



UTE COUNTRY NEWS

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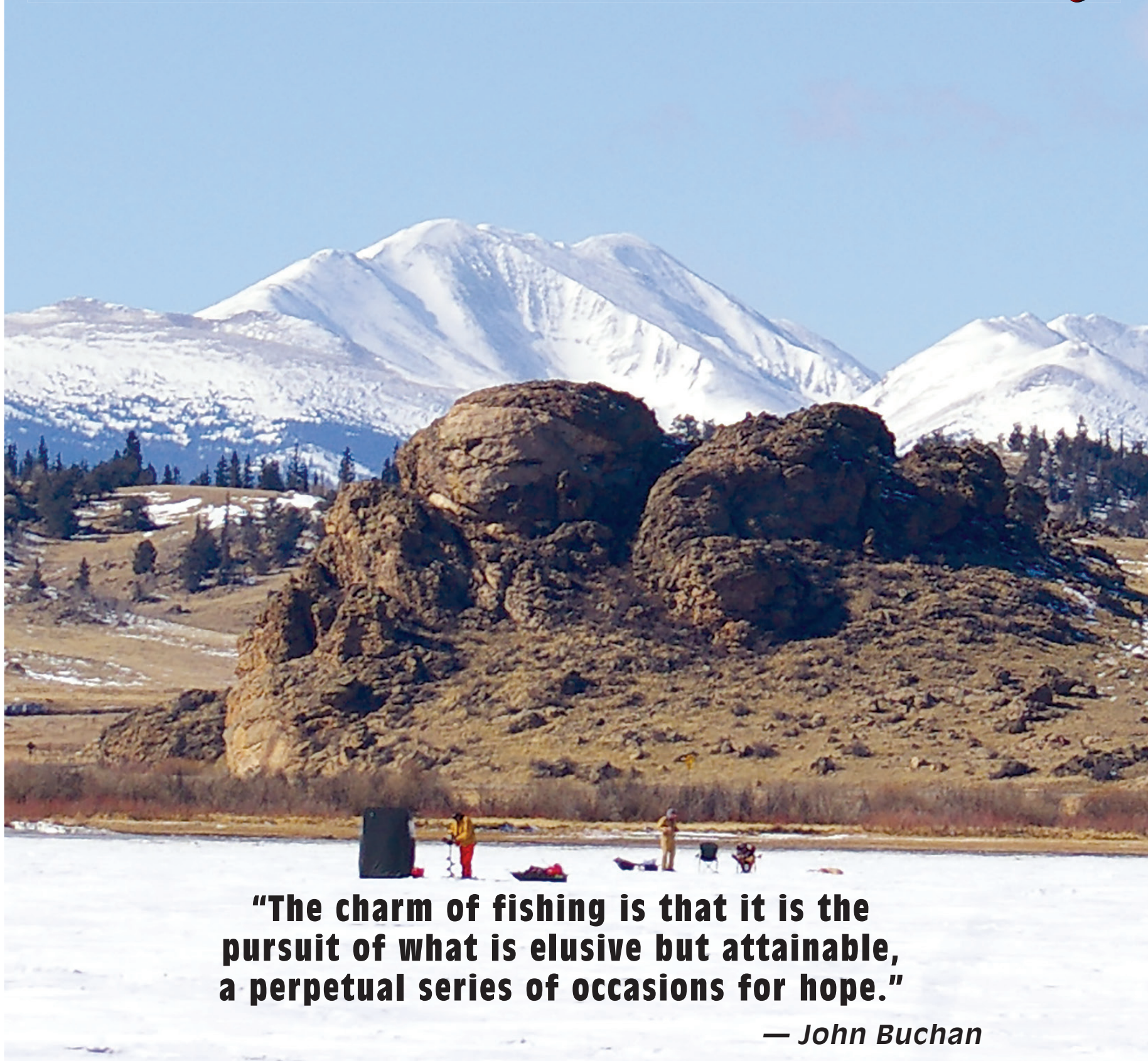
Putting the "unity" back in community™

February 2024

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

Vol. 16, No. 2

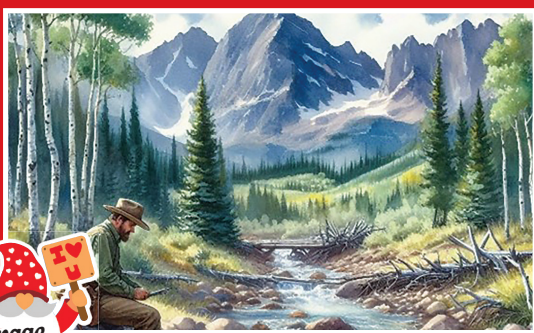
Welcome to Ute Country



"The charm of fishing is that it is the pursuit of what is elusive but attainable, a perpetual series of occasions for hope."

— John Buchan

PEEK INSIDE...



Dreams in a River of Gold



Florence Happenings



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On Deck

Jeff took our February cover photo back in February of 2013. Yes! There are things to do in February in Colorado and ice fishing is just one of them. We liked how the quote fit the photograph. Our February issue has many hopeful articles, please read on!

Those who truly enjoy fishing may enjoy reading *Florence Happenings* to find out about Florence Fly Fishing. Readers with a canine best friend will enjoy *Fitness on the Mountain's* "Wellness for you and your dog" as Lori explores deepening the connection between you and your dog. *Life Enhancing Journeys* provides sound advice for how to deepen your relationships. *Pharmgirl* shares the importance of CPR training in "Second Chances" by sharing her personal experiences administering CPR. We encourage everyone to read "Seeds of Hope" especially if you or a family member have served in the armed forces because it seems to be true that suicide rates are higher at higher elevation and also higher among those who have served. *Yes Dear Floral* will be a great resource for anyone seeking thoughtful Valentine's Day gifts and recognizes the importance of local economy!

We continue to seek a people-person aware of the definition of "deadline" who is looking to earn some extra money and make meaningful connections in Teller County. If that sounds like you, please stop in at Shipping Plus Mon-Fri 9-5:30 p.m., call us at 719-686-7587 or email utecountrynewspaper@gmail.com.

Do you have adorable photos of your pets? Give the one who loves you unconditionally a shout-out by sending us their photos. We are always seeking submissions for Critter Corner. Please email them to 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

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

Publishers:
High Pine Design
Jeff & Kathy Hansen
POB 753, Divide, CO 80814
719-686-7587
www.UTecountrynews.com
Utecountrynewspaper@gmail.com

Sales/Account Reps:
Feel free to call 719-686-7587 so we can find the sales representative in your area to best serve your needs. Flip Boettcher 719-429-3361

Writers:
Chuck Atkinson, Peggy Badgett, Dr. Bec, Flip Boettcher, Kathy Hansen, Lori Martin, Barbara Pickholz-Weiner, Mary Shell, Steven Wade Veatch

Contributors:
Ark Valley Humane Society, Charlotte Bumgarner, Josh Cowden, Jim Herlihy, Anna Miller, Rita Randolph, Matt Radcliffe, Steven Shepard, Ashlee Shields, SVL Animal Welfare Society, TCRAS

Critter Corner:
Submit photos to: utecountrynewspaper@gmail.com or PO Box 753, Divide, CO 80814

Publishers Emeritis: Carmon & Beverly Stiles

Cover Photo: Jeff Hansen

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First Class subscriptions are available for \$40 for 13 issues, or 6 issues for \$20.

Pharmgirl

Second chances

by Peggy Badgett

Living in the middle of nowhere, surrounded by miles of soybean and corn fields, introduced me to the true meaning of community. Fresh from the Chicago suburbs, we were a young family unschooled in the ways of rural life. We relied on our neighbors' wisdom heavily. One day I needed a cup of flour, the next advice on thistle control. Help was always available. We returned the favor whenever we could, cheerfully answering summons to round up errant heifers or drive a neighbor to the emergency room after his plow unearthed a hive of angry bees (that's a story for next month!) Even though we lived far from urgent medical care, I felt confident I could handle most emergencies.

During my research career, I was a trained first aid responder for our building. Back then, mechanics openly displayed calendars of shapely women brandishing wrenches and suggestively draped over vehicles. Wolf whistles and ogling were acceptable behavior. Occasionally one of men would pass me in the hallway and clutch at his chest, grinning wickedly. I would simply threaten to kick him firmly before beginning mouth-to-mouth just to make sure he wasn't faking it. My first aid skills were never required during those urban years. That changed after our move to the country.

One morning, at the fitness facility where I taught cycling classes, the receptionist raced through the hallways of the center calling for help. She guided me to a man laying among the weight machines. Years of training kicked in. Wrestling his purple tongue away to force air into his lungs and hearing ribs crack as I compressed his heart was nightmarish. It seemed like hours before the sirens wailed their approach. He died.

Fast forward years later. My oldest, Alex, became obsessed with snowboarding. I assumed the role of ski mom, hauling a van full of high school boys to local hills once a week. The boys, filled with youthful male bravado, headed to the terrain parks as soon as we arrived. I headed to green runs to practice falling. While I careened down the slopes with pillows stuffed in my snow pants and tried to dodge snow the boys sprayed at me, I wondered why I didn't just drink hot chocolate in the lodge. But I was stubborn. When the operators shut the hill down and the lights off, we all met back in the parking lot. My crew of sweaty teenagers threw their wet gear in the back, devoured snacks from the cooler, and relived the highlights of the night. I adjusted the driver's seat to ease the pain from my bruises and drove us all home.

One week, a desperate telephone call from one of my friends sent our snowboarding plans spinning. Apologizing to the boys, I traded an evening of face-planting to listen to her relationship crisis at the high school basketball game. Meanwhile, in our competitor's town, a couple debated whether to attend the game or listen to it on the radio. All four of us arrived at the school simultaneously and stood in line to pay admission. Just as I handed over my crumpled dollar bills, the man behind me crumpled to the ground. I wanted to run away. But I knew I wouldn't get very far in my high-heeled boots. Instead, I threw my coat on the floor, knelt beside him, and asked in a surprisingly calm voice to no one in particular, "What do we have here?" The man's eyes rolled up into their sockets. He was unresponsive. I heard someone call 911 as my fingers searched for a pulse. His carotid was silent. No air passed between his blue lips.

My recent American Heart Association recertification was fresh, especially the old Bee Gee's song "Staying Alive" we had thumped our mannequins in time with. I placed my hands in position.



Peggy keeps her heart healthy by climbing the Manitou incline.

As we positioned the pads, the fact that our patient was wearing a Green Bay Packer sweatshirt suddenly hit me. I was a Bear's girl trying to save a fan of our archrival.

Adrenaline coursed through my body, powering my arms and shoulders to press and release. After a few moments, my friend's husband arrived with the school's defibrillator. As we positioned the pads, the fact that our patient was wearing a Green Bay Packer sweatshirt suddenly hit me. I was a Bear's girl trying to save a fan of our archrival. Irony. Several folks offered to take over, but I shook my head fiercely. I wasn't about to lose this one.

The machine took its reading and delivered the shock. I continued compressions as we waited for the paramedics.

I was so into the zone that I almost burst into a chorus of that horrible song — which would have sent everyone running — when the man's wife seized my arm. Our patient's eyelids fluttered open, and a smile crept over his face. I grinned back as the ambulance crew arrived and took over. He didn't want to go to the hospital and miss the game. They strapped him in anyway. His wife gave me a bear hug before climbing into the ambulance.

Both of us received second chances that fateful night, when a chain of seemingly random events threw us together. I regained confidence as a first aid provider, and he scored extra years with his family. We kept in touch. Sadly, my ability to respond to emergencies did not improve my snowboarding skills; I continued to flounder on the icy Midwest hills.

Peggy Badgett is an artist and writer. Her website is pharmgirl.org; she can be reached at coloradopharmgirl@gmail.com.

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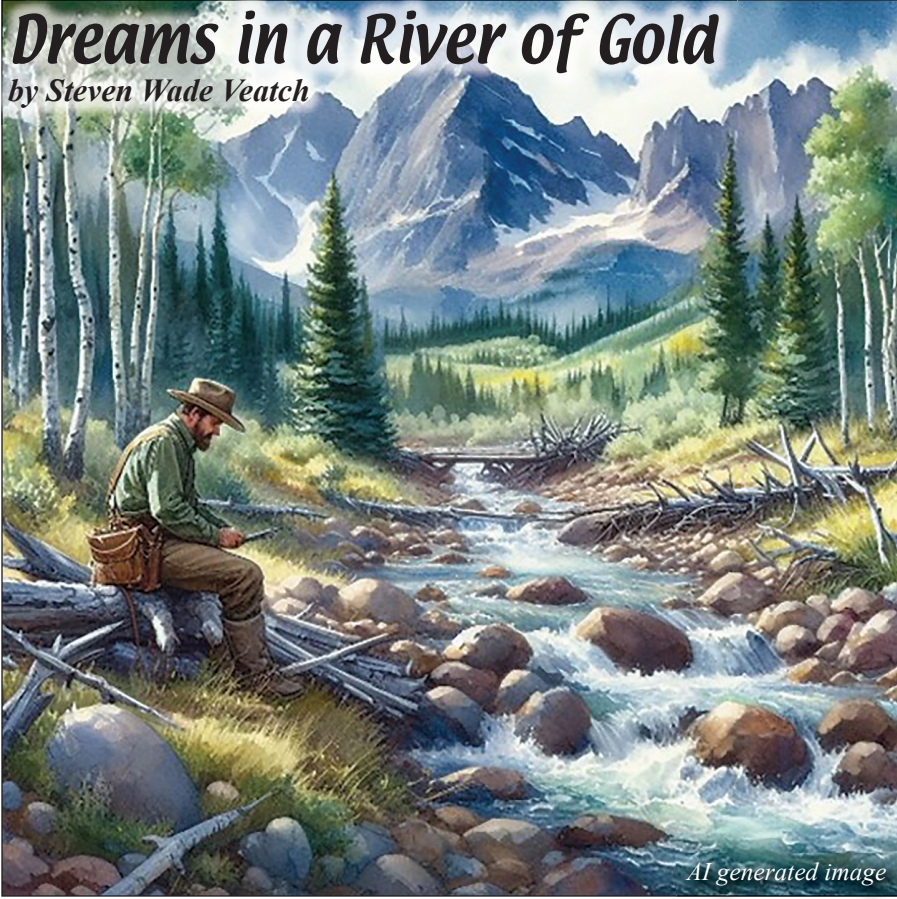
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*Beside the meandering stream,
a prospector worked his gold pan
while water tumbled over
smooth granite boulders.*

*Here the mountain stream
grew deeper in its channel
and formed pools, a likely place
for gold to settle.*

*The prospector tirelessly shoveled,
sifted, screened, and panned—
then picked gold nuggets
from the black sand in his pan.*

*Laboring by the stream, he knew why
he left home, saying goodbye—
swapping his life for one on the frontier;
a life of hardship, danger, and brutal work.*

*The reason was clear when he bedded down
by a crackling campfire, under a cold
sky filled with stars and a half-moon.
As he slept, next to the stream,
the aspens whispered dreams
making a strike, taming a new land,
and building the West.*

Adopt Me *by TCRAS*

Baklava

Baklava is a 1-year-old, spayed female, domestic short hair grey in color. She is a shy girl but has a heart of gold and will make someone a wonderful kitty if given time. Baklava came from a house with a lot of cats and is slowly learning to trust people. Once she realizes you'll pet her, she won't let you stop! She likes having a safe place to call her own and is learning from TCRAS staff that a lap can be a safe place! If you have patience to give her time to come out of her shell, she'll be such a sweet addition to your family! Call 719-686-7707 to set up a time to meet her.

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

Better brain health in 2024

by Jim Herlihy

Alzheimer's disease is expected to impact nearly 13 million Americans by 2050, including 76,000 Coloradans today, according to the Alzheimer's Association. So, consider there are steps you can take yourself to maintain and improve your cognitive function.

Research has shown lifestyle changes like improving diet and exercising regularly have helped drive down death rates from cancer, heart disease and other major diseases. These same lifestyle changes may also reduce or slow your risk of cognitive decline, which is often a precursor to Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia.

"There is increasing evidence to suggest that what is good for the heart is good for our brains," says Jeff Bird, executive director of the Alzheimer's Association of Colorado. "Keeping our brains healthy is not something we should worry about only as we get older. It should be a life-long effort."

Healthy brain tips

Looking for tips on how to protect your cognitive health? Here are several ideas borne from research supported by the Alzheimer's Association:

- **Manage your blood pressure** — People treated by FDA-approved medications to a top (systolic) blood pressure reading of 120 instead of 140 were 19% less likely to develop mild cognitive impairment, according to a study led by researchers at Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center. Those people also had fewer signs of damage on brain scans, and there was a possible trend toward fewer cases of dementia.
- **Check your hearing** — Hearing loss is present in 65% of adults over age 60, according to researchers. This study looked at a subgroup of older adults with hearing loss who were at higher risk for cognitive decline (about 25% of the total study population). This study showed that those participants at highest risk for cognitive decline who utilized hearing aids and hearing counseling for three years cut their cognitive decline in half (48%).
- **Get vaccinated** — Getting an annual flu vaccination was associated with a 40% decrease in the risk of developing Alzheimer's disease over the next four years, according to researchers from The University of Texas' McGovern Medical School who found that even a single flu vaccination could reduce the risk of Alzheimer's by 17%.
- **Go with your gut** — 16% of the world's population struggles with constipation — more among older adults due to fiber-deficient diets, lack of exercise and the use of certain medications. Researchers found that bowel movements that are three days or more apart, (might be constipation) were associated with 73% higher odds of subjective cognitive decline and long-term health issues like inflammation, hormonal imbalances and anxiety/depression.
- **Cut back on "ultra-processed" foods** — People who consume the highest amount of ultra-processed foods have a 28% faster decline in global cognitive scores — including memory, verbal fluency, and executive function — compared to those with lower consumption, according to research involving half a million people living in the UK. High consumption was defined as more than 20% of daily caloric intake. Ultra-processed foods are those that go through significant industrial processes and contain large quantities of fats, sugar, salt, artificial flavors/colors, stabilizers and/or preservatives.
 - Examples include sodas, breakfast cereals, white bread, potato chips, and frozen foods, such as lasagna, pizza, ice cream, hamburgers and fries.
- **Get vaccinated (part 2)** — Getting a vaccination against pneumonia between the ages of 65 and 75 reduced Alzheimer's risk by up to 40% according to a Duke University's Social Science Research Institute study.
- **Be social** — That's right. Add "hang out with friends" and "have fun" to your to-do list. For example, enroll in a dance class with a friend. Alzheimer's researchers are now looking into whether increased socialization, along with a "cocktail" of lifestyle interventions including improved diet, exercise, cognitive stimulation and self-monitoring of heart health risk can protect cognitive function. The Alzheimer's Association's U.S. study to protect brain health

through lifestyle intervention to reduce risk (U.S. POINTER) is a two-year clinical trial that hopes to answer this question and is the first such study to be conducted of a large group of Americans nationwide.

"There's currently no certain way to prevent Alzheimer's and other dementias," said Bird, "but there is much to be gained by living a healthy lifestyle and adopting brain health habits that you enjoy."

Alzheimer's by the numbers:

- More than 6.7 million people in the U.S. are living with Alzheimer's or other forms of dementia in 2023 — 55 million people around the world

• About 1 person in 9 (11.3%) in the U.S. age 65 and older has Alzheimer's dementia

• More than 76,000 Coloradans are living with dementia

• Approximately two-thirds of those living with Alzheimer's are women

• People of color are more likely to develop Alzheimer's: Black Americans are twice as likely as whites while Hispanics are 50% more likely than whites

For those with questions about memory loss or personality changes that may be associated with Alzheimer's or other forms of dementia, the Alzheimer's Association has a free Helpline staffed 24/7 by trained professional staff members: 800-272-3900.

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Praise Mountain Fuels Reduction Project set to begin thinning

by Josh Cowden

The South Park Ranger District on the Pike-San Isabel National Forests & Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands will implement the Praise Mountain Fuels Reduction Project in support of the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service 10-year Wildfire Crisis Strategy. The specific area of this project is approximately 1700 acres of National Forest lands along County Roads 98 and 403 southwest of Lake George in Park County, Colorado. The project is expected to last approximately five months. Hand thinning by crews will likely go through the summer or fall.

The primary goal of the project is to reduce the intensity of fire behavior and increase the likelihood of successful fire suppression adjacent to private lands and along potential control lines. Another important goal is increasing the resistance to epidemic levels of mountain pine beetle and other pests. Both mechanized and hand thinning will be utilized. Hand thinning slash will be piled and burned during snow cover. Thinning reduces the poten-

tial for fires to spread from the surface to treetops and then from tree to tree. Many of these areas will be prescribed burned in the future to reduce surface fuel loading and reduce fire intensity.

"This work will aid in reducing the intensity of fires and create healthier forest conditions across an important area of the district," said South Park District Ranger Josh Voorhis. "Mechanical thinning sustains healthy forest ecosystems while also protecting the lives and properties located within our communities."

Smaller diameter logs from mechanized thinning will be decked onsite for sale as public firewood later. Larger logs will be hauled off site for lumber production. Expect additional truck traffic during log removal. Small areas of National Forest will not be accessible during actual operations.

FMI, please contact the South Park Ranger District at 719-836-2031. Follow us on Facebook and X #LKGeoMitigation for the latest information.

Seeds of Hope

by Ashlee Shields

Cultivating Resilience, Preventing Suicide is a transformative event dedicated to fostering strength, understanding and community support. This symposium aims to plant seeds of resilience, providing insights, resources and compassionate discussions on preventing suicide and nurturing a collective sense of hope. Through expert speakers, personal stories of triumph, and interactive sessions, we invite you to be part of a movement that grows resilience, breaks down stigma, and promotes a future filled with hope. Let's cultivate a community where each individual is a vital seed in the garden of collective well-being. Together, we can

sow seeds of hope and build a resilient, supportive foundation for a brighter tomorrow. The Teller County Mental Health Alliance (TCMHA) is uniting with the community to bring hope and suicide awareness in our community.

The next annual TCMHA suicide awareness symposium will be taking place on March 1, from 8-3:30 p.m. at the Woodland Park Community Church. Due to demand and a full house last year, we are expanding to a bigger facility with breakout sessions and activities.

FMI or to sign up email Ashlee.Shields@ppchp.org.

The Old Homestead Museum winter hours

by Charlotte Bumgarner

The Old Homestead, once a grand brothel for the rich men of the Gold Rush Era in Cripple Creek is excited that the Ice Castles are near our location, so pleased to announce some special winter hours. We will be open Friday, Saturday and Sunday each week, hours Friday and Saturday noon until 6 p.m. with Sunday 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. The normal admission of \$7 per adult will apply. Please note our opening does depend on the weather; we do not want our ladies to drive on bad roads.

The amazing Ice Castles are one great reason to visit Cripple Creek, so please enjoy that special attraction but take some time to wander about a block to Myers Ave and visit the museum for more local fun and flavor. Guides will share many facts and fun stories. Maybe if you are quiet and

think hard enough you will even see and hear the girls' laughter and merriment.

The Old Homestead began as an exclusive brothel in 1896 during Colorado's Gold Rush and is today a museum that paints a picture of Colorado's history for tourists from around the world, thanks to a group of local ladies dedicated to protecting the historic building for future generations.

If you would like to learn more about Cripple Creek's colorful history and the part that The Old Homestead played in it come and visit the museum and find out how you can become a piece of Cripple Creek's history by helping with this important project. The Old Homestead Museum 719-689-9090 or contact Charlotte Baumgartner at 719-689-2485 or cb4mile@hughes.net.

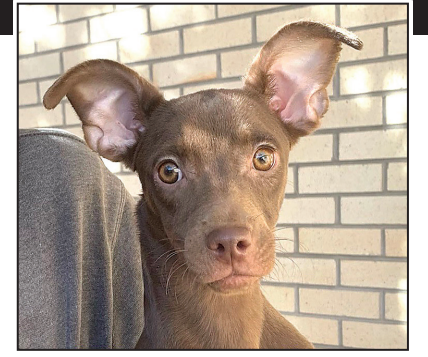
Adopt Me

by SLV Animal Welfare Society

Darla

This is Darla, a 7-month-old light brown, spayed min pin mix. She has an identical sister, Trixie, who also needs a home. They love attention and are great with children. They are somewhat house trained. If interested, please call 719-587-9663 (woof).

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



A Look Inside the Artist Dawn Kaseoru, Impasto Artist

by Mary Shell

The past few months I have been covering the unknown, or new artists to see what brings them to where they are now and what they see in their future. What makes a person become an artist is still a question to be answered. For whatever reason, it will include self-expression and personal experiences.

I found Dawn on Facebook when she posted the aspen trees featured here. The painting caught my eye; bold, colorful and thick with texture. They say impasto artists cross the line between painting and sculpture.

How long have you been painting impasto?

I have been an artist for most of my life. Have dabbled in many different mediums, you might say I am kind of a "Jack of all mediums, Master of none."

I took an Impasto class in July of 2023 and was immediately hooked! And after really getting into the flow of creating these past few months, I am totally addicted to it!

What made you choose this medium?

I am a very tactile person, so if something has texture or vibrant color, I always reach out to touch it. I used to create large scale 2'x4' pieces of fused glass aspen trees. I designed the trees with fruit (small pieces of colored glass) and would fuse them together, creating a very tactile piece of art. I would travel and sell my art at fine art festivals all over Colorado and Arizona. We moved to Sedona because it was an artistic community, and I thought my art would sell great there. Everyone loved it, but the tourists didn't want to pay to ship it or carry it home with them. When I did the fine art festivals in Colorado, I was in their town and people had no qualms about buying it. Lesson learned there!...

I stumbled upon (or was divinely guided) to a lady who taught impasto style painting... I was very intrigued and decided to take a few classes from her. It was so fascinating. I fell in love with creating all that thick texture! I have always been very detailed when I draw or paint and Impasto is such a spontaneous method, that I struggled at first but have been able to loosen up and enjoy going with the flow!

What calls you to create?

Being in nature, I want to capture it, especially aspen trees and rivers or lakes. Growing up in Summit County, we were surrounded by nature, that is where I feel most at peace, and painting brings me to

that happy place!

I see you use vibrant colors in your creations. Could you explain how color affects you?

I love color! I want the colors and the texture to jump off the canvas and grab someone's attention, so much so that they reach out to touch the piece! I paint colors as close to Mother Nature's palette most of the time, but there are occasions where I will add or exaggerate the colors on the piece I am painting. I have also become infatuated with the use of neutral colors, it is a bit more challenging, and the end results have been amazing.

Who inspires you?

My Aunt Kay, my sixth-grade art teacher, Mrs. Jones, and artist friends have inspired me to try new things, and they were always so encouraging. I am so grateful for all of them. I find nature also lends a big hand in inspiration...I see trees, clouds or mountain scenes and I immediately look to see how I would paint it. So fun to dig deeper into arranging a scene and have it turn out better than I expected, most of the time!

Do you experiment with other mediums?

ABSOLUTELY! Love working with fused glass, photography, flowers and I enjoy drawing with charcoal and pastels. Played with clay and a wheel; my pottery didn't turn out great, not something I would be able to make a living from, but it was fun! Art school opened my eyes to so many different mediums, and my favorite in school was photography and painting with Gouache. I also create fairy gardens out of natural materials I find on hikes or along rivers.

What is your favorite subject?

I am completely in love with aspen trees. They have so much character and the colors they produce are stunning. I love capturing the personalities of the trees.

Is there something you would like to try next?

I think my next thing to try will be Plein Aire painting with acrylics. I think I will wait until it warms up a bit before I try that, though!

What's in the future for you?

Hmmm...I guess Divine Spirit only knows! I find myself being led, whether it is to people or places that bring me to the next steps in my journey. I am leaning



towards just creating Impasto art and selling it at art shows. I loved doing shows with my fused glass and I really miss being out there with fellow artists. Now that my husband is retired, we can travel out of state to do juried art shows, so that will be a nice mix!

Is there something you would like to say about yourself to the readers?

I am a mom of three wonderful, now adults, and two dogs. My husband and I have known each other for over 40 years. We were high school sweethearts and then went our own ways, only to be reunited and were married 30 years ago. Unable to have children, we turned to adoption and have been so blessed to have all of them in our lives.

Ever since I was a little girl, I was always making things out of sticks, leaves, fabric, and boxes. I would paint scenes or make them into rooms for my dolls. I loved to draw, color with crayons and colored pencils, paint with watercolors, acrylics, and pastels.

I took photography in High School and pursued the dream of being a photographer right after High School. Had a job with National School Studios taking photos of children. Found out that was NOT my calling. I much preferred taking nature photos, especially using black and white film.

I was given an opportunity to learn how to airbrush T-Shirts for tourists by painting scenes of Colorado on them. I sat in the front window of a T-shirt shop right next to Casa Bonita in Denver and then also, worked in a crystal shop in Estes Park, sitting in the front corner window.

I really wanted to pursue art and it was then that I decided to attend Colorado Institute of Art. I received an associate degree in visual communications. After graduation, I was the Graphic Design Coordinator for North Jeffco Parks and Recreation and worked for an art magazine, creating their catalog of artists and their work for collectors to browse.

I have worked with many mediums and my favorite up until Impasto, was fused glass. I had a glass studio for about 12 years. Started two different art galleries and working studios where I taught fused glass.

I am happy to be in Cañon City! Brings me closer to family and friends and am discovering the art community here is closely knit...Love it!

Learn more about Dawn on Facebook.

You may contact Mary Shell on Facebook or creatingfromthesoul@yahoo.com.

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Mountain Artists encourage student artists with show and scholarship

by Rita Randolph

The Mountain Artists of Teller County are getting ready for the annual Student Art Show that will be hanging in the Galleria of the Woodland Park Public Library from April 13 through May 1, 2024. This show is open to all middle school, high school, private schools and home-schooled students in all of Teller County. For the first time, the Lake George Charter School will be included!

The show has been a showcase for our highly talented young people and the public has expressed great surprise and appreciation for it for many years now. Everyone is encouraged to come see the art during the three weeks it will be on display.

Teller County students must be 18 years or younger as of January 1, 2024. Middle school students can win 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place ribbons and high school students can win ribbons plus cash which total approximately \$1500 every year. Accepted categories are: Oils, Acrylic, Watercolor, Drawing, Mixed Media, Digital Design, and Photography.

Students in the area wishing to enter

the Student Art Show must go online to www.themountainartists.org and print out the application (at the bottom of the page) and bring the filled-out application to the Woodland Park Library by Friday, April 12 between 3 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.

Awards will be presented on Saturday, April 20, starting at 2 p.m. at the Library (downstairs). Winners must be present to receive monetary awards (or have a parent or teacher present to accept).

Additionally, the Mountain Artists award a scholarship(s) every year to selected students who will be attending higher education in the Fall of 2024 with some emphasis or major in the area of art. Interested students can get an application with details or requirements also from the website mentioned above.

Originally established in 1989 the purpose of the Mountain Artists is to promote, encourage, support, and assist in the making and showing of visual arts of persons of all ages in the Ute Pass, Teller County and surrounding areas. Contact person: Kyla Woodruff 909-684-9426, Sharon Dernbach 719-648-3245.

Pikes Peak Pride Mardi Gras Masquerade Fundraiser for 2024 Pride Festival

by Matt Radcliffe

Pikes Peak Pride is thrilled to announce its upcoming event, "The Pikes Peak Pride Mardi Gras Masquerade." This exclusive fundraiser is set to be a highlight of the Pikes Peak Pride 2024 festivities, taking place in the heart of downtown Colorado Springs. The event promises an evening of mystery and opulence, channeling the vibrant energy of Bourbon Street into a grand masquerade ball dedicated to supporting the annual LGBTQIA+ community Pride Festival.

Guests are invited to don their most elaborate masquerade attire and immerse themselves in an atmosphere of intrigue and grandeur. The ballroom will be transformed into a luxurious spectacle, featuring awe-inspiring performances including fire breathers, aerial artists, and contortionists, each act crafted to make the night an unforgettable experience.

The evening will also offer a range of gourmet delights, signature cocktails, craft beer, and fine wines, with every aspect of the event designed to contribute to the fundraising goals of Pikes Peak Pride.

Attendees' participation will directly support the LGBTQIA+ community and the eagerly anticipated Pride Festival.

This takes place Fat Tuesday, February 13 from 6-10 p.m. at Pinery at the Hill 775 W Bijou St. in Colorado Springs. The Masquerade Ball is more than just a celebration; it is a crucial fundraiser for Pikes Peak Pride. The event offers a unique opportunity for community members to come together in support of diversity, unity and the LGBTQIA+ community's journey toward full civil and social equality.

Executive Director of Pikes Peak Pride states, "This event is a cornerstone in our efforts to bring people together in celebration of who they are. The Masquerade Ball is not just a fundraiser, it's a beacon of hope and unity, demonstrating the strength and resilience of our community. It's an opportunity for us to gather, celebrate our achievements, and plan for a future where everyone is accepted and loved for who they are."

Tickets can be purchased at <https://givebutter.com/c/PikesPeakPrideMasquerade>.

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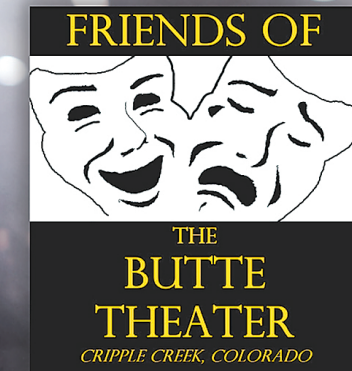
King

King has been with the shelter since December 2022. He's our longest stay resident and we'd love nothing more than to see him in his forever home this month! King needs to be your one and only pet. He is also working on his separation anxiety; it takes him some time to feel comfortable in a new home. He would love a family where he can go to work with you or you work from home with him. King is currently in an awesome foster home where he is making slow progress with his separation anxiety. His foster mom says, "King is super smart, super silly, playful, sweet, and curious. He is a quick learner with obedience training. He has learned several voice commands and some hand signals. He is the best snuggler ever! He will scoot right up next to you. He likes to bury himself in pillows and blankets. He LOVES to go for walks! He also loves to eat. He is very well behaved in the house. He does not get into things he is not supposed to." If you'd like to meet King, please give us a call 719-395-2737.

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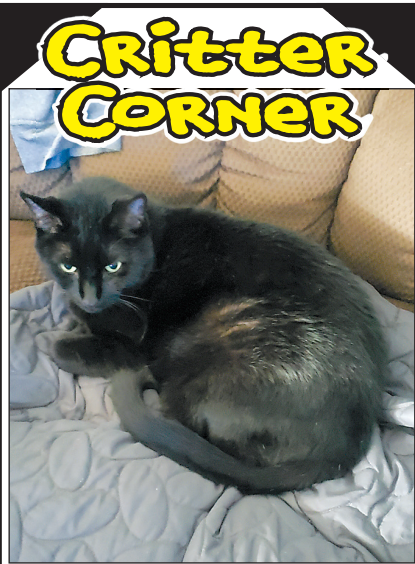
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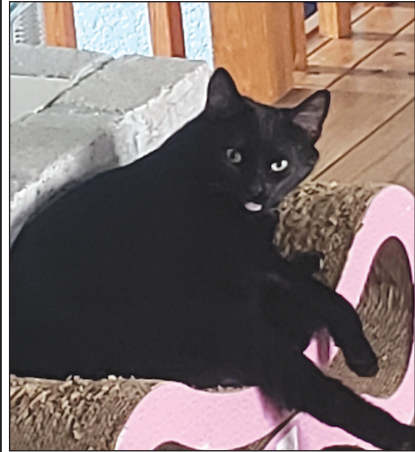
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The Shadow Mountain Detectives

The last case

by Gilrund the Historian

Jerry called the Shadow Mountain Detective Club to order and asked, "Does anyone have something we need to investigate?"

It was quiet. No one spoke for a while, for there was good reason. It was going to be the last meeting of the Shadow Mountain Detective Club. Sally's family was moving away to Kansas. Her Dad got a better paying job there. They were leaving at the end of school. Sally just sat and said nothing. Anne and Willy were quiet too, for the same reason. They were moving, too. Their Dad was transferring to Tennessee to help run the business there. That left Jake and Jerry. They had tried to get some of the other kids to join the club, but they couldn't find anyone that was interested.

It seemed that video games and movies on the TV were more interesting than helping people with mysterious problems.

The quiet meeting quickly ended when Anne and Willy's Dad rushed in the door of the treehouse and looked at his two children saying, "Come on, kids, you've got to help me find my computer."

Then to the other there he said, "Sorry, kids. But if I don't find my computer, I'll lose my transfer and my promotion."

With that, he ducked out of the treehouse door and along with Willy and Anne started back to their house up the block. As they walked their Dad asked the two kids if they had seen his computer anywhere in the house. They answered that they hadn't.

"Well, Mom and I need your help looking for it. It has to be somewhere in the house. I seldom take it to work at the office," he went on, "I just don't understand where it could be, if not on my desk."

When they arrived at home, the whole family started searching all through the house for the computer. After an hour, they still hadn't found the computer.

It was time for lunch and as Mom prepared the meal, Dad, Anne and Will sat at the kitchen table and talked about where they had last seen the important computer.

Willy stood up from the table and walked back into Dad's study. He just had to take another look. He walked slowly around the room looking at everything that might give him a clue as to where the computer might have gone.

It was then he noticed that the only window in the room was unlocked. He looked at the lock on the top of the bottom frame and saw that there was a tiny hole just under the lock.

Willy looked closer and decided that if he had a thin metal rod, he could push it through that hole and open the lock, then the window.

Willy ran back to the kitchen and called out to his Dad, "Dad, did you know that there is a tiny hole in the window frame? I

think that someone could push a metal rod through it and unlock the lock, then open the window."

Dad stood up from his chair and with Willy and Anne following, walked to his study. He went straight to the window and looked at the frame and the lock.

"You're right, son," he said, "I think someone has stolen my computer. But why? You can buy one for next to nothing and no one can get into it without my password. It doesn't make sense to me."

Mom was at the doorway watching and said, "What about your competition, Ron? Do you think he would do something like this to get the transfer and promotion? There is a raise in it, too, you know."

"I don't want to think that Ron would do something like this, but I'll do some checking at the office," replied Dad as he started for the door.

"Can I go with you, Dad?" asked Willy, "Perhaps I could be of some help."

"Me, too, Dad," said Anne, "I want to help, too."

"We're pretty good at investigating, you know," added Willy.

Dad smiled and said, "Okay, come on." The three headed for the car and were soon gone without eating the lunch that Mom had just prepared for them all.

It was a short trip to Dad's office. Soon they were in the office building entering the offices of Dad's work. The secretary was surprised to see all three of them as they entered but smiled and waved to the kids. They had been there several times before. Willy and Anne split up and appeared to just wander around the offices looking at the several people that were working there.

Willy walked into Ron's office. Ron smiled and waved as he looked at his computer screen and kept working.

Willy walked behind Ron's chair and glanced at the screen as though he was interested in what Ron was doing. But what he was really doing was looking for his Dad's computer.

He looked all around the room and noticed that there was a closet on the right side of the room.

"How can I get Ron out of the room long enough to look in that closet?" he thought.

Then he had an idea and walked out of the room to the secretary.

"Don't you get to have lunch?" he asked.

The secretary smiled and looked at the clock that hung on the wall behind her desk.

"Why, you're right. It is time for lunch," she said. Then, turning toward Ron's office, she called out, "Ron, it's time for lunch and you own me for losing that bet we made, remember?"

Ron looked up and noticed the time on his computer, then he said, "You're right, I do owe you lunch. I'll be right there."

Ron came out of his office and locked the door as he and the secretary left for lunch.

Anne came over to Willy and said, "What did you find?"

"A closet door in Ron's office where anything could be hidden, including Dad's computer."

"But he locked the door," said Anne, "How will we get in to look?"

Willy went into his Dad's office and said, "He's gone, Dad. But he locked the door so we can't get in to search."

Dad smiled and held up the key to his office as he said, "They are all the same." Dad walked out of his office heading toward Ron's office and unlocked the door. All three of them went inside as Willy went straight to the closet and opened the door to look inside.

Inside he found a jacket hanging on a hook and a filing cabinet. All the drawers were unlocked, but one.

Dad opened all the drawers and looked quickly inside to find only business paperwork. When he got to the locked drawer, he went to the secretary's desk and opened the top drawer. There he found a ring of keys which he took out and found the key that would unlock the last drawer.

Dad opened the locked drawer and there it was, his computer. He quickly took out the computer and took it to his office. As Willy and Anne watched, he downloaded all the information that was on the computer onto a thumb drive. Then he erased everything that was on the disc. He wrote something on the computer and put it back in the file drawer, closed and locked it again.

Dad looked at Willy and Anne grinning and said, "Old Ron is in for a big surprise. Let's go to lunch."

They went to a Famous Dave's Barbeque and got a table. After they had ordered their food, Dad smiled as he told the kids what he had done to his computer.

"Ron really wants my promotion and the transfer to Tennessee." He explained to the children, "I have taken everything that he wants off my computer, then I put on something special for him. You see, when he finally gets past my password and I'm sure that he will, the computer will automatically send an email to my supervisors telling them what he has done. I'm afraid it will cost him his job. The company will not keep someone that they cannot trust."

The kids sat and waited as their orders were placed on the table. Then Dad started talking again as they ate their food. "You know," Dad started, "I'm kind of sorry for the guy. But if he can't be trusted, then he is going to pay for his dishonesty. I hope you kids will learn from this and not follow Ron's example. If Ron had just kept doing his job, things would go alright for him. So, how's the ribs?"



Willy and Anne couldn't answer because their mouths were full of the good meat. So, they just smiled and kept chewing.

It was three days later that Ron finally broke the coded password and was brought into the leaders of the company to explain what he had done. He was given another chance. But he had to be very careful and do only what he was paid to do.

Willy and Anne were helping pack for the move to Tennessee and weren't able to go to the next club meeting. So, only Jerry, Jake and Sally were there.

"Is there anything that needs to be investigated?" Jerry asked when the meeting started.

Jake raised his hand and said, "I know that this is kind of old stuff, but I'd still like to know where the stream comes from that was in the case of that old rusty gun we found a while ago."

"Yeah, and all the weird things that happened afterward at the muddy place in the canyon where the old house had been. That was a really fun investigation," added Jerry.

"I don't know if I want to go there again," replied Sally. "I know that I wasn't there for the scary part. But do we really need to know where the stream comes from? Besides, Anne and Willy probably won't be able to go with us and I'd really like Anne to be with me if we go."

Jerry replied, "I'll ask them if they can come with us. If they can, will you come with us on one more adventure?"

Sally agreed and the meeting was over until Jerry could talk to Anne and Willy.

It was just the next day that Jerry was able to talk to Willy and asked if he and his sister would come for the search for the beginning of the stream. Willy said that they would be moving in five days, but they would come

along on the search.

The next day the kids all met at the stream and started walking up the hill that the stream flowed down. It wasn't a steep hill, so the kids made good time as they followed the small stream of water further and further up until the hill got really steep. Then it was a hard climb over big boulders and thick bushes and weeds.

Finally, Jake found what they were looking for. The place where the stream started. It wasn't what they expected because the stream came out of the closed opening of a mine. The mine had been closed up long ago with boards nailed across the opening. So, the water of the stream flowed under the boards and down the hill.

"Shall we see inside the mine?" asked Jake, "I'm sure that we can get these old boards off easily enough."

"Yeah, let's see what's inside. We might find lots of gold or silver," said Jerry.

Jake pulled on one of the boards and it came off the opening. Then Willy and Jerry pulled off other boards until the opening was clear of any of the old boards.

Willy and Jerry had their cell phones and turned on the flashlights in them as they started into the mine. The walls looked to be solid rock and the stream flowed down the middle of the floor of stone. On and on they walked, following the stream that flowed further and further back into the dark tunnel. Then they came to a small pond of water that sparkled like a Christmas decoration. Sally reached down and picked up some of the shining material and looked at it in the light of Willy's phone.

"Is this what I think it is?" asked Sally. "It looks like it to me," replied Jake, "But I'm no expert on rocks and stuff like that."

Jerry picked up some of the shiny rocks

and looked at them closely. "They don't look like what I have read about. They are too flat and shiny for me. What do you think, Willy?"

Willy took one of the stones and looked at it carefully. "I think you're right, Jerry. Too flat and shiny for gold or silver. Let's take some home and have our parents look at it and maybe they can tell us what it is."

The kids all took pockets full of the shiny rocks out of the mine and then on home to show their parents. When they met the next day in the treehouse, they all knew what the rocks were. "It's mica," announced Jerry after he had called the club to order. "My Dad says that there is a lot of it around here. But it is fun to look at and my Mom says that a lot of people use it to make decorations and stuff."

"My Dad says that some people collect it, too and then sell it to other collectors," added Sally.

"Well, my Dad told me never to go in that mine again. No matter what we found in it!" announced Willy as Anne nodded her head in agreement.

Jerry grinned and said, "Well I guess that was our last investigation as a club. But it was a fun one. We all got something to remember it with, too. So, I think that now that Willy and Anne and Sally are leaving, I say we go and have a malt and say good-bye until we meet again someday in the future."

The kids all agreed, left the clubhouse to walk to the malt shop and drink their final malt as a member of the Shadow Mountain Detective Club.

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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Florence Happenings

by Flip Boettcher

Worldwide Treasures

One thing you can say about Florence's historic downtown district is that it is always changing. Two shops we have come to know and love, Worldwide Treasures, owned by Harriet Graham, and MK's Unique Boutique, owned by Marilyn Kolstedt, have moved from their cramped store within another store to a much larger space. The new location at 202 West Main Street, across from the Rialto Theater and the Blue Spruce Gallery, will be called Worldwide Treasures.

The space is large enough that Graham will have 10 vendors plus her space as well as MK's Unique Boutique. All 10 spaces are full.

Graham's space, Worldwide Treasures, features one-of-a-kind custom jewelry with six American Indians and eight Anglo jewelers crafting the jewelry, Graham said. Graham has owned the Bad Boys Turquoise Mine in Cripple Creek since 1989 and has a good supply of turquoise specimens for jewelry and display.

The shop is also large enough that she will be able to display other rocks, gems and minerals as well. Graham also features American Indian pottery, paintings and Kachinas, spirit dolls.

MK's Unique Boutique features handmade items including hand stitched quilts and baby quilts; aprons, towels, and custom works; hard and soft scrubbies, dish cloths; and baby items. MK's also features seasonal items; wreaths and florals; glass angels; gift bags with oven mitt, towels and utensils; totes and zipper pouches; and much, much more.

Worldwide Treasures will be up and running by the first of February. Store hours are Tuesday to Saturday 10-4 p.m., closed Sunday and Monday. Phone 719-784-7434.

Plan on a visit to Worldwide Treasures at 202 West Main Street to see all the unique items they offer.

Market on the Ark

Farther east on Main Street is the newest shop to open in Florence at 122 East Main Street, Market on the Ark, which opened in January of this year.

Market on the Ark is owned by Jennifer Howard, and features antiques, collectibles, furniture with a specialty in miniatures and smalls, as well as antique real and costume jewelry.

There are four vendors in the store and all have been in Florence in various other stores over the last 10 years, said Howard. The store offers online auctions through Hibid, they accept consignment items and have bimonthly online sales.

Howard also owns 719 Estate Sales, so she now offers online sales and this new store front in addition to Estate Sales.

Market on the Ark is open seven days a week from 10-4 p.m. Phone 713-298-3250 or jenhow123@gmail.com.

Market on the Ark is inner connecting with the Antique Warehouse at 124 East Main Street, owned by Virginia Lindley, which features vintage and artful lighting and Western accouterments. They are open seven days a week from 10-4 p.m. Phone 719-372-1016 or mvh876@gmail.com.

Check out both shops; they offer some unique items.

Florence Fly Fishing

Continuing east on Main Street, on the corner at 132 East Main Street, one will find the recently opened Florence Fly



Jennifer Howard outside her new shop Market on the Ark. photo by Jennifer Howard

Cover: Ron doing what he loves best, fishing. photo by Ron VanValkenburg

Fishing, located inside Larry Nelson's Florence Antiques, owned by Ron VanValkenburg, better known as Ron Van.

Ron grew up fishing, he said, and was an insurance agent, a financial advisor and a recruiter before he became a part time independent guide and outfitter for shops in Telluride. Ron went to fishing school in Vail and said that the most useful thing he learned there was how to take a hook out of someone without hurting them. Over the years he has taken more than 200 hooks out of people, including himself!



Marilyn Kolstedt on the left and Harriet Graham in their new store Worldwide Treasures located at 202 West Main Street. photo by Flip Boettcher

Finally, Ron opened a full-sized fly fishing shop in Pueblo called Anglers Addiction, which he ran for about 13 years before retiring four or five years ago and closing the shop, he said, but he kept all of the shop inventory.

After his wife, who was selling the fishing supplies on e-bay, died last year, and not wanting to unload the inventory for a cheap price, Ron found Larry Nelson and opened the Florence Fly Fishing store inside Florence Antiques.

The shop is stocked with lots of excellently tied flies, rods and fly fishing equipment for the beginning to intermediate fisherman, according to Ron.

Fish become lethargic when it is cold, so this is not the best time of year to fish, but that will change come about April 1, and according to Ron, the best fly fishing in Colorado is from the Pueblo reservoir to Pueblo.

Since Ron is retired, he does not keep regular hours at Florence Fly Fishing, but Nelson is learning fast and the store is open Tuesday-Sunday 10-5 p.m. and maybe on Mondays. People can come in and shop without Ron being there and if they have questions or can't find what they want and Ron is not in the shop, they can call him. If he can't answer their questions over the phone, he will come into the shop to talk with them, he said. Phone 719-415-7266 or 719-569-1046.

If you are a fisherman and need supplies, Florence Fly Fishing at 132 East Main Street is the place to visit.



Fitness ON the Mountain

Optimal wellness for you and your dog

by Lori Martin

In past articles, I really did not have to work very hard to convince readers to strive for better health and wellness. We know better but oftentimes lack the desire, motivation or the time. The simple concept of eat healthier, move more does not just apply to us humans, though. More and more pet owners are exploring ways to improve their pet's quality of life, as well.

We're looking at the benefits of feeding our pets better quality foods. If you've been to any of our local pet stores lately, you probably were amazed at the assortment of brands on the shelf. Choosing the best food for our dogs and cats can be overwhelming.

Organizations such as Pet Food Advisor are helping to educate pet owners on the different brands available. Through government regulations and strict standards of testing, Pet Food Advisor alerts its community when a recall has been issued on a particular brand. This new information seems to be moving some pet owners away from commercial brand foods.

My personal take away regarding commercial dog foods is:

1. Feeding my dog well is expensive.
2. Not all dog foods are created equally.
3. Any brand can be subject to recall.
4. Kibble is the least absorbable food available.
5. Raw food diets are gaining more popularity but require more time and work.
6. The balance of nutrients in a raw food diet may be more difficult for the average owner to determine.
7. If we're feeling unsure about taking the leap to raw food diets the next step up from commercially processed foods is preparing/cooking our dog's food at home.

Yes, this is a lot to consider. The alternatives to commercially prepared foods can be quite overwhelming and expensive.

Quality food is only a part of the equation for improving the health and wellness for ourselves and for our pets. Mental stimulation, physical exercise and discipline are keys to our success as pet owners, as well.

As I embark on a new chapter of my life, both my dog and I, quickly realized we had some adjusting to do. Establishing a regular routine of exercise, healthy food choices and reducing stress helped us get our feet on the ground both mentally and physically speaking. Pondering the last few months, I realize how this process of grounding has helped us through our transition. I couldn't imagine having a better bond with my dog, Colt but, thanks to the following revelations we are more bonded than we have ever been.

1. When I get anxious, he gets anxious.
2. When I stay calm, he is calm.
3. When I am confident, he listens better.
4. When I am tired or overwhelmed, he takes advantage.

I'm not a dog trainer but, I am an expert in my dog and I believe what I've learned can help others. We all know people who struggle with their dog's behavior. Sometimes they counter bad behavior by trying to outsmart the dog or act out by over aggressively jerking on leashes or yelling to gain control over the dog. I have slipped into these behaviors myself, at times. Not only do these tactics not work, they can be self-defeating.

In this journey of ours there has been a lot of pondering, a good dose of grace and a very intense desire to constantly improve.

The solution was actually quite simple. When I am well, Colt is well. I am now more driven than ever to make sure I am well. Our quality of health and wellness needed to be optimized. As a fitness and wellness expert, I knew where to begin. Eat better, sleep better and pay more attention to movement. I make sure we have quality alone time and social time. Observing the process first hand, it was so obvious how



the subtleties of my body language, my posture, my breathing and my distractions had been affecting us both.

Lucky for me, I know exactly how to move forward in improving all the above. At the first hint of leash pull I ask myself:

1. What is going on with my mind right now?
 - Distraction
 - Confusion
 - Indecision
 - Fear
2. How did I sleep last night?
 - Trouble falling asleep
 - Trouble staying asleep
3. Did I skip a meal?
 - Protein
 - Carbs
 - Fat

When our minds and/or our bodies are compromised we don't present ourselves as confident, let alone energetic and ready for a fun adventure. Our pets don't even have to look at us to sense these changes, but somehow, they know.

The good news is, with practice, we have the ability to reverse negative body language thereby, enhancing our relationship with our loving pets. For those who have chronic pain or chronic medical conditions it is more difficult. I implore you to consider how our pets can help us improve those conditions, as well.

Take a moment to:

- Focus on our breath! Oxygenating our bodies works double duty to help us mentally and physically.
- Gradually, add movement, any kind of movement.
- Pay attention to the details of our surroundings.
- Gradually, increase movement.
- Pay attention to the details of our bodies.
- Continue breathing imagining our body becoming fully oxygenated.
- Envision ourselves in our best posture.
- Ask ourselves to describe our perfect walk with our dog.
- Loud voices or confident instructions?
- Stress and leash yanking or awareness and gentle corrections?
- Dragging our feet or whole body engagement in each stride?

In many ways, I want to call this dog-walking yoga but, it is so much more than that. I'm bonding with my pup, which creates an overall better experience, for sure. I am also, safer and more aware of my surroundings. I can gaze in front of me observing cracks in the sidewalk or branches on the path. I begin to use my peripheral vision to note and prepare for any surprises that might come from other directions such as, an off leash dog or wildlife or stranger approaching.

When my creative brain is fired up, I'm more productive, I solve problems. The colors, the sights, the sounds, the smells are all more vivid.

Most importantly, our dogs become more confident in themselves and with us as their leaders.

There you have a whole bunch of rea-

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Panning for Good

Exploring mountain cemeteries

by Dr. Bec

“In all of us there is a hunger; marrow-deep, to know our heritage — to know who we are and where we have come from. Without this enriching knowledge, there is a hollow yearning.”

— Alex Haley

I recently had the opportunity to go to Anglesey Island, Wales on a family history trip with my 87-year-old Dad and other family members. During this trip, soul-filling comfort seeped into me, filling a void I didn’t know I had. As I immersed myself in the lives and circumstances of those who came before me, I felt connected, it seemed I knew the land and was in a beautiful and powerful way, bound to my roots, my people.

What an exciting moment it was when Dad found his great grandfather’s headstone in Heneglwys parish/cemetery (see picture)! The headstone was made of beautiful, 500-million-year-old, grey Welsh slate. As a rock enthusiast, I enjoyed learning that my great grandfather’s brothers were slate makers. Welsh slate was and is used for a variety of purposes including roofing, landscaping, flooring and headstones and is considered the finest natural slate in the world. The gifts of the earth both in Wales and in Colorado mountain towns attracted those willing to work hard. Tragic deaths were part of this dangerous work and many lost their lives in the mines and quarries as did Hugh, one of my Dad’s Grandfather’s brothers who died when he fell off a slate cliff in 1893 leaving a wife and four children.

Upon returning home from Wales, the mysteries and intrigue of cemeteries — their early beginnings, stories of those buried there and the types of stones used as markers captured my imagination. There are many cemeteries near Colorado mountain towns that deserve our attention and appreciation. In this article, information about the Florissant Pioneer Cemetery and the Divide Cemetery will be explored.

Florissant Pioneer Cemetery

The Florissant Pioneer Cemetery is located at 634 County Road #421 (Upper Twin Rocks Road) in Florissant, Colorado. Over 291 people have been laid to rest in this beautiful, secluded valley surrounded by aspen and ponderosa pine trees, native grasses, shrubs, wildflowers and a variety of wildlife. The first legible grave marker in the cemetery is a granite marker of a child in 1874, four years after Judge James Castello built a Ute

Trading Post (1870) and in 1873 secured an official post office for the area. The Pikes Peak Historical Society is the current Trustee of the Florissant Pioneer Cemetery.

Wooden markers were often used to mark early graves when more permanent markers were not available or unaffordable. They were susceptible to extreme weather and fires which compromised the accuracy of cemetery records. Many unmarked graves exist in the historical section of the cemetery including graves of little children who likely succumbed to epidemics such as cholera, flu, tuberculosis and smallpox.

John Rakowski, President of the Pikes Peak Historical Society and a geologist, shared that headstones and monuments in the cemetery were crafted from a variety of rock types including sandstone, marble, granite and gneiss (a black and white metamorphic rock found in New England, Italy, New York and Colorado). A large, red sandstone monument similar to rocks in Garden of the Gods can be found in the cemetery along with commercially made headstones transported from the east coast.

Pioneers of all sorts and their families including miners, ranchers, merchants, railroaders, loggers, and soldiers have been laid to rest in the Florissant Pioneer Cemetery. Every year for Memorial Day and Veterans Day, members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 11411 from the Florissant area led by Commander Randy Ford, place a cross and a flag on soldier’s graves and conduct a ceremony. They recognize soldiers from the Civil War through the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars who are buried in the Florissant, Fourmile and Lake George Cemeteries.

I attended the Veteran’s Day ceremony, November 11, 2023, and was impressed with the peace that filled the cemetery and how respectfully those participating in and attending the ceremony treated that sacred space. I asked Tammy and Kent Bailey who were watching the ceremony if they had military family buried there. They said, “No,” so I asked what brought them out on such a cold and windy day. In essence, they shared, “Our veterans have given their lives for our freedom, we enjoy peace in our country and we can go about our daily lives without fear or intimidation from oppressive and violent regimes. We owe them so much.” We ended our conversation in agreement that it would be wonderful for citizens to be able to feel and internalize what we experienced that day.



Finding Great, Great Grandad in Bodffordd, Anglesey Island, Wales
L to R: Miriam Stay, Nathan Williams, Lary Williams, Becky Frazier



Grave Markers in Divide Cemetery (Colorado Yule Marble in forefront).

Divide Cemetery

The Divide Cemetery is located one-half mile north of Divide on the east side of County Road 5. This cemetery has a stunning view of the northwest side of Pike’s Peak and the graves are surrounded with tall pine and aspen trees. To the east of the cemetery, there are meadows with wildflowers, grazing sheep and cows, elk herds and a variety of mountain wildlife. It is a scenic, pastoral setting.

The Divide Cemetery is home to 224 graves and many unidentified ones marked by rocks, wood or metal temporary markers. Candy Shoemaker, a member of the volunteer committee who currently cares for the cemetery, used to dig graves in the Divide Cemetery with her husband Larry. She said they had to be cautious when digging in order to not disturb unmarked graves. In recent years, employees from the Cripple Creek/Victor mine helped solve the problem of lost graves by sharing their ground penetrating radar. The Divide Cemetery is currently cared for by the previously mentioned volunteer committee with support from the Highland Lakes ROMEOS and the Rocky Mountain 4H group.

The first person known to be buried in the Divide cemetery location was a man named White who died of pneumonia in his log cabin north of Divide during the harsh winter of 1883. Mr. White’s son, who was nine years old at the time, walked to a neighbor’s cabin to ask for something to eat. The neighbor, Marion Beard and others went to the White cabin and found the trapper dead. Mr. Beard donated an acre of land surrounding White’s grave for use as a cemetery.

A sort of comforting, yet a bit gruesome story was that Candy’s friend Bessie Helen Carroll (1900-1981), wanted to have her horse buried with her. So, she buried

her horse first and then Bessie was laid to rest in the same area when her time came. Other people in the Divide Cemetery were also buried with their favorite pets.

As for the geology of grave markers, white, smoky and rose quartz stones outline some graves and a few permanent headstones or memorials in the cemetery look to be made from Colorado Yule Mar-



Tammy and Kent Bailey

ble from Marble, Colorado. This marble (white with grey and tan veins) was used in the Lincoln Memorial and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Pikes Peak Granite and commercial headstones and monuments crafted from a variety of materials can also be found in the cemetery.

Taking time to learn about and explore these three cemeteries has connected me in meaningful ways to my biological family and my geographical home.

Cemetery Details

Florissant: Open every day
Full-time Florissant residents (808)16

continued on page 15

Yes Dear Floral

by Kathy Hansen

Jessica and Sean, owners of Yes Dear Floral are excited to celebrate their 3rd Anniversary this month as they opened February of 2021. It is no surprise given Jessica has been designing arrangements since she was 15 years old. They moved to Colorado Springs from Chicago seven years ago, where Jessica earned her degree from American Floral Art. She worked at a floral shop in Colorado Springs for a few years, then she and Sean decided to fill the need in Woodland Park so they moved up here to open the shop.

Yes Dear Floral is a full service floral boutique. One of the reasons for their success is that they source high-quality floral products. This is not what you find at your grocery store. Jessica boasts that her flowers last two weeks. Some of the reviews she has gotten indicate they can sometimes last three or four weeks! They will also deliver — local delivery is considered a 20-mile radius from their store but do call if you are not certain. While there may be a modest sur charge for greater distances, they have gone to Guffey, Manitou Springs, Cripple Creek and to any church in the area for weddings and funerals or special events.

In addition to amazing flowers, they also offer house plants, flowering plants (think Shamrocks for March) and gift baskets. Those gift baskets may be customized for any theme. She’s assembled a variety of themed baskets such as “dog” baskets, “cat” baskets, specialized baskets to fit the taste of a special Air BnB guest, “pamper-me” baskets complete with bubble bath and rose petals. These arrangements will embellish and embrace the emotions that come along with the flowers. Go ahead and challenge Jessica, she’s up to the task!



Jessica and Sean, owners of Yes Dear Floral

For February, Jessica features long-stemmed roses at 70 cm, can you imagine that! She also has classic colored roses so you can convey your affection through the tradition of color. Jessica has selected a variety of tropical plants to lift your spirits and blooming plants like kalanchoe and African Violets to brighten your surroundings.

Jessica and Sean are passionate about their petals and assure high quality whether you are picking up from her shop or having her send a bouquet across the country as she interfaces with professional florists across the county, always assuring the highest quality. Jessica proudly stated, “I find the BEST of the BEST because people in our community deserve high-quality flowers.”

Keep Yes Dear Floral in mind for Valentine’s Day and Mother’s Day or any holiday. They will assure you can find a fantastic floral gift for anyone’s budget from \$10 - \$100. They are located at 180 Hwy 67, Suite G in Woodland Park. Open Monday-Friday 9-4 p.m., and Saturday 10-2 p.m. Reach them by phone 719-374-6370. Please do yourself a favor and visit their incredible website <https://yesdearflorals.com/>. I must caution you; it is quite likely that you will be adding recipients



to your floral list because there is truly something for everyone!



continued from page 14

can be buried in the cemetery and former residents with strong family ties to the area can be considered. Cost: \$400 for a regular burial plot and \$200 for cremains.

Divide: Open every day

Residents must have lived in Divide for 10 years and a permanent grave marker is required. Cost: \$450 for opening and closing the grave and \$200 for cremains.

Resources:

<https://tombstone-inscriptions.ppgs.org/divide.htm> or [/florissant.htm](https://www.findagrave.com)
<https://www.findagrave.com>
Teller County, Colorado, Church and Cemetery Records by Carol Loudermilk-Edwards (Westminster, Colo.: Carol Loudermilk-Edwards, 1983)
Colorado Cemetery Inscriptions by Lela O. McQueary (Englewood, Colo.: Kay R. Merrill, 1985)

Joke

When I asked John Rakowski, the President of the Pikes Peak Historical Society what the residency requirements were to be buried in the Florissant Pioneer Cemetery, he said, “Well, you have to be dead.”

Quote

“There is a certain frame of mind to which a cemetery is, if not an antidote, at least an alleviation. If you are in a fit of the blues, go nowhere else.”

— Robert Louis Stevenson

Challenge

Stroll through a cemetery close to you or visit a family member’s grave. Notice patterns, nature, historical items of interest and maybe uncover a mystery or two. Adventure awaits!



L to R: Commander Randy Ford, Schott Adams-Bugler, Bill Boles and Steve King, Flag Bearer.



L to R: Commander Randy Ford, Steve King, Kanae Sym, and Bill Avery

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SPCFPD: Changes

by Flip Boettcher

There are some exciting, new changes happening at the Southern Park County Fire Protection District (SPCFPD), starting with a new logo. The logo was designed by local resident and department reserve fire fighter Glenn Chambers with guidance from Chief Aric Stahly and input from the volunteer staff and local residents.

The new logo is full of symbolism — the shape of the shield represents the department oath to protect and serve the community in all fire, EMS and rescue emergencies; the American flag is to remind us that we are all equal citizens and have common ground; the Colorado flag represents the state in which we reside and serve; the landscape inside the Maltese Cross remains the same as in the previous logo, to honor those who went before us; the wildlife near the road is pretty accurate — please drive accordingly; the gradient red in the Maltese Cross is to highlight the town of Guffey where the department headquarters are located; and SPCFPD is displayed because the department serves more than Guffey — a significant portion of the district’s residents have a Florissant postal address.

Ambulance desert

The department has also changed its medical response protocols to shorten response times, said Stahly. The SPCFPD is able to staff station #1 in Guffey 363 days a year from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. This allows for a faster response to emergency calls during those hours. After those hours, a designated “first-out” EMT responds directly to the scene with medical equipment, while other responding personnel bring an ambulance, squad trucks and whatever else is needed. This will eliminate the time for the first-out EMT to respond to the station and can arrive on scene much faster to begin patient care; the ambulance will still be deployed, assured Stahly.

After a 911 call, rural patients can sometimes wait an hour or more for emergency responders from strained services to arrive at their door. At least 4.5 million people nationwide live in an “ambulance desert,” according to a Wall Street Journal article, where they are more than a 25-minute drive from an ambulance station.

The more rural one gets, the more one has to be responsible and accountable for their own health, safety and services. Response times in rural areas can be very long due to weather, distance and responding personnel.

Rural or frontier emergency medical service (EMS) agencies have always been challenged with distance, finances and staffing, according to SPCFPD Lieutenant Barry Picker, and those challenges have been further complicated coming out of the pandemic.

Fortunately, the SPCFPD has been able to avoid many of the pitfalls faced by other rural agencies, stated Picker, firstly by living within their budget. District residents are very supportive of the fire department and recently voted to increase the mill levy, the major source of funding for the district. The department has been able to save and set aside funds, which have gone toward a number of capital improvement projects including upgrading the department vehicles and improving their facilities.

For certain predetermined causes, the SPCFPD has a policy to call for helicopter assistance before crews even leave the fire station, based on information received from dispatch, Picker said. If symptoms described by the patient sound like stroke, heart attack, first time seizure or multi-system trauma, flight is dispatched, with the helicopter often overhead circling the scene when crews arrive, saving an untold amount of time before the patient gets to the hospital.

At no cost to residents, the SPCFPD provides training on how to deal with some of the most life-threatening issues, said Picker. These classes include CPR and first aid; stroke awareness and prevention; hy-

pothermia; sepsis; diabetes; stopping a life threatening bleed; and opioid overdose, after which free Narcan is provided to any household where a member of the family has a prescription for an opioid.

Since medical response times in rural areas can be longer because of weather, road conditions and time of day, families who have taken these classes are better able to provide some care until EMS arrives on the scene, stated Picker.

Last, but not least, the SPCFPD is fortunate to have seven dedicated, competent volunteer EMTs, which is rare in any rural fire department. These people are volunteering for one reason: “they care about their neighbors and want to be of service,” said Picker.

The seven EMTs are Bob Henderson, Aaron Mandel, Jennifer Taylor, Rich Taylor, Aric Stahly, Millie Picker and Barry Picker. If you see one of them, be sure to thank them for their service.

This brings us to volunteering. What would you do if you called 911 in an emergency and the message said, “Closed due to lack of volunteers?” This is becoming a very real problem for many rural fire departments and nationwide, recruiting, training and retaining volunteers is a problem.

People in the district expect to be protected; they expect fire, medical and emergency services when they call 911. What people don’t think about is where do those responding personnel come from? They are your friends, neighbors, community members and they are YOU too. It is the community’s responsibility to provide volunteers so that the fire department can respond to emergencies.

The fire department is a team effort between the department and community — 50/50. The department provides the equipment, vehicles and training and the community needs to furnish the volunteers to train and respond.

The SPCFPD spends quite a bit for each volunteer. According to fire Chief Aric Stahly, the average cost to train and equip an EMT is about \$3,000, which includes the class, uniforms and a medical “jump bag” full of EMS supplies; it does not include fuel for travel to classes, usually held in Woodland Park or Cripple Creek.

The average cost to train and equip one firefighter is about \$7,000, not including the SCBA (self-contained breathing apparatus), which adds another \$8,000. This will train and equip one firefighter to respond to structure fires, wildland fires and Hazardous Materials incidents. It does not include fuel for travel to Fire Academy classes in Hartsel or Cripple Creek.

Fire Academy and EMT classes last from 4-6 months, with classes usually two evenings per week and some Saturdays for clinicals/practicals/live training, added Stahly.

Therefore, volunteering for the fire department is a commitment and a very valuable community service and training is a must. Volunteers may have to respond to emergency calls at any hour, in any kind of weather and on any day.

The Guffey fire department is looking for volunteers, “but we want good neighbors, NOT heroes,” stated Stahly. There are many ways people can volunteer to help the fire department besides rushing into burning buildings or “blood-n-guts” emergency medical services, Stahly added.

People interested in volunteering can come to station #1 any day from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. and get an application to take home and bring back after scheduling a first interview with Stahly. Stahly is available by appointment to answer any questions. Call 719-689-9479 or email Stahly at chief@guffeyfire.net.

“By continuing to look for ways to



bring value to their residents SPCFPD is ensuring that Guffey does not become another rural EMS desert,” said Picker.

Additional programs

Another program the fire department is considering starting is called Care Car, which would provide transportation for local residents to and from doctor visits and/or dental appointments, according to medical lieutenant Barry Picker. A resident would schedule their appointment and a week before the appointment they would contact the fire department. The department would then schedule one of their providers to pick you up at your home, take you to your appointment and bring you back to Guffey.

At this point there are a lot of details to work out and the department is really just gauging what interest there might be in the community for this program.

If anyone is interested in participating in this program, please email the department to: chief@guffeyfire.net, or to bpickerguffeyfire@gmail.com.

In November, the fire department started its chipping program in conjunction with its fire mitigation program. Residents who have slash piles to mitigate can call the department for details on chipping up these piles.

Any resident planning on trimming trees on their property and starting slash piles should contact the department first for instructions to ensure the piles are easy to chip up.

The department also provides a free Wildland Fire Risk Assessment for property owners. The chief or a qualified fire fighter will come out to your property and make recommendations to help property loss in case of a wild fire. Call the fire station in Guffey to schedule 719-689-9479.

It’s that time of year to make sure your chimney or stovepipe is clean to avoid chimney fires. Residents who can’t or don’t want to clean their chimney, contact the fire department. Stahly said there is a local business who will come to Guffey and clean your chimney for a fee.

The following are some dates you might want to put on your calendar. The dates are for the fire department’s community outreach and training events for 2024:

February 10 Community Education Class: Opioid Overdose Prevention and Hypothermia Awareness and Treatment
March 9 Community Education Class: CPR and First Aid
April 11 Community Education Class: Wildfire Mitigation for Property Owners
May 8 Coffee and Doughnuts with the Fire Department
June 15 Community Education Class: Stroke Awareness and Prevention; Sepsis Awareness
July 18 Open House, Station 1, 1745 County Road 102, Guffey
August 10 Community Education Class: Diabetes Awareness and Prevention, Stop the Bleed Class
August 31-September 2 Fire Department Yard Sale
October 12 Community Education Class: Safe Burning (also Flu Shot clinic with Park County Public Health)
October Chili Cook-Off (Will be 2nd or 3rd Saturday)
November Chipping program begins (assistance with wildfire mitigation)

Note: typically classes start at 9:30 a.m., however the time will be determined as each class approaches. Anyone who would like to join their email list for announcements, news and community education can email office@guffeyfire.net.



Life-Enhancing Journeys

Enhance your relationship to yourself and to others

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

Whether you have been dating someone for a while, are currently living with a partner or are a long-married couple, you might be looking to enhance your relationship. February is the month Valentine’s Day is celebrated. This is a special day to acknowledge the affection you feel for your partner and other loved ones. A question that I am often asked, “Is there one thing in particular that could improve my relationships?” The answer is *Yes! Work on yourself.* This is not the response most want to hear. They want their partner to change without changing themselves.

When I listen to a couple’s story about problems in their relationship, one or both partners may blame the other for the conflicts, “They’re the problem, so if you can fix them, everything would be OK” is a pretense often given. No one intentionally tries to destroy their relationship, however, if one or both continue to be faultless, blame the other partner, and maintain the attitude of, “I’m right, and you’re wrong...I know better than you... What you think doesn’t matter,” deterioration of trust is the result.

During the early days of a relationship, we may “love-bomb” (love-bombing is a form of manipulation conveyed by an excessive amount of affection, gifts, and attention) our new romantic interest. We unwittingly think it is okay to ignore our need to love ourselves because we count on our partners to “fill us up.”

With time, you become more comfortable with each other and settle into a routine. When you hit the inevitable rough patch, you might try to ignore it. As you repress your feelings, the pressure builds up. What happens next is the inevitable explosion. Then it is common to blame your partner for your anger. These emotional outbursts can threaten the relationship.

If you blame your partner, ask yourself:

- Am I refusing to see my role in the arguments?
- Am I trying to get my partner to fill the emptiness that exists in me?
- Am I projecting my own frustrations onto my partner?
- Do I care about my partner’s needs but tend to ignore my own feelings?

Self-reflection can help put our emotions into words to better understand what is going on inside and connect more effectively.

Are you willing to look at yourself and ask some difficult questions such as:

- What role did I play in our problems?
- Is this how I have reacted in other relationships?
- Did I get defensive?
- Did I argue with my partner after they criticized me?
- What have I chosen to ignore?
- When I was struggling, why was I afraid to ask for support?
- When could I have been kinder and more understanding?
- When could I have spoken up instead of staying silent?
- Am I committed to remaining a couple? If yes, am I willing to do what it takes?

Asking yourself these questions means that you are courageous enough to admit your involvement in the condition of your relationship instead of being a passive/aggressive recipient, thinking, “Look at what they are doing to me!” If you are focusing on your partner as the cause of the relationship problems, you are conveying the message that someone else is in control of you, and you view yourself as a helpless victim.

The quality of the relationship has to do with the dynamic between the two people, rarely is it about one partner. Here is an



example: I am feeling sad without realizing that I want more closeness. So instead of asking for some attention (after all, I never want to seem that needy or vulnerable), I push my partner away and accuse them of ignoring me. Take responsibility without blaming them or yourself. It is not a blame game but an understanding of the interaction between the two of you.

It helps to understand yourself before you focus on a relationship. While people think that the key to a solid connection is communication, good communication starts with knowing yourself. Begin by asking, “How do I talk to myself?” Each partner can benefit from looking inward to understand themselves better. This requires taking responsibility for your thoughts, feelings and behavior to show up as the best version of yourself.

Take care of your own needs. Everyone has needs that must be met, and expecting your partner to fulfill all those requirements is unrealistic and unfair. Taking care of your own needs through your efforts or by knowing others whom you can turn to, will help you to become more confident. Maintaining self-awareness strengthens your coupled relationship by highlighting what is working well now and what might need strengthening going forward. Now there are two self-motivated people bonding with each other out of desire rather than need.

Avoid comparing yourself to others. “Comparison is the thief of joy,” as Theodore Roosevelt said. Studies have suggested that social comparison has the potential to reduce overall well-being regardless of whether the comparison is in an upward or downward direction. Recognize that you are worthy of love and respect simply because of who you are.

Learn to appreciate and love yourself. Acknowledging your own worth can be a first step to increasing your self-esteem. For example, if you feel alone and empty, instead of blaming your partner, consider how you have been treating yourself. When you can see, value, and love yourself, it comes naturally to show love to others.

There is a big difference between trying to get love versus wanting to share love. Wanting to *get love* implies that you are feeling empty inside, yet when you want to *share love*, you are feeling filled up by the love you feel for yourself, and the abundance of that love is then available to your partner.

Even if just one of you works on learning to love yourself, the whole dynamic can change from a codependent relationship (someone who often gets their self-worth from others) to a loving, interdependent relationship (where two secure people place equal value on connection

and individuality). Instead of partners *completing* each other, they *complement* each other to form a solid bond.

Examine your reactions. Our bodies react to our unconscious emotions, usually based on experiences from our past, which can trigger us off. When you notice a physical sensation (rapid heartbeat, tight muscles, a knot in the stomach, etc.), pause, breathe, and ask yourself questions such as:

- What am I feeling inside?
- What did my facial expression convey?
- What was said or what happened just before I reacted?
- Have I reacted this way at other times?
- Did I just want to be listened to or was I looking for help to find a solution?

Set limits and create boundaries. Although you may not want to disappoint your partner, saying *no* might be the best decision, especially if saying *yes* will distress you. The only time to say *yes* is when you can truly follow through. If you agree, keeping your agreements 100% of the time will reinforce trust. If you are unable to follow through after you have consented, renegotiate the agreement beforehand. This will help to build trust and decrease the potential for anger and resentment.

If you are unsure, pay attention to how your body is reacting:

- How does this request feel?
- Does this align with my core values?

Turning down your partner’s request when they ask for a favor may feel uncomfortable at first, yet this is a useful way to build self-esteem and self-respect while maintaining a secure relationship.

Figure out what you think, feel, or need rather than depending on your partner to tell you. Pay attention to your preferences, interests, dreams, hobbies, etc. first before asking what they might prefer. When you are sure of yourself, these actions will enhance your confidence and will prevent an over-reliance on your partner to validate you.

Everyone has flaws so accept your imperfections. Rather than just focusing on your flaws, notice your positive qualities. Create a list of all the things you appreciate about yourself instead of just fixating on your shortcomings. Paying attention to your whole self is a means to achieve greater understanding and self-knowledge.

Be willing to be vulnerable. Dr. Brene Brown, author and researcher, defines vulnerability as “uncertainty, risk, and emotional exposure.” Although it may seem scary because vulnerability can stir up fear of rejection or abandonment, taking risks is an essential part of living a satisfied life. It can help you build greater

confidence and authenticity. Using the power of vulnerability allows you to say what you want, ask for what you need, express your emotions, and appreciate your achievements.

Stop taking things personally. What is said may have nothing to do with you but is about the person’s own projected perceptions, therefore it likely is about them. When you take things personally, it gives the other person your power, which often hurts you. To stop taking things personally, consider the situation as well as the other person’s motivations and background. Just because someone is unhappy with you does not mean you have done something wrong. It could mean that the person is unhappy with themselves and projects the blame onto you.

Avoid assumptions. When you make a statement about what you believe your partner thinks, feels or wants, follow it up by asking, “Is that true...correct... accurate?” This gives them a chance to confirm or deny the validity of what you presume is going on for them without it becoming an assumption.

If you are unclear as to what your partner is saying to you, instead of guessing, ask directly, “What do you mean...?”

Take responsibility. This means acknowledging the role you play in your own life. Rather than looking around for someone or something to blame, accept that your own actions may have led you to the situation you are in. When you accept that your actions have consequences, you recognize that you have the ability to change anything you choose going forward. By realizing that you are in charge of your own life, you will find it much easier to start creating your own fulfillment rather than depending on others to do it for you.

When we appreciate our partners for who they are instead of what they can give us, our relationships can become more harmonious. Research shows that what keeps couples together is based on how they interact, how they speak to each other, and if they are dedicated to growing the relationship together. For the benefit of the relationship, make a commitment to become as emotionally agile and adept as possible.

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.

~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.

AVAILABLE VIRTUALLY

- NAMI Colorado: <http://www.namicolorado.org/>
- Suicide prevention: <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/orid41988>

CAÑON CITY

LIBRARY

- 7 Free Legal Clinic 2-5 p.m. Call 719-269-9020 to schedule.
- 17 Chautauqua performance by Marvin Jefferson portraying Martin Luther King Jr. 3 p.m. at the Steeple Event Center 701 Macon Ave.
- 1st Friday Lego Club 3 p.m.
- 2nd Friday Breakout Box 3 p.m.
- 3rd Friday Creative Crafting 3 p.m.
- B.O.O.K. (Babies on our knees) story time Mondays 10:30
- Chess Club Wednesdays 2 p.m.
- Cribbage Club Fridays 10-noon.
- Dulcimer Club for kids 2nd and 4th Wednesday 3:30-4:30 p.m.
- Mahjong Club Tuesdays 1-4 p.m.
- Metaphysical Group Saturdays 10:30 a.m.
- Natural Grocers health-based training 2nd Wednesday 11 a.m.
- Rummikub Club meets 3rd Monday of each month 1 p.m.
- Sewing with Lisa on Tuesdays 10:30-12 for all ages.
- Story Swap Book Chat 1st and 3rd Tuesdays 3 p.m.
- Story time and craft Tuesday and Thursdays 10:30 a.m.
- All at 516 Macon Ave unless otherwise specified. FMI 719-269-9020 www.copl.lib.co.us

COLORADO SPRINGS

- 13 Mardi Gras Masquerade Fundraiser for 2024 Pride Festival. See page 8.
- 16 Michael Flatley's Lord of the Dance 25th Anniversary Tour at Pikes Peak Center.
- 17 Jerry Seinfeld at Pikes Peak Center 7 p.m.
- 25 Toby Mac's Hits Deep Tour 2024 by the Awakening Foundation at the Broadmoor.

CRIPPLE CREEK

- 1 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.
- 15 Third Thursday of the month is the Two Mile High Club monthly meeting 5:30 p.m. in the lower level of the Double Eagle casino complex 442 East Bennett Ave.
- 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

- 7 Mobile Vaccine Clinic 11-3 p.m. They will have flu and Covid-19 vaccines.
- 23 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!
- Mexican Train on Thursday 10:30a.m. FMI 719-689-3584 x124.

BUTTE THEATER

- 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18 Butte-I-Ful Love Stories

DIVIDE

- 2, 16 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.
- 11 Valentine's event 9-11 a.m. Join us for a mini of our resident animals and take a special tour on Chinook's nature trail where you will hear the story of "The Lovers." Guests will receive a flower, snacks and seasonal drinks \$40 for anyone 12+ years old, \$20 for those 8-11 years old. Reservations required 719-687-9742.
- 12, 26 Little Chapel Food Pantry 2-5 p.m.

MUELLER STATE PARK

- 4 Snowshoe Hike#3 Homestead TH 10:30 a.m.
- 11 Osborn and Nobel Cabin Hike meet at Black Bear TH 9:30 a.m.
- 11 Owl You Need is Love meet at Visitor Center 2-3 p.m.
- 24 Lost Pond to Black Bear Hike meet at Lost Pond TH 9 a.m.
- *Th = Trailhead FMI 719-687-2366

FLORENCE

- 10 Second Saturday Happy Wife Happy Life. Visit historic downtown Florence for shopping and dining. Make it an early Valentine surprise.
- Florence Pioneer Museum and Research Center at 100 E. Front Street is open for the winter months. It may be chilly outside, but it's warm and cozy in the museum. Check out our business hours at www.florencepioneermuseum.org or call 719-784-1904.

JOHN C. FREMONT LIBRARY

- Story Times continue on Fridays at 10:30 a.m.
- Save the date: March 1 special Dr. Seuss Story Time.

FLORISSANT

- LIBRARY
- 9 Tarot Club 3 p.m. Teens and up are welcome to join this group and learn all things tarot. February's theme is Renewal.
- 14 Florissant Bookworms Book Club 10:30-12 p.m.
- 15 Homeschool Connections 10-12 p.m. Parent led social and educational enrichment time for homeschoolers. Meets monthly on the third Thursday. February's theme is Messy Science!
- 16 Friends at the Table Cookbook Club, theme is "Chinese" Bring a dish to share! 11:30-1 p.m.
- 20 Read Amok Book Club themed "Libraries" Bring up to 5 books within the theme

- to share! 11-12:30 p.m.
- 20 Free Legal Clinic 2-5 p.m. at Florissant Library. Call 719-748-3939 to sign-up.
- 20 AARP Smart Drivers Course. Call to reserve a spot. \$20 for AARP members and \$25 for non-members.
- 25 Speech Bubble Book Club 1 p.m. Bring a graphic novel to share!
- Tuesdays Tai Chi 10-11 a.m. 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.
- Family Fridays at the Library every Friday! Starts with Storytime at 10 a.m., followed by Reading with Charlie, and then a special family activity at 11 a.m.!
- FMI 719-748-3939

GRANGE

- Thursday Potluck and Music 6-8 p.m. Dancing encouraged!

GUFFEY

- Donation-based Yoga Sundays 11:30-1 p.m. at Guffey Charter School. Facebook.com/sunmountainyoga or yoga@reneemoulipb.com.

THE BAKERY

- 18 Valentines Dinner 5 p.m.

COLORADO MOUNTAIN DISTILLERS

- Live music 5-8 p.m.
- 3 John Spengler
- 10 James Speiser
- 13 Roma Ransom
- 17 The Locals
- 24 Intervention

LIBRARY

- 5 Bee Keepers 10 a.m. Meets every first Monday of the month to discuss everything bee keeping. Come and join the group!
- 6 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 crochet, knit and talk away.
- 26 Guffey Literary Society 1-3 p.m. Book choice for February is *The Deamon Copperhead* by Barbara Kingsolver. The Guffey Literary Society is a wonderfully dynamic and diverse group. All are welcome to join.
- 27 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! FMI 719-689-9280 or Guffeylib@parkco.us.

WILD SPIRIT MOUNTAIN LODGE

- 9 Trivia 6 p.m.

- 10 Live Music 6 p.m. by In Range.
- 11 SuperBowl Party 3 p.m.
- 14 Valentine's Dinner 5 p.m.

HARTSEL

- Country Church of Hartsel meets at the Hartsel Community Center 80 Valley View Drive 10 a.m. Sundays. Everyone is welcome! FMI call Jimmy Anderson 719-358-1100.

LAKE GEORGE

- 18 Every 3rd Saturday - Men's Breakfast and Bible Study 8 a.m. at Woodland Bible Chapel 39601 W US Hwy 24 Lake George. Current study is Biblical Manhood. Free. RSVP/Questions to John 720-299-3360 or www.woodlandbiblechapel.com.

MANITOU SPRINGS

- 3 CarniBall 6-9 p.m. at Iron Springs Chateau. Tickets available: <https://manitou-springs.org/carniball-masquerade/>
- 10 Mumbo Gumbo Jumbo Cookoff starting at 11 a.m. at Soda Springs Park for \$.75 samples.
- 10 Carnivale Parade kiding off at 1 p.m. down Manitou Ave.

VICTOR

- 17, 18, 24, 25 The Victor Lowell Thomas Museum will be open 10-5 p.m. Joe LaFleur will be available to sign his bird watching book on Feb 24.

WOODLAND PARK

- 6 JA Volunteer Open House see page 11.
- 10 Woodland Park Senior Center Winter Tea 11:30-1:30 p.m. Join us and help to solve the Gold Camp Mystery that will be presented by Woodland Park High School theater students while enjoying tea, sandwiches and desserts! RSVP at the Senior Center front desk. Members \$10, non-members \$20, children 12 and under \$10. (Corner of Pine & Lake Streets).
- 14 Valentine's Day Community Dance presented at Ute Pass Cultural Center featuring Swing Factory Big Band. Doors open 6:30 p.m., dancing 7-9 p.m. Dancing and drinks, snacks are welcome. Free. Donations welcome. Reservations are not needed. FMI www.CommunityConcertFEB14.eventbrite.com
- 17 The CSU Extension Teller County Master Gardeners will be holding their annual gardening classes at the Woodland Park Library, lower-level the third Saturday of the month through May 10:30-12:30 p.m. The topic in February will be "Seed Starting" and "Vegetables that Grow Up Here." Class size is limited to 40 on a first-come, first-served basis. Walk-ins are

welcome on the day of class, until the class is full. The cost is \$7 per class. Please contact Marie Bartol 719-687-1290 with questions or to register.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

- 9 Crossroads Co-Parenting Seminar 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Teller County court approved parenting and divorce class. \$35 fee. Pre-registration required. FMI Michelle@cpteller.org.
- 13 Practical & Positive Parenting 5:15-7:45 p.m. Gain support for every step of your child's physical, emotional, and cognitive development. This family workshop is a nurturing and active approach to parenting in a supportive peer environment. Meal and childcare provided. Registration closes Feb 12 for the Tuesday sessions. FMI Michelle@cpteller.org.
- 22 & 29 VITA Free Income Tax Preparation 1-5pm, by appointment only. Don't miss out on Earned Income Credit (EIC), education credits, child tax credit, and child care expense credits! If you are missing a Covid stimulus payment from 2020 or 2021? You may be eligible to claim them on your 2023 taxes. This service is available for basic returns with income up to about \$60,000. FMI 719-203-1265 or TellerCountyVITA@gmail.com.
- Family Cafe 9 a.m.-12 p.m. Monday through Thursday Closed Feb 19. Enjoy coffee, Free Wi-Fi, a Kid's Corner, and a space to congregate free of charge for parents and caregivers in our community to connect.
- Playgroup 9:30-11 a.m. Tuesdays, Wednesdays & Fridays. Walk-ins welcome. Parents and caregivers with children ages 5 & under. Older siblings are welcome. FMI Cory@cpteller.org.
- Yoga with Leah Mondays 10-11 a.m. No Yoga Feb 19. First come, first served, no late entry. Bring your own mat and props. All levels welcome. FMI Michelle@cpteller.org.
- Yoga with Leah Wednesdays 5-6 p.m. First come, first served, no late entry. Bring your own mat and props. All levels welcome. FMI Michelle@cpteller.org.
- GED Classes Mondays & Thursdays 5-7 p.m. New students (min. age 16) may join GED classes after completing orientation and \$40 registration fee. FMI Katy@cpteller.org.
- Career Cente 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.
- Pearson VUE Testing Center Mondays 9:30-5 p.m. Closed Feb 19. Schedule your certification or licensure exam at www.pearsonvue.com. Fees

vary. FMI Katy@cpteller.org. All programs at Community Partnership 701 Gold Hill Place unless otherwise noted. FMI 719-686-0705.

LIBRARY

- 15 Blood drive 12-4:15 p.m. use blood drive code:10054258 FMI vitalant.org
- 2 Coffee Chats 10 a.m. Join us for coffee and conversation. Meet new friends in Woodland Park!
- 6 Woodland Park Book Club 10:30 a.m. Check our book club page to see what we're reading next!
- 7 Kids Craft Club. Drop in between 3 and 5 p.m. for a guided craft! Geared towards ages 5-10. Younger kids will need guardian assistance. Guardians must be present within the library for the duration of the craft.
- 7 Teen Craft Day 3:45-5:30 p.m. Let's make conversation heart boxes!
- 7 Evening Adult Fiction Book Club 5 p.m.
- 8 Reader's Circle Book Club 10:30 a.m. in the Large Meeting Room.
- 17 Science Saturday at 11 a.m. We're learning about the human heart! Join us in the children's area for fun experiments. Geared for children under 10.
- 20 Community Discussions at 5 p.m. Let's get together as a community to discuss common topics in a respectful, moderated environment. In February we're talking about climate change.
- 20 Free Legal Clinic 2-5 p.m. at Woodland Park Library. Call 719-748-3939 to sign-up.
- 21 Fiber Arts Club 1 p.m. Come make and share your fiber art! Knitting, crocheting, weaving, bracelet making, whatever you like!
- 21 Teen Craft Day 3:45-5:30 p.m. in the Teen Room. Let's make conversation heart boxes!
- 21 Celebrating Diversity at 3:45 p.m. A social group for LGBTQIA teens and allies.
- 28 Evening Arts and Crafts for Adults at 5 p.m. Join us for an evening of crafting each month!
- 29 Tarot Club 3 p.m. Teens and up are welcome to join this group and learn all things tarot. February's theme is Renewal.
- Line Dancing Above the Clouds at 6:30 p.m. every Monday and Thursday. Please note we will not meet on the 19.
- Pokemon Trading Card Game Club every Thursday at 5 p.m. Trainers of all ability levels are welcome!
- 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 10 a.m.

Monkey See, Monkey Do You can Kindle Kindness, too!

by Readers of Ute Country News

Below are acts of kindness experienced or witnessed submitted by our readers this month:

- A customer brought in a package, then said he had two more. I held the door for him and noticed that he had parked far away. I reminded him we have a 10 minute parking area at the curb in front of our door. His response was, "Well, I know that. I feel I am able-bodied and don't mind walking the distance so that this spot is open for those who are not." Choosing to park further away to keep a spot open for those less able is an act of kindness!
- Helping Santa out, a gentleman donned the suite and listened to the children's requests. A grade-school-aged girl sat on Santa's lap. When Santa asked, "What would you like for Christmas?" The young girl answered, "Money." Santa asked, "What are you going to do with the money?" She replied, "Give it to my Mom so we don't get ejected from our house." Santa placed donation jars around town at places Santa frequents and collected over \$2,000 to give to the

little girls' Mom. Hearing of someone's hardship is an act of kindness. Taking the steps to collect the donations and get them to the Mom was an act of kindness on a scale grand enough for Santa!

- A young man helps his mom place the flowers on the altar at church. After the service it is also their responsibility to remove the flowers each week. Often, this young man will tell his mom, "I gave a flower to (so-and-so) because she looked sad today." Being aware that someone is having a sad day and taking action to brighten the sad day is an act of kindness!
- It was a busy holiday season, after which I tackled my list of writing Thank You cards for the gifts received. This was a fantastic way to honor those who had given gifts and also a way to relive the joy of receiving. Extending positive feelings is an act of kindness I can extend to myself and my family or those around me.
- Sharing excess food is an act of kindness to the person receiving the food and to the planet.
- A customer calls for a service we do not

provide. It is apparent this caller would benefit from a simple Google search to get the phone number for the service requested. Sometimes just taking that extra step can mean a world of kindness to a person that doesn't have the same technology or skills.

- I'm going to tell people I love them more often. I notice when someone tells me they love me how good I feel. I hope God and Jesus feel good when I tell them how much I love them!
- I ordered a pizza online last month and didn't get all the ingredients I ordered. The next time, it was fine. Then this week, I ordered and once again, not all the ingredients were on the pizza. I waited until the "rush" would be over to call in hopes of being able to speak to the manager. The woman who answered the phone said, "I'm as close to a manager as you can get at this time." When I explained that not all the ingredients were on the pizza, she suggested next time I call the order in because there tends to be errors when ordering online. Telling me

the most effective method of technology to use to get an accurate order was an act of kindness, for which I thanked her.

- A man has surgery on one of his limbs. His friends come to help in various ways. One friend helps with meals and transportation. Another friend helps with shoveling his drive and a path all around his work area. A different friend buys slip-on shoes that might be easier than the fastening type. There are so many ways to show kindness after someone has had surgery and is recovering!

We encourage and welcome your reports of acts of kindness, whether you have witnessed the action or have taken it. We believe the more we share stories of kindness, the more likely we are to extend kindness to others and that by doing so we co-create a kinder world. Please share by emailing utecountrynewspaper@gmail.com, leave a voice mail at 719-686-7587 or stop in Shipping Plus to report the act(s) of kindness!

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www.PetFoodPantryTC.com

Happy Valentine's Day from The Pet Food Pantry Volunteers & Our Mascots, Baylee and Daisy.
We thank our donors for their continued support!

Steven Shepard at Brazenhead Vintage Market

by Steven Shepard

Local woodworking artist Steven Shepard is now exhibiting and showing his original wood-working primitive art for retail sales at Brazenhead Vintage Market in Woodland Park, Colorado.

Steven has had positive feedback and meaningful sales of his original artwork at multiple art shows in the Pikes Peak region. He describes his artwork as funny handmade knick-knacks from the Front Range of the Colorado Rockies. The gems are original and unique curiosities, assembled, carved and crafted in America. His unique products make an enchanting gift item and appeal to young and old alike. Themes include automotive, aviation, nautical, nature and western wood characters that command attention.



Above: A sample of Steve's art. Inset: Artist Steve Douglas Shepard.

Steve's original carved creations can be found on the first floor (section BB) at Brazenhead Vintage Market 720 West US Highway 24 in Woodland Park, Monday - Saturday 10-5 p.m., Sunday 12-4 p.m. FMI 719-247-7230 or sbt designs2014@gmail.com.


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