zenobia mines) in the Cripple Creek District.

Soon the mountain trail stretched out before them, snaking through lush greenery, wildflowers, aspens, and spruce trees. Sometimes long grass brushed against his trousers as he rode. His heart raced with excitement at the rhythmic sound of the donkey's hooves echoing through the crisp mountain air.

John's hands gripped the reins firmly as the sure-footed donkey worked its way down the mountain with a steady gait. At times, the trail presented challenges — a steep incline, a narrow passage between rocks, and a bend in the road that made John lean into the curves, shifting his weight to aid the donkey's balance. Nature seemed to come alive around him. John noticed deer, hawks, and squirrels in the foliage, and each sight added to the thrill of the ride.

As they rode to Kilpatrick's Ranch, John felt the wind tousling his hair and smelled the scent of pine and earth in the air. Finally, the road brought him to a peaceful clearing — Kilpatrick's Ranch — below Pikes Peak.

Perhaps his day can be thought of in this way: By the time he arrived at the ranch, the sun was high in the open sky as a group of teenage boys gathered at the



Main Street (Baldwin Avenue) in Altman. Photo date unknown. Courtesy of the Cripple Creek District Museum.

corral. John dismounted and patted the donkey affectionately. The boys greeted one another with laughter and handshakes. The ranch, with its pastures, trails, ponds, and pine trees, promised endless possibilities. The boys reveled in the freedom that came with riding horses as they explored the sprawling landscape, galloped through open fields, and maneuvered around trees,



John Bowen's tombstone at the Sunnyside Cemetery, Victor, Colorado. Photo date 2023 by S. W. Veatch

rocks, and other obstacles.

As the afternoon ended, it was time for John and the donkey to head for home. John bade farewell to his friends, mounted his donkey, and started riding back home to Altman. He carried with him the memories of a day well spent on the ranch with his friends. The way back was uphill, and after a while, John dismounted and sat on a flat, lichen-encrusted stone to give his donkey a break. A storm seemed to be gathering.

As John and his donkey approached Altman (the camp with the highest elevation

in the district) a storm developed. The sky roared with a primal fury as jagged bolts of lightning split the heavens and illuminated the darkness with their dazzling brilliance. Thunder reverberated through the air and a rumbling percussion shook the ground. Gustling winds whipped through the trees. The air crackled with raw energy, charging the atmosphere with electric tension. Nature's power was on full display, revealing unpredictable might.

Just as John and his donkey were nearing Altman, lightning stretched across the sky from hell to breakfast, and struck a nearby tree, causing it to explode. Newspaper accounts record what happened when he was close to home. *The Rocky Mountain News* published this incredible report on July 16, 1914:

*He had visited the Kilpatrick ranch nearer Gillette and was returning to his home when he encountered an electrical storm. He had proceeded within a half mile of his home when a bolt of lightning struck a tree near the road. Rider and animal were felled by the effect of the bolt. Young Bowen was strapped securely in the saddle and when the burro arose later the limp form of the boy clung to the animal. The burro continued until he reached the yard of the Bowen home where the mother of the boy loosened him from the saddle and carried him into the house.*

*Members of the Bowen family worked over the boy several minutes before he was revived. He became hysterical and asked strange questions. The family sought to calm him but failed.*

*An hour after he had been brought into the house, young Bowen walked to a bureau, pulled out a gun, which was small caliber, and fired into his body above the heart, dying almost instantly.*

*The shooting was witnessed by members of the family, but they were unable to reach the boy in time to prevent him from ending his life. The remains were turned over to the coroner.*

Lightning is a formidable force. It is possible that lightning struck John in this way: When lightning struck the tree, it jumped to John Bowen as well. John would have felt its impact through multiple systems of his body. Neurologic complications could have been severe, including loss of consciousness, confusion, memory issues, dizziness, headaches, seizures, and changes in sensation or movement. He would have suffered other problems, such as burns (from heat caused by the strike) and associated blunt trauma from explosive shock waves. Objects damaged or thrown by a lightning strike can cause physical injury. The only thing known for sure is that John was not the same after the lightning strike. His eyes finally opened, he gulped in some fresh air, got up, walked to a chest of drawers, opened a drawer, picked up a revolver, and shot himself.

John died at his home at the top of the hill. Time had slipped away from him, a life mostly un-lived. The death of a teenage boy is a tragedy that makes us question our existence. It reminds us to appreciate the fragility of our time on Earth and appreciate the people around us.

# BLM prescribed burns near Cañon City

by Levi Spellman

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is preparing two prescribed burns, scheduled to take place between October 2023 and April 2024. Prescribed burns help preserve the health of forests and wildlife by removing materials that contribute to the severity of wildfires. The annually scheduled burns will take place as weather and fuel moisture conditions permit.

The Deer Haven area is slated for a prescribed burn approximately 15 miles northwest of Cañon City, south of High Park Road, and west of County Road 69

in northern Fremont County. Another prescribed burn is planned on the north side of Waugh Mountain, approximately 26 miles northwest of Cañon City, 20 miles northeast of Salida, and two miles south of Fremont County Road 2.

Approximately 380 acres of BLM-managed land will be treated as part of the Deer Haven prescribed burn and 100 acres as part of the North Waugh Mountain prescribed burn. Targeted fuels include ponderosa pine, Gambel oak, decadent grasses, and other ground fuel that has accumulated since

previous treatments.

Both projects will create a mosaic of burned and unburned areas intended to reduce conifer encroachment in grass parks while improving forage for wildlife and domestic livestock. Prescribed fire also helps to create various stages of plant succession, which is critical to the health of fire-adapted ecosystems.

Smoke from the prescribed burns will be visible throughout the day of the burn, mostly during the warmest part of the day. With cooler temperatures in the evening, smoke may linger and accumu-

late in low-lying areas. Firefighters will be on site throughout the day of ignition and will periodically patrol the burns for several days afterward.

Prescribed fire smoke may affect your health. For more information, please visit the Colorado Air Pollution Control Division's website: <https://cdphe.colorado.gov/wood-smoke-and-your-health>

For general information, contact Matthew Norden, BLM Rocky Mountain District Assistant Fire Management Officer at 719-269-8583.



## ~OUT AND ABOUT~

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](mailto:utecountrynewspaper@gmail.com).

### AVAILABLE VIRTUALLY

- NAMI Colorado: <http://www.namicolorado.org/>
- Suicide prevention: <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/> or dial 988

### CAÑON CITY

- LIBRARY**
- 4 Free Legal Clinic 2-5 p.m. Call 719-269-9020 to reserve your time slot.

- 13 Nature's Educators 4-5 p.m.

- 14 Solar eclipse event 9-12 p.m.

- 21 Susan Frontczak performing as Mary Shelley (author of Frankenstein)

- 27 Pumpkins in the plaza 10:30 a.m.

- Adult literacy program. We have tutors available to help for FREE!

- B.O.O.K. Babies on our Knees Monday 10:30 a.m.

- Break out box 2nd Friday each month 3-4 p.m.

- Cañon City Garden Club meets 4th Saturday each month 1-2:30 p.m.

- Chess Club Wednesday 2 p.m.

- Creative Crafting (different craft each month) 3rd Friday each month 3-4 p.m.

- Cribbage Club Fridays 10 a.m. All ages welcome!

- Junk/Art Journaling Club meets 3rd Tues of each month 10-12 p.m.

- Lego Club 1st Friday each month 3-4 p.m.

- Mahjong Club 2nd and 4th Tuesday 1 p.m.

- Metaphysical Group every Saturday 10:30 a.m.

- Natural Grocers' 2nd Wednesday 11 a.m.

- New Neighbors Genealogy 1st Friday 1 p.m.

- Rummikub Club meets 3rd Monday 1 p.m.

- Story Swap Book Club 1st and 3rd Tuesday 3-4 p.m.

- All at 516 Macon Ave. FMI 719-269-9020 [www.cepl.lib.co.us](http://www.cepl.lib.co.us)

### CHIPITA PARK

- Save the date! November 4-5 Chipita Park Association's 19th Annual Arts and Crafts Fair at Marcroft Hall 9105 Chipita Park Road. This annual event showcases area vendors offering textiles, pottery, jewelry, woodcrafts, soap and beauty products, baskets, rustic furniture, artistic greeting cards and holiday décor. The Ute Pass Historical Society will be there with calendars and books, and Ute Pass Library will have used books. Lunch and home-made baked good are available for purchase. FREE! Saturday 9-4 p.m., Sunday 10-4 p.m.

### COLORADO SPRINGS

- 11 The Dropkick Murphys at the Broadmoor

### CRIPPLE CREEK

- 5 American Legion Post 171 meets the first Thursday of every month at 6 p.m. at 400 Carr St., Food and refreshments at 5 p.m.

- GED Classes Mondays &

Wednesdays 1-3 p.m. New students (min. age 16) may join GED classes after completing orientation and \$40 registration fee. FMI Katy@cpteller.org.

### ASPEN MINE CENTER

- 27 Commodities distribution 9-1 p.m.

- Tuesdays BINGO 10:30 a.m. for seniors.

- Wednesdays Luncheon 11:30-1 p.m. upstairs dining room, every Wed. FREE! FMI 719-689-3584 x124.

### DIVIDE

- 9, 23 Little Chapel Food Pantry Distribution and Pet Food Pantry Distribution 2-5 p.m.

- For more info 719-322-7610 or email [littlechapelfoodpantry@outlook.com](mailto:littlechapelfoodpantry@outlook.com)

- 13 The Ute Pass Historical Society's annual Potato Soup Supper at the Pikes Peak Community Club to celebrate the agricultural heritage of Divide! Doors open at 5:15 p.m. Dinner at 5:30 p.m. Speaker David Martinek at 6:30 p.m. Supper is potato soup, salad, rolls and dessert \$5 per person at the door. FMI 719-686-7512 or [uphs@utepasshistoricalsociety.org](mailto:uphs@utepasshistoricalsociety.org) or [utepasshistoricalsociety.org](mailto:utepasshistoricalsociety.org)

- 14 Comedy Above the Clouds at Ruse's Place 6:30 p.m. featuring David Testroet and Rick Bryan hosted by Thad B. Call for tickets 719-687-599.

- 29 Colorado Wolf and Wildlife Center. Join us as we pass out meat-filled pumpkins during the tour to all the wolves, followed by bon fire and refreshments 4-6 p.m. at 4729 Twin Rock Rd. Tickets are \$40 ages 12+ and \$20 ages 6-11. No one under the age of 6 is permitted.

- 13, 27 Teller Senior Coalition BINGO 10-11:30 a.m. at Little Chapel Church 69 CR 5. RSVP 719-687-3330 ext. 6. Call to set up a ride 719-687-0256.

### FAIRPLAY

- 9 Virtual Pro Se Clinic 3:30-5 p.m. call 719-836-4297 for a time.

### FLORENCE

- 14 The 2nd Annual Pet Parade. Dogs, cats, ferrets, hamsters, guinea pigs, etc. Dressing your pet is encouraged. Prizes for best tricks, pet look alike, most original, outfit and people's choice. Registration 11-12 p.m., parade begins at 12:30 p.m. Pets must be leashed or restrained. All contestants must carry bags and pick up after your pet. Meet at the parking lot on the corner of Pikes Peak and Main St, near Rocky Mountain National Bank.

- 16-21 Paint the Town see page 17.

- John C Fremont Library encourages everyone to come see the Westcliffe Fiber Artists displaying their creations this month.

- Florence Pioneer Museum and Research Center 100 E. Front St. will be open for the fall months. The book *Colorado's Florence Oil Field, the Oldest Commercial, Continuously Producing Oil*



### CRIPPLE CREEK

- 14, 21, 28 The Haunting Season is upon us! Get in the mood by taking a Ghost Tour! The Cripple Creek District Museum is offering guided Ghost Tours on Saturday afternoons. Hear about the spirits who have never left Cripple Creek. Take photos along the way — you never know who might appear. Cost is \$10 per person. Reservations are encouraged, tours sell out quickly. FMI or reservations 719-689-9540. Happy Haunting! Pictured above is "The Undertaker".

*Field in the World* written by Phillip Pall Denney is available for sale for \$23, the author is sharing the profits with the museum. FMI [www.florencepioneermuseum.org](http://www.florencepioneermuseum.org).

### FLORISSANT

- GRANGE

- 14 Pine Needle Basket Class and Needle Felting Class both at 9-11 a.m.

- 28 Haunted House 12-1:30 p.m. Come enjoy hot dogs and hot cocoa at noon, then if you are brave, venture through the Haunted House. If you make it out, you can harvest some potatoes in the potato hunt. Goodie bags will be given to all the kiddos. Be sure to wear your best costume as we will take pictures for the costume contest. Winners will be contacted via text.

- Tuesday mornings 9-12 Florissant Grange Quilt of Valor Guild meets. If you are a quilter and would like to join the fun, stop by and help make beautiful quilts for veterans in Teller County.

- Thursday potluck and music 6-8 p.m. Join us... bring a dish and a small donation to enjoy good music and even better food. FMI 719-510-2325.

- LIBRARY

- 3 Adult Craft at 11am. Make mosaic coasters! Space is limited, so please call to reserve a spot!

- 11 Florissant Bookworms Book

Come relax with us!

- Thursdays Yarnia! 10-12 p.m. Craft and share your knitting and crocheting love with others!

- The second and fourth Tuesday of each month join us for Hooks and Needles, an additional club for crafting! 10-12 p.m.

- The third Wednesday of each month join us for Crafting Together, a club where we finish our abandoned art projects. 10-11:30 a.m.

- The fourth Saturday of each month, join us from 10-11:30 a.m. for our Adult Social Circle! Meet and make friends with ease.

- Fridays Storytime with Ms. Beth at 10 a.m. followed by Reading with Charlie the dog!

- Friday Family Fun Fridays 2-4 p.m., with the second and third Fridays each month from 10-5 p.m. FMI 719-748-3939

### GUFFEY

- 29 Join us 10-2 p.m. at the Southern Park County Fire Protection District Station 1 for the Guffey Community Vitalant Blood Drive, use drive code: 10054313. You may register online to reserve your spot <https://donors.vitalant.org/dwp/portal/dwa/appointment/guest/phl/utspSlotsExtr?token=rwv0UspHLLrmOxK9GR4RG%2FBhHbK5sryrO49s3d3%2BzA%3D>

- If you have any questions, please contact Renee at [Renee@ReneeRudolph.com](mailto:Renee@ReneeRudolph.com). Your commitment to giving back to the community is greatly appreciated and your donation can truly change lives. See you there and thank you for being a hero!

- LIBRARY

- 3 Walking, Talking Threads 12:30-3 p.m. Meets every first Tuesday of the month. Take a nice brisk walk around Guffey Town and meet back at the library to crotchet, knit, and talk away.

- 9 Virtual Pro Se Clinic 3:30-5 p.m. call 719-689-9280 to set a time.

- 25 Rocky Mountain Rural Health Outreach 11-2 p.m. Weather permitting, RMRH representatives will be offering free health screenings, sound financial medical advice, free clothing and much more.

- 20 Friends at the Table Cookbook Club, theme is "spooky foods" Bring a dish to share! 11:30-1 p.m.

- 20 Friends of the Florissant Library Book Bake and Plant Sale! from 10-2 p.m. Support your library!

- 21 Friends of the Florissant Library Book Bake and Plant Sale! from 10-2 p.m. Support your library!

- 26 Speech Bubble Book Club 1 p.m. Read and share in the love of comic books, graphic novels and manga!

- 28 Trunk or Treat at the library! 10-12 p.m. Dress in your costumes, trick or treat and take part in crafts and activities! If you are interested in being a "trunk" please give us a call.

- 29 Blood Drive 11:30-3:45 p.m. use blood drive code 10054684 FMI vitalant.org

- Tuesdays Tai Chi 10-11 a.m.

### MANITOU SPRINGS

- 28 The 29th Annual Emma Crawford Coffin Races. Shuttles run 10-6 p.m. from the Citizens Service Center at 1675 Garden of the Gods Rd. Parking is free, shuttles are \$5 per person, cash only. FMI 719-685-5089 or visit [manitousprings.org](http://manitousprings.org). See page 7.

### MOUNT HERMAN

- 8 Cleanup 9-12 p.m. Focus on the Forest is doing their final cleanup. Join us for the cleanup of multiple areas on Mt Herman Rd that need our attention before weather prevents it. We will focus on the various off shoots up at the top of the road. The road does not require 4WD but is dirt so a higher clearance FWD is preferred. Sign up via email: [contactus@focusontheForest.org](mailto:contactus@focusontheForest.org).

### VICTOR

- 7, 21 Spirits of Sunnyside Cemetery Walking Tours available, weather permitting. FMI VictorMuseum.com.

- 7, 21 Stranger Side of Victor History. FMI VictorMuseum.com.

### WOODLAND PARK

- 7 Mountain Vapor Lounge is celebrating 6 years with cake beginning at 11 a.m. until the cake is gone! We will have more information soon about specials at that time and waffles! FMI 719-888-9523 or [mountain-vaporlounge@gmail.com](mailto:mountain-vaporlounge@gmail.com)

- 19-21 Munchkin Market semi-annual fundraiser for Ute Pass mothers of preschoolers. You will find everything your kiddos need from clothing, books to bikes at WP Community Church 800 Valley View Drive. Admission is free. Bring bags, totes or boxes to take home your treasures. When purchasing large items, receive a claim ticket and put items on "hold" while you shop.

- 19 Thurs 3-7 p.m.

- 20 Fri 12-7 p.m.

- 21 Sat 9-1 p.m. Half price day, all items 50% off.

- 25 Rock n Roll Halloween Costume Party at Ute Pass Cultural Center. Doors open 5:30 p.m., music by Sound Advice 6:30-8:30 p.m. Food trucks, cash bar, prizes and fun!

- 28 Mountain Vapor Lounge 11-4 p.m. Spa Day! \$10 sessions and a take-home gift! Must RSVP for your spot FMI 719-888-9523 or [mountain-vaporlounge@gmail.com](mailto:mountain-vaporlounge@gmail.com)

- COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

- 4-Nov 8 Cooking Classes for Families 5-7 p.m. School-age children (ages 6-12) and their caregivers learn about healthy eating as a family and the importance of working together to plan and prepare healthy meals on a budget. Hands-on workshop. Take home groceries to practice class recipes. Meal and childcare provided. FMI

continued on next page

continued from page 22

- Michelle@cpteller.org.

- 10 Circle of Fathers 5:30-7:30 p.m. Dads are often left out of the conversation. Join a father-led group where your opinions, ideas, and point of view are heard. Meal and childcare provided. Second Tuesday of each month. FMI [Taylr@cpteller.org](mailto:Taylr@cpteller.org).

- 13 Crossroads Co-Parenting Seminar 9:30-1:30 p.m. Teller County court approved parenting and divorce class. \$35 Pre-registration fee required. FMI Michelle@cpteller.org.

- 17 School Readiness 12-6 p.m. Developmental screenings and assessments, includes motor, cognitive, language, and social-emotional screening, hearing screening, and school readiness assessment. New this month vision screening. For children ages 1 month through 5.5 years. FMI Jackie@cpteller.org.

- 21 The 7th Annual Fall Fest 11-1 p.m. Fun for the whole family. Activities for all ages, snacks, food trucks, festive photo booths, games and giveaways. FMI Jackie@cpteller.org.

- 31 Halloween Walk 3:30-6:30

p.m. at Gold Hill Square. Annual trick-or-treating with Community Partnership and our neighboring businesses.

- Through Dec 5 Practical and Positive Parenting Classes 5:15-7:45 p.m. A nurturing and active approach to parenting in a supportive peer environment. Support for every step of your child's physical, emotional and cognitive development. Meal and childcare provided. FMI Michelle@cpteller.org.

- Career Center 12-4 p.m. Tuesdays & Thursdays. Pikes Peak Workforce Center can help with job searching, resume assistance and unemployment applications. Walk-ins welcome. FMI Erin@cpteller.org.

- Family Café 9 a.m.-12 p.m. Mon through Thurs. Enjoy coffee, Free Wifi, a Kid's Corner and a space to congregate free of charge for parents and caregivers in our community to connect.

- FREE Yoga with Leah Mondays 10-11 a.m. First come, first served, doors lock at 10 a.m. Bring your own mat and props. All levels welcome.

- FMI Michelle@cpteller.org.

- FREE Yoga with Leah Wednesdays 5-6 p.m. First come, first served, doors lock at 5 p.m. Bring your own mat and props. All levels welcome. FMI Michelle@cpteller.org.

- GED Classes 5-7 p.m. New students (min. age 16) may join GED classes after completing orientation and \$40 registration fee. Contact Katy@cpteller.org.

- Pearson VUE Testing Center Mondays 10-4 p.m. Schedule your certification or licensure exam at [www.pearsonvue.com](http://www.pearsonvue.com). Fees vary. FMI Katy@cpteller.org.

- Playgroup 9:30-11 a.m. Tuesdays, Wednesdays & Fridays. Rotating fieldtrip locations. Walk-ins welcome. Parents and caregivers with children ages 5 & under. Older siblings are welcome. FMI Jackie@cpteller.org.

- All programs at Community Partnership 701 Gold Hill Place unless otherwise noted. FMI 719-686-0705.

- LIBRARY

- 3 Woodland Park Book Club 10:30 a.m.

- 4 Teen Craft Day 3:45-5:30 p.m.

- 4 Family Art Day 11-5 p.m. in the Children's Activity Room.

- 4 Evening Adult Fiction Book Club 5 p.m.

- 5 Vitalant Blood Drive from 12-4:15 p.m. use blood drive code: 10054258 FMI vitalant.org

- 5 Trailblazers Meeting at 5 p.m. Meet with local hikers, plan hikes and share resources!

- 6 Coffee Chats 10 a.m. Join us for coffee and conversation. Meet new friends in Woodland Park.

- 7 Local Authors Showcase 1-4 p.m. Come hear local authors talk about their experiences writing and getting published!

- 7 Roaring 20s Library Foundation Fundraiser 5-7:30 p.m. Drinks, live music and a fine art auction! Feel free to dress up or come as you are. Tickets are \$45 online or \$50 at the door. Visit our website or the library to get tickets beforehand.

- 10 Skills for Better Posting and Responding on Social Media 6-7 p.m. Learn how to contribute to a less angry and less divisive conversation online while still getting your point across.

- 12 Reader's Circle Book Club 10:30 a.m. in the Large Meeting Room.

- 14 Solar Eclipse Viewing 10-11a.m. Max eclipse is at 10:36 a.m. Watch the eclipse from the library! Special glasses provided while supplies last.

- 14 Giant Tic Tac Toe 10-3 p.m. Play giant eclipse themed tic tac toe in the children's area!

- 18 Fiber Arts Club 1 p.m. Come knit, crochet, weaving, bracelet making, whatever you like!

- 18 Family Art Day 11-5 p.m. in the Children's Activity Room

- 18 Teen Craft Day 3:45-5:30 p.m. in the Teen Room.

- 24 Meditation Class at 5 p.m. Learn how to initiate meditation for peace and personal practice.

- 26 Tarot Club 3 p.m. Teens and up are welcome to join this group and learn all things tarot. October's theme is "scary" cards.

- 28 Teen Halloween Party 1-3 p.m. Wear your costume, play games, decorate spooky cookies, and take part in a Mario Kart Wii tournament!

- ASL Class every Wednesday at 5 p.m. Come learn the basics of American Sign Language!

- Tuesday Books and Babies 10 a.m. a special storytime for babies and toddlers

- Tuesdays is Magic the Gathering from 4-6 p.m.

- Thursdays Preschool Storytime 10 a.m.

- Thursdays Tai Chi at 5 p.m.

- Fridays Tai Chi at 10 a.m.

- October is Rescue Pet Month! We are partnering with Teller County Pet Food Pantry for a pet food drive! Please bring any kind of dog or cat food to the library. There will be a collection box in front of the stairs on the main floor. Let's gather 500lbs of food to donate! FMI 719-687-9281.

- Ute Pass Historical Society's gift shop at 231 E. Henrietta Ave is open 10-noon Wednesday, 11-3 p.m. Thursday through Saturday. The 2024 Ute Pass Edition and 2024 Green Mountain Falls Editions are available for sale \$14+tax. FMI 719-686-7512 or [utepasshistoricalsociety.org](http://utepasshistoricalsociety.org).

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