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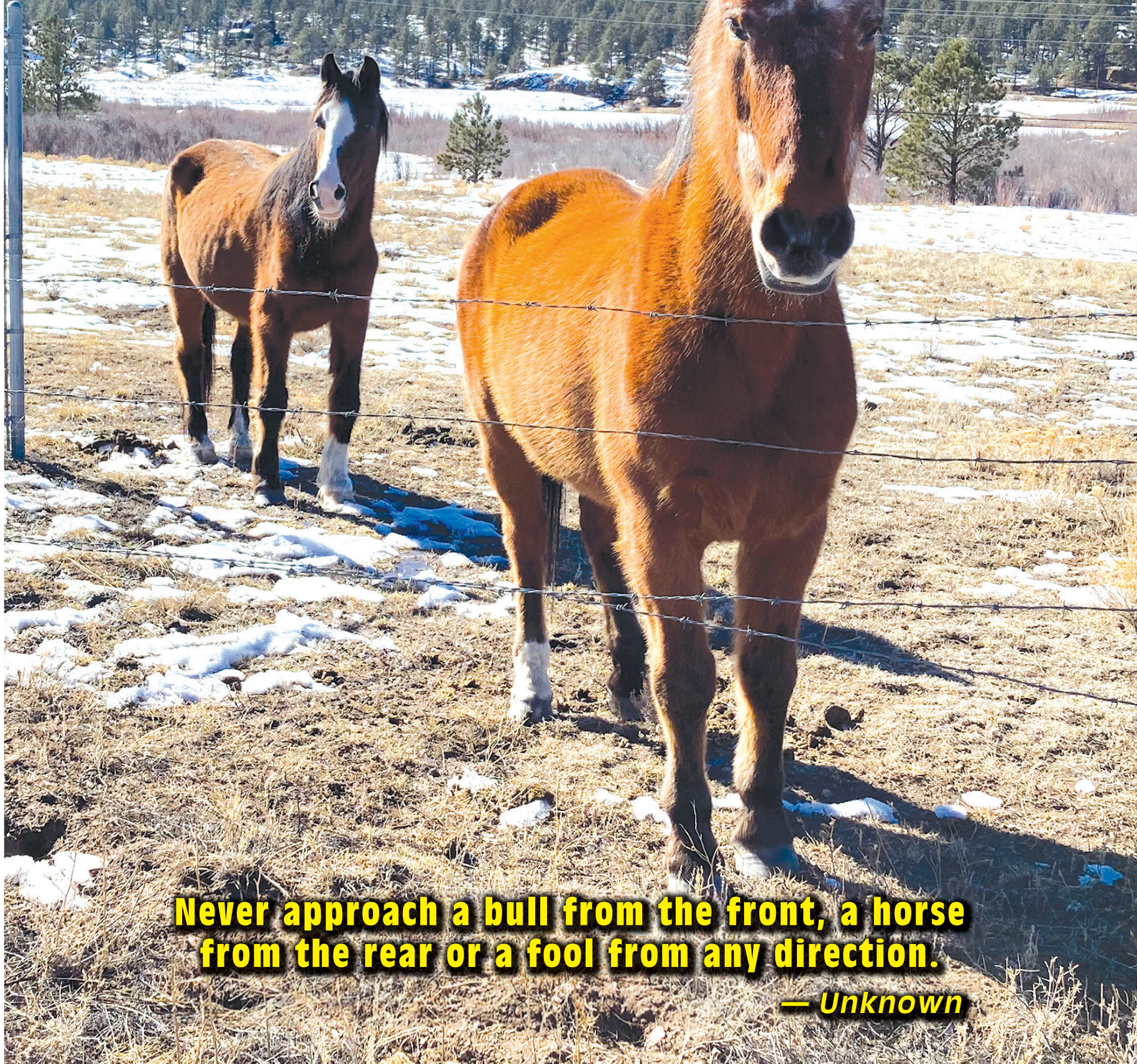
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March 2024

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

Vol. 16, No. 3

Welcome to Ute Country



Never approach a bull from the front, a horse from the rear or a fool from any direction.

— Unknown

PEEK INSIDE...



page 6

Virginia Lynch:
Forensic Nursing Science



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Fairplay's Front Street



page 21

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On Deck

Our March issue cover photo was taken by Jeff while he was delivering our February issue in Lake George, off Highway 24, near the post office. We find the quote is fitting the photograph, adds a little humor and like my Mom used to say, "The greatest truths are said in jest." Perhaps we all need to be mindful of the manner in which we approach various aspects of life.

"March is Women's History Month and National Quilting Month. Enjoy the fascinating article honoring Virginia Lynch, the founder of Forensic Nursing Science, current resident of Teller County. Learn more about our local Quilters Above the Clouds in "March is National Quilters Month."

Our March issue offers many examples of subjects to be approached. "Cannonball! Fuel Reduction" shares how the overgrowth of our forests can be approached to reduce wildfire impact. *Life Enhancing Journeys* offers very specific tips on how to approach a difficult situation in "We need to talk." "Fairplay Front Street" shares a tidbit about the various businesses on Fairplay's Front Street that you might like to approach. *Pharmgirl* offers a humorous tale of how she approached Grace the chicken in "Saving Grace."

Are you seeking a side-gig that gives you free reign on your time, offers 20%+ commission to start and gives you a chance to get out and meet people? *Ute Country News* is seeking a responsible sales representative. If you are interested, please stop in at Shipping Plus Mon-Fri 9-5:30 p.m., call us at 719-686-7587 or email utecountrynewspaper@gmail.com.

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.

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A Look Inside the Artist Cindi Hunt, Whimsical Artist

by Mary Shell

There's something about whimsical art that touches the hearts of everyone. Playful, happy, and carefree, the objects take on a life of their own as if they were in a cartoon. I find time making little whimsical paintings just to clear my head of serious art making. So, what is it that makes us create art that is made just for fun? Cindi Hunt can tell you why. Whimsical art is the language of a child's soul.

How long have you been painting?
I have gone through periods of painting prolifically, and then periods that I don't paint. It runs in spurts. I also have a ceramic studio in my garage. When the weather gets warmer, I'm out there a lot too.

When did you start painting whimsically?
I suppose I started experimenting with whimsical art as a child. Surface designs and bright colors have always been important elements of my work. My teaching and my parenting worlds began around the same time. I spent a lot of time looking at and reading picture books. I went on to design and implement numerous children's art programs. Being playful in my presentation and our activities put young children at ease.

What do you like about that style?
I love the use of bright colors and the use of lines and shapes. They give me joy. If you think about it, these are some of the design elements that most children seem to intuitively understand.

Who inspires you to create?
For the first part of this answer, I'm going to have to use the past tense "inspired." My father! He painted in oils. I would watch him get his paints ready, treat his canvases, and sketch his ideas. I was impressed in how he could create realistic images with certain strokes and colors. If I was very good, I could put paint on the canvas too. I was hooked! When he was done for the day, I would be intrigued by how he would take care of his tools. I treasure those memories to this day. I no longer have my dad with me, but I have most of his paintings and all my memories.

These days, I am influenced by illustrators and artists who create whimsical images for readers and young children. Romero Britto is one that comes

to mind. He is a Brazilian born painter. His murals adorn many Children's hospitals here in the States. His use of bright colors, lines, movement, and shapes makes a scary place like a hospital feel less scary.

What has been difficult for you to create?
In painting it would have to be the human form, especially faces. I typically create stylized versions. In clay, I never mastered throwing a pot on the wheel. I work in slab construction and surface design.

I see that you also work in clay. Which do you prefer?
I like both mediums. As an undergrad in art education, I got to experiment with a variety of materials. I realized I loved working in slab construction, making plaster molds, and mixing oxides with liquid slip to produce various colors. It was like being a mad scientist. Drawing and painting were always an outlet for me.

What would you like to try next?
I am interested in sculpture. I want to take my slabs and make them stand tall vertically. You could say I want to take my art to new heights.

What's in the future for you?
Upgrading my studio space. What started out as an oversized garage in 2020, became a pottery studio for four

women artists. Now we have two kilns, three wheels, work areas, a glaze room, and a slab roller. I want to expand my usable space to include an area for painting and more storage. I am also exploring what it will take to create a usable studio space year-round.

What else would you like to say about yourself that the readers would like to know?
I'm coming out of retirement to teach a children's art class in my studio space, here in Cañon City. I have written, age-appropriate art curriculum for six children ages six through nine. The sessions will include teacher direct, child lead, large group, and small group activities. The classes will introduce students to design elements, artists, and various techniques. I am in the process of setting up a page on Meta to advertise Stardust Studio and a blog to help families support their children's creative development.

<http://www.maryshellart.com> and creatingfromthesoul@yahoo.com

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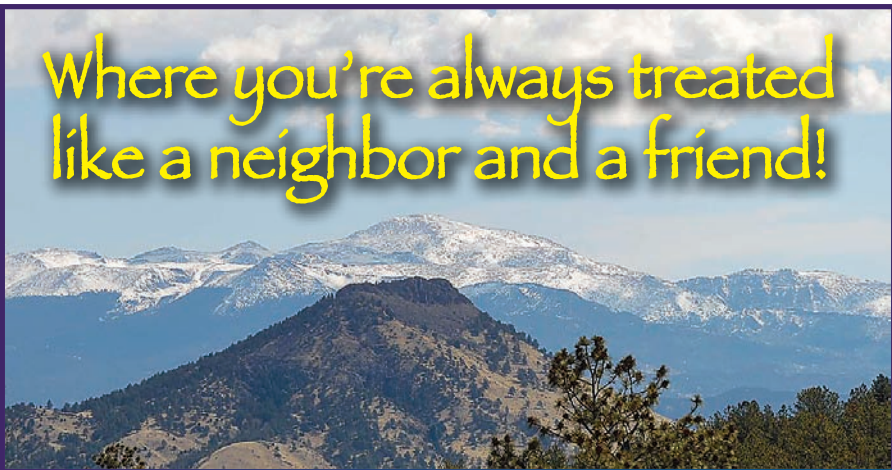
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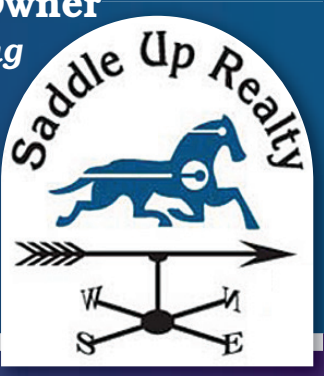
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People See, People Do You can Kindle Kindness, too!

by Readers of Ute Country News

Did you notice the change in our column name? It has been brought to our attention that the term "monkey" may potentially be perceived as derogatory, which is not our intent. The new column name may be more relatable and less derogatory.

- Knowing his wife's concern to bring about more positive energy into this world, an attentive husband purchases the book *Infectious Generosity*, which discusses the impact of very small interpersonal interactions, like the power of making eye contact or smiling at someone. Supplementing a partner's interest is an act of kindness for that partner, the relationship and potentially the world!
- Kind actions at the grocery store: I saw a woman offer to help pick something up from a low shelf for a gentleman using a cane that had difficulty bending. I saw a man offer to help a woman pick something up that she had dropped. It was fun to hear him say, "My mom would be ashamed of me if I didn't offer to lend a hand." (Thanks to his mom!) A woman offered to allow a man behind her to go ahead as he had fewer groceries. In the parking lot, I noticed a vehicle flash its lights to indicate it was safe for the car pulling out of a space to continue. How fun to notice how polite my community is!
- With the intention of avoiding having to deliver our paper in the snowstorm, we reached out to folks who helped in the past. Our volunteer offered immediately to help with the delivery, which took a tremendous stress off our shoulders. This act of kindness helped us finish the project as well as serve our mental health.

- A series of kindness follows: We contacted a trusted friend and helper at the food pantry to disseminate FREE tickets to those who might not have the means to enjoy a show. We offered some homemade ham/pea soup and cornbread for taking on this task. After he picked up the tickets, he and his helpers came to the restaurant next door for a burger. One of his helpers was driving a truck with a plow on the front. Noticing that our handicapped spot was snowed in, the helper took the initiative to plow that spot all on his own; no one needed to ask, he just did it! Then, our trusted friend stopped by the next day to drop off a Gerbera Daisy in gratitude for the soup as he ran out of "thank you" cards. Next time we have a ham bone, we know our friend is open to receiving pea soup, navy bean soup or baked beans from that bone. Helping and gratitude manifest in opportunities to see shows, parking spots being plowed, sharing food and plants. Participating in kind actions tends to lead to welcomed surprises!
- A woman works hard to shovel her driveway, but soon finds the snow is quite heavy and the task is more difficult than anticipated. Her heart jumps with joy when a neighbor shows up with his plow to remove the remaining snow.
- Good to get out today. I plowed my neighbors out and asked if they needed anything. She said she needed to get to the grocery store and liquor store, so I said, "Come on along!" They are GOOD people! You know, he served our country. Helping with plowing and a ride to town and back is the least I can do.

Free Income Tax Return

by VITA

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) is an IRS sponsored program provided by local, trained and certified volunteers to provide FREE, confidential and secure preparation and e-filing of Federal and State income taxes for tax payers who qualify (income under \$60,000). This service is available in Woodland Park, Cripple Creek and Florissant by appointment 719-203-1265 or TellerCountyVITA@gmail.com. FMI www.ColoradoVITA.org.

Adopt Me

by Ark Valley Humane Society

Indy & Addie

Indy and Addie are both 1-year-old female domestic shorthair mixes. This loving duo is looking for a home together. They both get along with dogs, having lived with a pup in their previous home. While they can be slow to warm up, once you gain their trust they're giant cuddle bugs. We know you will love spending time with this pair. Addie has the gorgeous calico-coat and is the shyer gal of the pair. When her sister, Indy, is by her side she is much quicker to warm up. Indy is a beautiful brown tabby who is more confident in new situations. We've gotten to spend many days enjoying the company of both of these cats and hope a loving home calls soon! If you're interested in Indy and Addie you can give us a call at 719-395-2737.

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



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The Curse of Cripple Creek: Failed mining districts of the southern front range

Cripple Creek is a fabulous gold-mining district. How could it possibly be a curse?

It is well known that Cripple Creek is by far the most productive gold-mining district in Colorado. Less well known is that Cripple Creek is surrounded by what may be the worst mining districts of Colorado, including Green Mountain Falls, Crystola, Woodland Park, Third Creek, and many others. How can we define the "worst" mining districts?

The shining success of the Cripple Creek discovery infected investors and prospectors with irrational optimism as they searched the region for the "next Cripple Creek." From 1892 to 1900, perhaps as many as a hundred mining towns were established, of which all but a few have disappeared without a trace. Searchers excavated thousands of feet through rock in hundreds of shafts and tunnels, then built numerous ore treatment plants. In contrast to the great effort, with only a couple of minor exceptions, the production was: nothing, nil, nada, zip, zero, bupkus. Much has been written about Cripple Creek; almost nothing about its would-be rivals such as Africa, Alhambra, Signal Butte, and Suckertown. But to understand mining history, we must understand not only the successes, but also the failures. They each have a story to tell.

On March 24th, Dan Plazak will present an interesting talk on the impact Cripple Creek had on (potential) smaller mining towns. Plazak is a retired geologist and engineer living in Denver, whose main interest is in oddball historical subjects ignored by other writers. He is the author of *A Hole in the Ground with a Liar at the Top: Fraud and Deceit in the Golden Age of American Mining*, *Doodlebugs and Dowzers: A History of Unusual Ways to Search for Oil* (in press). Shorter published works include "The imaginary gold mines of Kansas" (Mining History Journal, 2007, v.14 p.11-22. free PDF download at <https://www.mininghistoryassociation.org/Journal/MHJ-v14-2007-Plazak.pdf>), and "Making gasoline from water" (Skeptic magazine, 2019, v.24 n.1. p.8-13).

The Cripple Creek District Museum invites you to learn more about *The Curse of Cripple Creek* on Sunday, March 24, 2024 at 1 p.m. The talk will be held at the Golden Nugget Hotel, 119 N Fifth St, Cripple Creek. This program is presented as a public service of the Cripple Creek District Museum in partnership with the City of Cripple Creek. FMI, please call 719-689-9540.

Call for Entries: Open show, "Portraits"

by Blue Spruce Gallery

The Blue Spruce Gallery is hosting our "almost Spring" show in March, with the theme of "Portraits." Entries are due the 4th of March to the gallery at 205 West Main in Florence. Entry forms are available at the gallery or online at www.bluespruceart.com. Cash prizes will be awarded. Three-dimensional work is accepted into the show as well as 2-D. Artists can enter up to three pieces for this winter show. There will be a reception at the gallery with wine and light refreshments on March 9 from 4-6 p.m.



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Virginia Lynch: Development and Expansion of Forensic Nursing Science

by Kathy Hansen

Have you ever noticed how one thing can lead to another or how early experiences influence the ongoing process of career development? We are honored and privileged to share how Virginia Lynch contributed to the Forensic Sciences by creating a new discipline known as Forensic Nursing Science, which includes sexual assault nurse examiners (SANE)s, protocols for nurse death investigators and nurse coroners, and for clinical forensic cases of trauma and death, curricula and more. Forensic science is a multidisciplinary investigative body pertaining to the use of scientific methods or expertise to investigate legal matters that might be presented in a court of law. Let's start at the beginning.

The Early Years

Virginia A. Measures grew up with the protection and privilege of being the seventh generation Texans in the environment of cattle and horse ranchers. She was like any of the other fifth graders she walked home from school with, except when they agreed to play softball at Dr. Smith's house. You see, Virginia had seen Doc Smith's library containing an anatomy and physiology book, first published in 1948 by a young artist, named Frank Netter. His drawings of all things anatomical looked like photographs when she first saw them. She was intrigued and mesmerized by the colorful drawings of the various layers of tissue that lie beneath the skin. She politely asked permission to read this book and was granted the same every time. The title of the advanced publication is "The Ciba Collection of Medical Illustrations, a compilation of Pathological and Anatomical Paintings" prepared by Frank H. Netter, M. D. Virginia had no idea at that time of the depth and breadth of the impact that book had on her. Although she said, "I knew there was something I was meant to do, I just didn't know what it was."

Time moved forward and so did Virginia. As a teenager, Virginia volunteered to be a candy-striper at the local hospital. She remembers running into Dr. Smith, who was delighted to see Virginia volunteering. He asked if she would like to observe a surgical procedure and she readily agreed and continued to observe throughout that summer. She recalled that she needed to stand on a wooden apple crate to see the surgery! Virginia was amazed at this privilege because she would learn years down the road that this type of privilege was not afforded to seniors enrolled in the undergraduate nursing program she eventually attended. Dr. Smith's surgical nurse, Billie Francis Gouge became a mentor, role model, and influencer in many aspects of

Virginia's life. They remained friends for over 60 years. A couple of high school experiences impacted Virginia. First, she joined Future Nurses of America. She graduated a full semester earlier than the rest of her classmates; she was able to attend a semester of community college before she went back to march with the high school band as a Majorette and walk the stage with her cap and gown. She was recognized as the single Distinguished Alumni of the class of '59. She also fell in love with her high school sweetheart. They married; she became Virginia Lynch. They started a family raising three daughters on their ranch of cattle and horses. Virginia continued with the trail riding, parades and rodeo grand entry participations. Virginia stated, "My life was idyllic, I wanted for nothing, except I wanted to go to college to become a nurse." They divorced.

The undergraduate experience

Virginia enrolled in the Bachelor of Science — Nursing program at Harris College of Nursing, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth Texas. She was a freshman the same year as her oldest daughter, graduating the same year from different universities. Virginia was a senior in her undergraduate program. The professor of a leadership class brought up the subject of sexual violence because she was writing her doctoral dissertation on rape. Virginia was not familiar with the subject of rape, nor had she ever met anyone desecrated in that way; she was 42 years old. Her response, "It violated my sensitivity and my sense of justice! It made a deep impact on me. I wanted to learn how to reduce and prevent this gender-based crime!"

The professor gave an assignment — write a paper on how violence affects patients and how it involves law enforcement because as a nurse you will deal with the police. Reading how to care for victims of crimes and collection of evidence intrigued Virginia. She visited a crime lab to research her paper. She recalls seeing walls covered with guns recovered from criminals, paint cans collected from arson cases, a refrigerator with a jar of human fingers in formaldehyde, a blood-stained chair where a gynecologist last sat when his wife shot him. These things captivated Virginia. Her experience at the crime lab deepened her curiosity, becoming a launching pad for her career.

While Virginia was in a rotation through the Emergency Department as an undergrad at TCU, Virginia was assigned to care for her first rape victim. The woman was strangled and raped by her ex-fiance and barely survived. Virginia watched the



This is Virginia's graduate degree graduation photo. She did not attend the cap and gown ceremony as she was invited to London to present her thesis on Clinical Forensic Nursing for the first time and didn't want to miss the opportunity to speak before the Association of Police Surgeons.

bruises become visible around her neck. The victim was certain that the ex-fiance would come to the hospital to kill her! Virginia did her very best to care for this terrified woman and became aware of the various levels of treatment required for victims of sexual violence.

Virginia said to the police officer, "I hope you apprehend this perpetrator!" "It won't happen," replied the officer. Virginia was shocked and asked, "Why not?"

The police officer answered, "Because doctors and nurses unintentionally destroy evidence as you care for the patients."

That answer did not sit well with Virginia; she wanted to know why and how. It just so happened that Virginia knew the director of the crime lab. She went to him and asked him, "Is it true?"

He answered, "Yes."

Virginia asked, "How can that be?" The answer was twofold: First, there was no training. Doctors and nurses had no idea how to collect, document and protect evidence. Forensic science is not a required component of medical school. Police cannot go into the exam room. Prior to the 1970s, doctors and nurses unintentionally discarded evidence as they had no grasp of collection or preservation techniques. The second factor is time: If you're saving someone's life, there is no time to swab, diagram, etc.

Forensic science involves the process of collection of evidence, the documentation and analysis of recovered evidence, and testifying in court regarding the significance of the evidence at a crime scene.

The body is considered a crime scene in the trauma unit.

Introduction to death investigation

Death investigation was a different aspect of forensic science that intrigued Virginia. Did you know that prior to 1970 forensic medicine was primarily practiced only on the deceased, a field known as forensic pathology? Generally, the only living people examined by forensic pathologists were police officers injured in the line of duty based on legal issues surrounding the case. Yet another field, clinical forensic medicine existed throughout other countries for survivors of a crime. This became the impetus for Virginia to develop clinical forensic nursing that would provide forensic examinations for the survivors of crime related trauma. Crime victims rarely received a forensic exam. Contemporary forensic nursing provides clinical forensic examinations for all patients reporting crime and liability-related injury admitted to hospital emergency departments fortunate enough to have a team of forensic nurse clinicians — as employed by Memorial Hospital in Colorado Springs.

Out of 254 counties in Texas, only 13 had a medical examiner in the system. Counties had to be large enough to afford forensic physicians, vehicles and resources. Rural counties had justices of the peace (non-medical elected officers of death) instead of physicians. That meant many cases were undetected instead of being fully investigated. In other parts of

continued on next page

the world another category of forensic medicine was practiced known as clinical forensic medicine; those who cared for the forensic survivors would arrive at the scene, interpret wounds, recover evidence and testify in court. Virginia would become one of the key components in changing this for the USA through the development of forensic nurses to help provide more forensic professionals in the field. Forensic physicians remain a scarcity worldwide.

Sometimes tragedies become unexpected benefits. Virginia was thrown from her horse, leaving her leg shattered and confining her to a wheelchair during her recovery. She needed to change her area of study from Critical Care to Psychiatric Nursing to accommodate the healing of her leg. She pursued an internship as a Psychiatric Nurse. Many of her patients had been victims of sexual trauma, domestic violence, both child abuse and the elder abuse, echoing the fears and pain expressed by the first rape victim Virginia encountered. She saw a pattern and she knew how to treat the patients. Although forensic nurses do not practice criminal investigation and are not a component of law enforcement, she was painfully aware that conviction would depend on forensic science and felt an obligation to do something.

Virginia graduated in 1982 with her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the Harris College of Nursing at TCU. She was working as a surgical nurse. Some patients lived and some died; Virginia wondered if it was something surgical staff did or did not do. She asked to attend a clinical autopsy for a patient that died. Many of the patients who died were trauma cases, which were handled by the medical examiner. Virginia went to the director of the crime lab, requesting an introduction to the medical examiner. Virginia was intrigued once again.

By 1984 Virginia pursued a medical/legal independent study and internship at the Southwestern Institute of Forensic Sciences in Dallas, TX, under the direction of Dr. Charles Petty and Dr. Patrick Besant-Matthews. She became a Medical Death Investigator, earning her certificate in 1985.

It was after she earned her undergraduate nursing degree that a personal tragedy would strike; her housekeeper's daughter was raped. This was a first generation college student. The young woman dropped out of college. Virginia realized a Rape Crisis Program was needed and began to advocate for such a center. She knew firsthand of the necessity of psychiatric nursing care; a component of forensic healthcare, which also includes the recognition, collection, and preservation of specimens that would later be used as evidence was paramount.

Virginia developed the Rape Crisis Program and called on her mentor, Dr. Stone to come and instruct the application of the rape kit and other issues caring for forensic evidence.

Prior to the 1980s sexual violence was not a public topic, especially in rural America. No one talked about sexual violence in Parker County. In fact, one of the judges said, "Why do we need a Rape Crisis Program? People in Parker County don't get raped." To which the district attorney touted, "Oh yes, they do!" and went on to share that a three-year-old child had contracted a sexually transmitted disease. Virginia, appalled at the idea of a child being raped, succeeded in establishing the first Rape Crisis Center in Parker County and was awarded "Notable Woman of Texas" award.

Virginia was not the only person considering the importance of forensic evidence at this time in the United States. A confluence of interest came from attor-

neys, law enforcement agents, and medical professionals. Physicians realized that the Registered Nurse, skilled in forensic science technique, held the appropriate acumen necessary to provide the critical requirements of forensic healthcare in sexual assault examination.

Development of the Master of Science in Nursing, Clinical Specialization of Forensic Nursing

Meanwhile, during her tenure as a medical death investigator, Virginia realized she wanted to increase her education in the forensic sciences. She searched for a joint Master of Science degree in nursing science and forensic science. It didn't exist. She designed her own degree program, titling it Forensic Nursing Science, and presented this new program to Dr. Samuel Hughes, chair of the graduate nursing department, who fully supported her. She was the first to graduate from this program. Unfortunately, he died the next year and was replaced by a professor who did not recognize the potential and closed the program after Virginia graduated indicating there was not enough interest in it. Although disappointed, she was not to be deterred. She would soon write the curriculum for a revised Master of Science in Nursing in the Clinical Specialization of Forensic Nursing, a program that would be adopted by other universities. She would also be named Distinguished Alumni at TCU and later named Distinguished Alumni after developing the graduate degree in forensic nursing at the University of Texas, Arlington, College of Nursing because it was the original degree program in this specialty worldwide!

SANE

Virginia went on to create forensic nursing protocols, programs, curriculum, and publish the first two textbooks in this discipline as hospitals in Texas, Tennessee and Minnesota became the first states where doctors realized they needed a better plan of care for victims of sexual violence. Since nurses provide more direct patient care, they were recognized as the ideal clinicians to provide forensic healthcare protocols that include collecting evidence specimens, documenting microscopic injuries, and are formidable witnesses in court. This discipline has now grown into its own specialty, Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANE), a sub-specialty of Forensic Nursing Science.

The scientific investigation of death

By 1984, The Honorable Judge Harris Worcester agreed there was a need for increased forensic sciences in Parker County, specifically for a Medical Examiner System to ensure the proper cause, manner, and mechanism of death for a growing number of questioned deaths. But resources were tight, so they created a Medical Examiner District enabling them to pool scarce resources by joining a large metropolitan system. The advancement required a Medical Examiner Investigator for the county of Parker. The candidate to be the Medical Investigator must meet four criteria:

1. Work outside law enforcement (to avoid conflict of interest),
2. Be familiar with forensic science,
3. Knowledgeable in medicine,
4. Familiar with psychology.

He called Virginia, "You would be just perfect for this position!" Indeed, Virginia met all four of the criteria, thanks in part to that fractured leg that led her to the Psychiatric Nursing experience as an undergrad.



Virginia on the stairway of her home. photo by Jeff Hansen

During our interview with Virginia, she shared how forensic nursing and forensic sciences benefit the victim, as well as those who are falsely accused. She related a case of an elderly man who had remarried to a much younger woman. His adult children did not trust the new wife or believe her intentions were honest, in fact they had assaulted her a few years before their father's death. Perhaps this is why the wife did not want her husband's family notified of his death as she was certain they would blame her. Virginia was called in to examine his body. She noticed a blue/green discoloration on his lower abdomen and recognized this as a normal process of advanced medical causes. Because of Virginia's experience and medical knowledge, the young wife was exonerated of any wrongdoing.

This was also a learning experience. Virginia identified the lack of knowledge around what to do when a death occurs in a hospital. Virginia developed a checklist for nurses regarding what information to gather and how to do it in a way to assist in death investigation.

AAFS

As a Medical Death Investigator, Virginia was accepted into the American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS). At that time nursing was not a recognized forensic discipline. However, "I was accepted because I was a medical death investigator with a degree in Nursing Science. I continued to demonstrate the benefits of being a nurse in death scene investigation through the scientific papers I presented at AAFS conferences, and in time my section of the Academy asked me to define and title what I called Forensic Nursing. They immediately agreed that the work we did was forensic in nature related to human violence... death investigation, sexual assault, child abuse, domestic violence, crime-related trauma, evaluations of prisoners, nursing jurisprudence, etc.... and they voted to accept it as a discipline...30 years ago."

Virginia continues, "The year after I graduated from the University of Texas, I joined the AAFS, I realized nurses' role in this field is critical to clinical healthcare.

Joining a group of nurses who worked in the forensic aspects of nursing, primarily sexual assault, and proposed they were "Forensic Nurses" at their founding meeting. They recognized the connection and voted to embrace the conceptual model I had designed at UTA. I was voted the founding president. We became the International Association of Forensic Nurses in 1992 with 72 nurses, half were from Canada. Currently, 30 years later, we have over 8,500 members in 24 countries." Virginia was recently honored that the association has established an endowment foundation in her name to promote Forensic Nursing Science globally.

Virginia stated, "Now we have been recognized and petitioned the Academy to give us a section of our own. That was two years ago, and we are now designated the Forensic Nursing Science Section, the 12th section to comprise AAFS."

Today, the original forensic nursing program has advanced education and has evolved into 92 separate programs at various levels, from certificate to doctoral programs across the United States and expanding in several other countries. She continues to speak, consult, and publish on this topic. Her 11-page curriculum vitae is impressive indeed, and far too much to encapsulate in this publication.

Conclusion

Virginia's work has expanded forensic nursing and forensic science across the USA and to over 40 countries globally. Visiting her home office is much like going to an international museum as she has unique gifts and awards representing the countries where she has worked.

We are delighted to share this brief introduction to the woman who founded forensic nursing science because she lives in Divide, Colorado. March is Women's History month. Her contributions to nursing, science and humanity have opened doors for the reduction and prevention of violence against women and children across the globe! Thank you, Virginia, for your sensitivities, for your sense of justice and for carving out this new field of science and nursing!



Virginia and Zug Standing Bear in their home in Divide. photo by Jeff Hansen

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Garden Park Bone Beds Near Cañon City, Colorado by Steven Wade Veatch

*The sun burns in a blue, cloudless sky over bone beds.
Everything is quiet in the heat of Garden Park. A coyote darts by,
following a scent like a moth to light.*

*Dinosaurs once roamed here in ancient marshlands.
In Late Jurassic times, a long-necked Camarasaurus and Diplodocus
reached up high in trees for sweet Mesozoic greenery to eat.
A Stegosaurus tried to move, mired in mud;
a Ceratosaurus looked at her nested eggs and sniffed the humid air.*

*Fossil hunters and scientists have dug here since 1877,
among the hills and cliffs along the Fourmile Creek Canyon.
Cope and Marsh* staged part of their Bone Wars here,
where their rivalry played out at a heated pace.*

*Today, picks strike rock layers and shovels dig down through deep time
into thick Morrison mudstone to where buried bones of dinosaurs rested
for millions of years.
Brushes clean, sifters shake, measurements and photos taken, and flies swatted—
a tooth of the ferocious Allosaurus pops up, then fossils of turtles and crocodiles.
More bones, and then a flurry of discovery, wonder, and excitement.*

*While standing on the brink of time, I peer into the past and learn
some secrets of Earth's ancient times.
As the sun dips down, the day's digging ends.
While listening to the twilight, I let the milkweed fall
from my hand to follow the breeze.*

*Watching the evening end and the wind tease the tips of grass,
I think about these fossils and wonder what creatures,
in a distant future, will look at our fossil remains.
What will they make of us?*

*Edward Drinker Cope and Othniel Charles Marsh, were preeminent paleontologists who battled each other for dominance in the world of 19th century paleontology.

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Critter Corner

Boo in the snow...

Boo and Kacee warming back up after snow play - Sam Arnold, Lake George, CO

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

Millie and her Dragon

They meet

by Gilrund the Historian

It was a dark night and Millie had a long way to go before she got back home. Father had been sick for three days and the medicine he needed was now in Millie's bag as she hurried home. Mom wasn't able to go for she had to care for father. Millie was 16 years old and had been to the village many times by herself. She knew where to find the doctor for the medicine.

Millie had wanted to start early to go into the village, but one thing led to another, and she didn't get started until after noon. It was a long walk, but she was young, strong and could walk quickly. She thought that she would be back before dark. Again, one thing led to another, and she left the village just as the sun was going down.

"No problem." She thought, "I know the way home and I should be home before dinner." So, here she was walking as fast as she could through the forest on a well-used path, when she heard a sound that she had never heard before.

Millie stopped for a moment to listen. There it was again, the flapping of wings. But not just normal bird wings, these were big wings, and they didn't sound like feathered wings. Millie was smart to have brought the lantern that Mother had insisted on her bringing. So, she carefully lit the lantern and continued her walk, but a bit slower now. She looked closely into the trees of the forest as she walked and listened, holding her lantern high, so that she could see further.

Did she actually hear something? Or was it just a rustling of the trees?

Millie started walking a bit faster when she heard a deep rumbling voice call out for her to stop.

Millie stopped and looked around in the trees and up the path that she was following. Then she slowly turned and looked back down the path behind her.

There he was standing, covering the whole path from one side to the other. His folded wings touched the trees on both sides and his great dragon head held down just enough so that she could see his fierce face. It was a dragon, a green dragon, and it was looking right at her with his red eyes as it spoke to her in the same deep gravelly voice that had told her to stop. "There is danger ahead. You must climb on my back, and I will carry you home to safety. Do this quickly!"

Milly had heard of dragons but had never actually seen one. She didn't know that they could talk to humans and the legends had not mentioned that they cared about humans. Millie

wasn't too sure what she should do and stood looking at the huge beast.

"Mount my back now!" insisted the dragon in an urgent voice as it looked over her head into the darkness of the path ahead.

Millie ran to the dragon and as it raised its right wing, she ran under it and grabbed scales to climb up onto the creature's back. The lantern was lying on the ground in front of the dragon and when she was seated on its back, she saw the danger he had spoken of coming out of the darkness.

There were four men dressed in black carrying swords and walking swiftly toward them. The dragon roared loudly. They stopped as he jumped up, threw out his wings and took to the air. Millie was hanging on to two scales as tightly as she could, and her legs were locked to the dragon's sides. She screamed, "I'm not a princess!" as they rose out of the forest and higher into the darkness of the night sky.

It was a full moon and it rose up as the dragon flew on toward the farm of Millie's father. Millie was frightened, but this was the most exciting thing that had ever happened to her. She was actually riding on the back of a dragon in the light of a full moon. Her hands flew up into the air and she squealed in delight as the warm summer wind flew past her. Her long dark hair waived in the wind and her dress fluttered as the dragon flew on.

It wasn't long before they started down and there below them was her father's farmhouse. Mom was standing in the front yard with a lantern in her hand looking toward the forest path that Millie was supposed to be walking on.

"Here I am, Mother!" Millie shouted as the dragon started down to land just on the edge of the forest in front of her mother. Mother watched in amazement as the dragon landed. Millie climbed off of its back and ran to her.

The two started for the farmhouse as they heard the dragon say, "I will see you tomorrow afternoon in the meadow."

Millie called out, "Thank you, Mister Dragon. I'll be there." Then with a big grin on her face she followed her mother into the farmhouse with the bag that held the medicine for Father.

There was much talk between mom and Millie, after Father was given his medicine and fell asleep. "Are you really going out to the meadow and meet with this drag-

on?" asked Mother.

"You don't tell a dragon, "No" Mother," replied Millie, "Besides, he already knows that I'm not a princess. So, I don't think that he will eat me. Will he?"

Mother smiled and said, "No, he won't eat you. But what's his name? Where did he come from and why did he pick you to be his?" "How should I know, Mother. We just met on the pathway in the forest, and I think he saved my life."

Millie went on to tell her mother about everything that happened that night and she was going to the meadow tomorrow afternoon to meet the dragon.

The next day, Millie worked on the farm as much as she could and after lunch, she walked through the forest to meet the dragon. She didn't get to the meadow before she saw the dragon in a clear place in the trees and they stopped there to talk.

The big green dragon lay down in the grass, Millie sat down next to him under the trees, and the conversation started.

She found out that his name was Emerald, and he was looking for a human girl to be his "Caretaker." It seems that dragons have legends, too.

In those stories, a dragon would capture a human girl and keep her to clean his scales and fangs, sharpen his talons and polish his golden treasure hoard. Should the dragon become sick or hurt, the girl would take care of him until he was well or died. Then she would get all his treasure hoard.

In return, the girl would have anything that the dragon could do or find for her. The only problem was that dragons lived much longer than humans, so the girls seldom got the treasure hoard.

Then the big question came from Emerald, "Will you take care of me? I don't have a very big treasure hoard, for I am young and haven't found a great deal of treasure yet. You will have to leave your home here and live with me in my cave in the mountains of Zorr. I will take good care of you for all of your life, that is a promise, and dragons never break a promise."

"What of my parents?" replied Millie, "My father is sick and needs care. Sometimes Mother can't care for him, so I must do it. There are things that I do on the farm that must be done.

Who will do those things?"

Emerald smiled a bright toothy smile and replied, "I do have more than enough treasure to care for your parents. So, a helper can be hired for them, and I will give them gold to pay him."

Millie sat and thought as she ran her hand over Emerald's scales. "I must speak with my parents before I make a decision," she said as she looked at the dragon, "They must know what decision I make."

Emerald looked at her and then said, "Then go to them. We will meet again tomorrow afternoon here in the forest as we have done today for your answer."

The rest of the afternoon was spent with Millie leaning against Emerald's side and talking about how a dragon lives and how humans live.

It was getting dark, and Millie walked with Emerald through the forest toward her farm. She left him at the forest's edge.

There was a long discussion that night in the farmhouse over dinner. At last, it was left to Millie to decide.

Father was getting better with the medicine that he had and would soon be able to work on the farm again.

Morning came and Millie had made her decision as she walked toward the forest for her meeting with Emerald the dragon.

Emerald was standing in the trees waiting for her. When he saw her, he settled down in the grass and Millie sat down next to him and put her hand on his leg.

"I will live with you, Emerald, in your cave in the mountains of Zorr. I will serve you for the rest of my life as you will care for my parents."

Emerald jumped to his feet and threw back his head and roared to the sky. Flame shot into the air as he roared in happiness.

Millie jumped back and laughed as she watched the dragon's happy roar. Then she jumped on his back, and they flew through the hole that his flame had burned in the tops of the trees into the sky.

Round and round Emerald flew as Millie held on to his scales and laughed as the dragon showed his joy.

Then it was down to land in front of the farmhouse and Millie ran to her parents and told them of her decision. Then she stood

next to Emerald as he said, "I shall provide for you, and you shall want for nothing. You have but to ask."

Millie ran into the farmhouse and gathered up the few things that were hers. She put them in a small bag and returned to climb on Emerald's back.

"Goodbye, Mom and Dad," she shouted as Emerald rose from the ground, "I will see you when I can."

Emerald and Millie would come to visit every third month of the year when the dragon would bring enough gold to supply the needs of her parents.

Millie had been with Emerald for three years when, as she was polishing his green scales, he asked her a question, "My precious Mille, you are very precious to me, you know. I would like to ask you a question that may require much thought before you answer me."

Millie stopped her work and looked at Emerald waiting for the question.

"There is dragon magic that is not used much, except by the famous Dragon Riders of Zorr. I'm sure that you know of them. They are the air force of the king."

"Yes, I have heard of them," answered Millie, "They keep our kingdom free of war because they are so powerful."

"So, you do know of them," smiled Emerald, "That is good and makes my question more believable. They have a ritual that they go through in the choosing of the riders that bonds the rider and dragon together for life. It also gives the rider the life years of the dragon. Some of us live for over 400 years. I would like you and I to do this ritual. Will you stay with me for a dragon lifetime?"

Millie looked at Emerald with questions on her face as she thought for a few moments.

"What happens if I die? Will you die? If you die, will I die too?" she asked.

Emerald smiled his dragon smile and answered, "No, that's not how the magic works. If either one of us dies the other will live on. So, if I go to the Crystal Dragon, all of this is yours to do with as you please. Also, should you go to the Creator, then I shall be very lonely until I can find another to take your place, if that is possible."

Millie was quiet for a while as she

thought of what Emerald had just told her. She didn't know what living so long would be like. Things would change a lot, and what if she didn't like the way things changed? What then? What would she look like? Would she look old or stay young looking for hundreds of years?

She looked at Emerald and started asking him the questions on her mind. The dragon answered them as much as he could, but there were so many that after a while all he could say was, "Wait and see." It was over an hour before Millie had most of her questions answered and made her decision. "Yes, Emerald, I will go through the ritual with you. Will it hurt?"

Emerald smiled and answered, "Only a little. Stand in front of me and look at me, but don't move."

Millie stood right in front of Emerald and looked at him as he raised his claw and scratched her forehead then licked off the blood with his tongue. Then he said, "Be proud human, you are now a part of dragon kind."

Millie's hand went up to her forehead and touched a small scar as she said, "Is that it?"

Emerald smiled as he replied, "That is all. But you and I are now bonded for life. I am yours and you are mine. We will do anything for the other, just as do the Dragon Rider's of Zorr."

"So, now I will live as long as you live?" asked Millie, "That's odd, I don't feel any different. I didn't have chills or get dizzy. Nothing happened Emerald. Are you sure it worked? Shouldn't I have changed in some way to show that it worked? I didn't turn green or grow any scales, or wings. I would have liked to have grown some wings. That would have been fun. But I'm still just me."

Millie looked up at Emerald as he said, "And that's just the way I want it."

Millie wrapped her arms around the dragon's leg and hugged as she smiled.

To be continued...

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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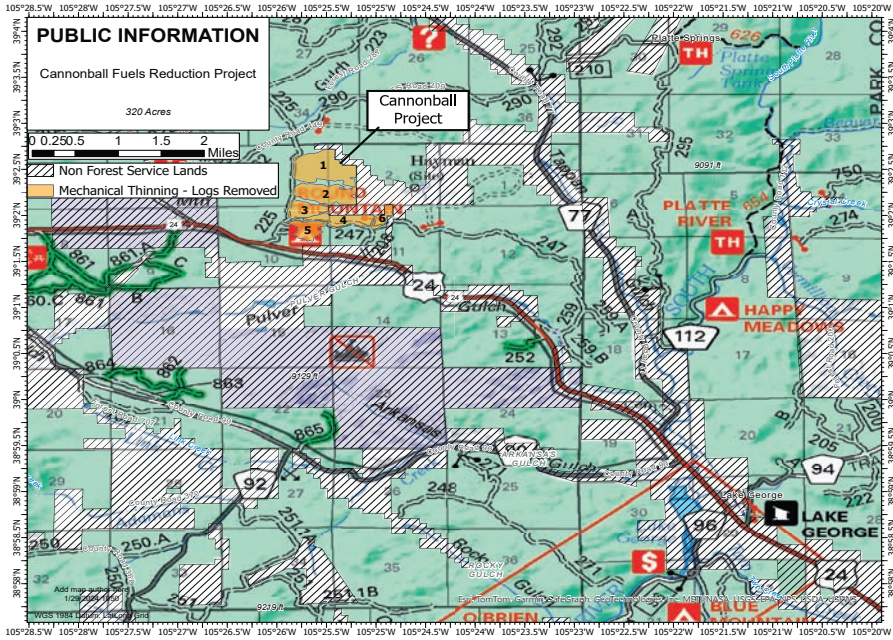
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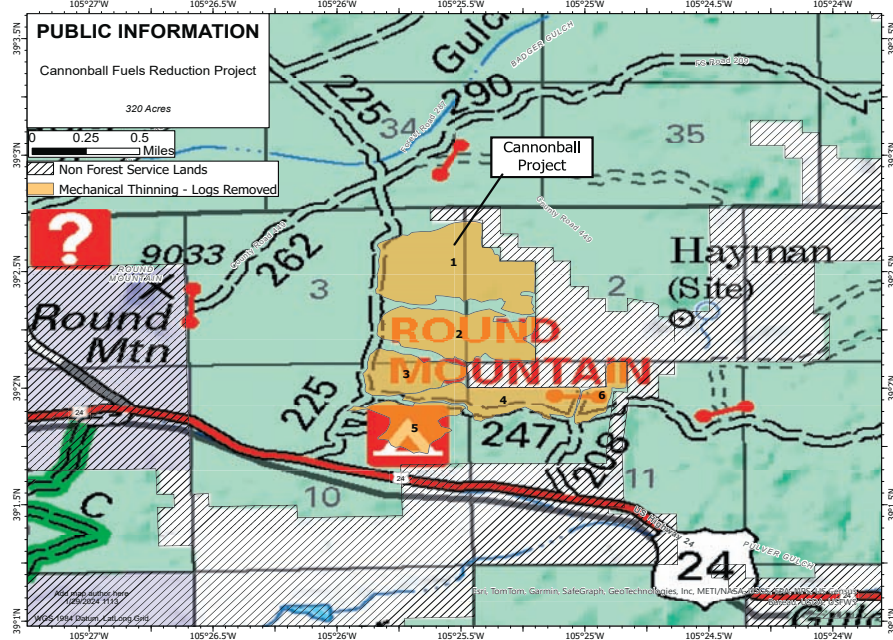


Cannonball 1 Fuels Reduction Project

by Joshua Cowden

The South Park Ranger District on the Pike-San Isabel National Forests & Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands will implement the Cannonball 1 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 400 acres of National Forest approximately five miles northwest of Lake George, Colorado. The project lies east of Forest Road 225 north of National Forest Round Mountain Campground. Work is expected to last approximately four months. Mechanized thinning with heavy equipment will be utilized. Mechanical thinning is often used in conjunction with prescribed burns, which can be used to significantly reduce the amount of fuel in an area. Together, these techniques can help to reduce the risk of wildfire, promote forest health, and provide a range of other ecological benefits. Cannonball 1 links previous and future fire mitigation projects in the Badger Flats area. Future mechanized thinning is planned for the west side of Forest Road 225 as well as prescribed burning to reduce surface fuel loading and reduce fire intensity. “Reducing hazardous fuels lowers fire intensity and the risk of catastrophic wildland fires which minimizes the risk to firefighter and public safety,” said South Park District Ranger Josh Voorhis. “In the ongoing effort to create and sustain resilient landscapes, fire management personnel on the PSICC implement a variety of mechanical and prescribed fire projects.” Logs resulting from the thinning will be required to be hauled off National Forest lands and utilized for Forest products.

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




Adopt Me

by TCRAS

Sasha

Sasha is a 7-year-old spayed female lab mix. She is very shy but gets so excited when she gets to go for walks. Sasha would love a home that will be patient and kind, giving her space to blossom into the sweet dog we know she is. She loves to play chase in the yard and will make someone a wonderful furry friend! To set a meet and greet with Sasha call 719-686-7707. This space donated by the Ute Country News to promote shelter animal adoption.



Fairplay's Front Street

by Flip Boettcher
photos by Flip Boettcher

What two blocks in Park County have an historic open air museum recreating an 1880s Colorado gold mining boom town on one end and a comfortable historic hotel on the other end? Fairplay's historic Front Street and there's lots in between. It's a great place to visit. Fairplay's beginnings were in 1859 with the discovery of gold in Colorado. Front Street was the main thoroughfare through town, as well as the heart of the business district. In 1873, a fire swept through the fledgling town and pretty much destroyed all the wooden buildings on Front Street. The town was quickly rebuilt, but mostly in stone this time and many of those buildings are still in use today housing businesses. Some of the interesting shops and businesses you will find on Front Street include the Unrepentant Artist, which stocks knives and blades of all kinds as well as CBD products. Owner Deb Hamm offers day-long classes for young adults called South Park Skills. Eagle Rock Ranch Mercantile has an interesting gift shop in the front of the store and sells ranch raised beef from the Eagle Rock Ranch. Eagle Rock Ranch has been in operation for 150 years raising beef and harvesting hay from their pastures. In fact, in the early days of the ranch, some of the hay was shipped to the Queen of England and the Czar of Russia to feed their horses. Anyone interested in goat milk and goat milk products should visit Mountain Essentials. Owner Nicole McChesney raises goats, milks them and creates lotions, lip balms, soaps, delicious goat milk fudge and much, much more. At the Colorado Mountain Hat Company, one can get a custom made hat made on equipment from the 1880s. Be prepared though, they have a long back ordered list. Mountain Sun Arts features scroll saw artistry by co-owner Brion Trahan and has a local artists gallery. Trahan also makes decorated, steampunkie wildlife skulls. Mountain Sun Arts has some very interesting items. Coyote Creek Studio Arts has original art and unique gifts by local and Colorado artists. They offer various art classes and are always looking for unique artists for the shop. South Park Pottery had its 37th anniversary last year and has pottery made by founder Pat Pocius. Her son Dan and his wife now run the shop and have added the Real South Park Collection, a museum with original, unique, one-of-a-kind items from the cartoon South Park. still available at your location or select dates at South Park Beauty Co. In addition to Permanent Jewelry, she will be offering her full schedule of silversmithing classes in Fairplay and surrounding areas. Keep River Wilding in mind for jewelry making and Permanent Jewelry parties for your special occasion! Detailed info on classes and services can be found at www.riverwilding.com and email any questions



Millonzi's Italian Restaurant and the Colorado Mountain Hat Company.



South Park Pottery, Lost Antler Trading Post on the left and South Park City at the end of the street.

Cover: Looking west toward South Park City with Coyote Creek, South Park Pottery and Lost Antler Trading Post on the left.



The antique Celtic model Arctic Soda Water Apparatus fountain located in the Silver Scoop Creamery.

to riverwilding@gmail.com. All that walking and shopping at the 10,000 foot elevation is bound to work up one's appetite and Front Street has some great eating and refreshment establishments. Salado offers delicious, seasonal ingredients in their eclectic southwestern cuisine. Millonzi's has an Italian dinner menu. Park Bar and Platte River Saloon have great food, cold beer and drinks. The Silver Scoop Creamery has a case stocked with delicious baked goods, a great lunch menu and of course ice cream. Of interest though in the Silver Scoop is the antique soda fountain. The soda fountain called the Celtic model Arctic Soda Water Apparatus was made by the JW Tufts Company in Boston in the 1880s. The fountain is made of marble and silver plated brass fixtures and weighs around 700 pounds, according to Silver Scoop owner Dale Fitting. The soda fountain sits on a granite-topped, carved maple cabinet. The fountain is not operational though. It was originally a soda fountain in Vermont and Fitting acquired it from a collector in 1997 for the Silver Scoop Creamery. Don't miss it. Then there's the Snitching Lady Distillery. Although the Snitching Lady does not offer food, they do offer on-site distilled whiskeys, bourbons and in season fruit brandies made by owner Thomas Williams. Williams also has a malting floor in the back of the Snitching Lady where he malts his own grains for the distilling. This June, the Snitching Lady will be celebrating their 6th anniversary. After such an exhausting day, one should probably plan on spending the night. What better place to stay than the historic Hand Hotel located at the east end of Front Street. The Hand Hotel was built and started in 1932 by the Hand family and offers comfortable accommodations, breakfast and two gift emporiums. One might even get lucky and see one of the ghostly apparitions that are said to haunt the hotel. (For more on the Hand Hotel see the January 2024 issue of the Ute Country News.) So, plan on a unique, interesting visit to Fairplay's historic Front Street soon, you won't be disappointed.

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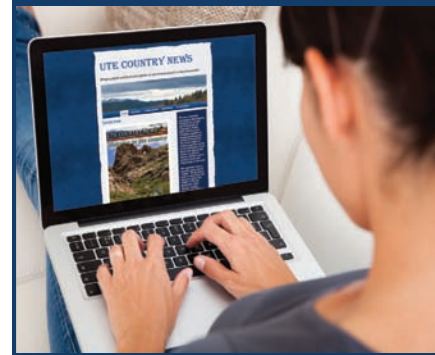
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Pharmgirl Saving Grace

by Peggy Badgett

Some call it fate. Others call it karma. No matter what you name it, animals and fowl in need always found me. My 20-acre farm in the middle of Northwest Illinois had become a refuge for unwanted creatures. So, I wasn't surprised one October evening when the quintessential question of "why did the chicken cross the road?" presented an answer. She was searching for me.

The cycling banquet scheduled for that evening promised to be fun; I was looking forward to hanging out with my friends and reminiscing of our past summer adventures. Driving along a busy highway, I sang along to a melody on the radio. I grinned, remembering my youngest daughter's query regarding the last song I had stumbled through the night before. "Mom, who sings this song?" she had asked. I answered with the name of the artist. "Let's keep it that way," she had said. The joys of teenagers. Suddenly the truck braked in front of me: I slammed on mine. It was rut season in the Midwest; bucks were so focused on chasing does that they didn't pay attention to traffic. But it wasn't a deer. Instead, a brown chicken darted out in front of my car. Her terrified eyes met mine for a moment, then she scurried to the other side of the road.

Cars honked angrily. I accelerated and weighed my choices. Option 1: rescue the hen. Option 2: arrive on time for the event and be haunted by her deer-in-the-headlights stare forever. Easy decision. I pulled off the highway into a farmer's lane, made a U-turn, and drove back to the scene. The chicken was innocently pecking at some weeds near a blacktop driveway. I drove onto it and got out of the car. She immediately ran away. The garage door was open, so I poked my head inside and called hello. A man was welding several pieces of metal in the corner. I shouted. He jumped. Wiping his grease-stained hands on a shop towel, he tilted his mask up. I smiled at him awkwardly, pointed at the hen, and asked "Is that your chicken?" He nodded. "She ran in front of my car"

Something for everyone at the District Museum

by Jeanne Gripp

The Cripple Creek District Museum has an event packed year ahead for visitors and locals alike. History Talks, concerts, Ghostly Walking Tours, and a chance to win a Gold Nugget are just a few of the fun activities planned.

In addition to all the activities, the Cripple Creek District Museum will be introducing new exhibits and a needed addition to the staff. The exhibits include Labor Strikes, a General Store, improved signage and new items added throughout the buildings. The District Museum is also pleased to announce the addition of a full time archivist to manage the Museum's valuable collections of historical information. The District Museum is open weekends from 10-4 p.m. until Memorial Day, at which time it will be open seven days a week, 10-5 p.m.

The Information Train Car, located next to the main museum, will be opening in late May, just in time for visitors. Information about local attractions, maps, and events can be found inside along with old photos and books for sale.

Events kick off in March with the first of four history talks planned. The Curse of Cripple Creek. The talks will continue throughout the year with Civil War Medicine, A. E. Carlton's life, and a special presentation by Jan Mackell Collins. All History Talks will be held at The Golden Nugget Hotel, 119 N Fifth St, Cripple Creek. All History Talks are free, begin at 1 p.m. and refreshments will be served.

A musical summer is planned with a variety of entertainment. July 4th will



From left to right: Hannah with Grace, Alex with Feather, Amie with Marge the Rooster

I told him.

His wife appeared in the doorway. I relayed my story again and she sighed. The hen was the sole survivor of four chicks. They had purchased them because they thought it would be nice to have fresh eggs. They hadn't known about raccoons, owls and coyotes. I explained that we kept a small but well-loved flock on our farm. Simultaneously they asked me if I would take her. "Of course," I responded. We plotted her capture.

The husband grabbed a large fishing net from a corner of the garage. The chicken nimbly evaded it. We surrounded her and took turns trying to grab her as she ducked, dashed, and dodged. Cars and trucks whizzed past. We must have been a sight. Three adults against one chicken and she was winning. After 20 minutes, I was sweaty, dirty, barefoot, and my good clothes were stained from a near miss that ended in a slide my old softball coach would have been proud of. Finally, as the sun began to set, our runaway slowed her pace and took shelter in a nearby spruce.

I worked my way through the tree's branches until I was able to reach her tail feathers. She squawked loudly as I carefully pulled her out, but quieted after I cradled her in my scratched arms. The couple loaned me a small crate. I placed the chicken inside, waved goodbye to them, and set off for my event. After parking in the bowling alley lot, I told the hen I'd be back and headed into the banquet hall, pulling what I hoped was the last

pine needle from my hair.

I found the seat my friends had saved me, grabbed a plate and filled it with food. Between forkfuls of salad and mashed potatoes, I explained why I was late. They all shook their heads and chuckled. They invited the chicken inside, but I declined since they probably intended to cook her. After the program, I drove my new acquisition home. Hannah plucked the hen from my arms as soon as I brought her into the farmhouse. We fed her some quartered grapes. I named her Grace in honor of the song that was playing on my car radio when she found me.

Our flock was peacefully roosting in their shed when we turned the light on. Hannah placed our new acquisition near the feeder and bucket of water. Grace fixed her beady orange eye on us, nibbled some cracked corn, and drank a little water. Then she hopped up onto the rail next to Marge the rooster like she had lived there her whole life. She had a new home on Running Horse Farm. Her decision to cross the road had been a good one.

Peggy Badgett is an artist and writer. Her website is pharmgirl.org. She can be reached at coloradopharimgirl@gmail.com.

A showing of her artwork will be held at Buena Vista Art and Photo on Main Street during the month of March. An artist reception will be held March 1 from 4-6pm. Please stop by to say hello!



kick off a three-day concert event. More concerts are planned for Labor Day and later in September. Exit West will kick off the holiday weekend by performing on July 4th. Besides their own concert series, Music at the Depot, the District Museum will play host to dances for Top of the World Rodeo weekend, Donkey Derby Days, and Fall Festival in October. All concerts are FREE for the public.

Mysteries at the District Museum returns summer of 2024, giving visitors to the museum a chance to be entered into a drawing

to win a gold nugget. Visitors find answers in the museum to questions and then enter their answer sheet into a drawing. The visitor with the most correct questions wins a gold nugget. Three winners will be picked at the end of the summer season.

The hauntingly popular Ghost Tours return weekends in September and October. What better way to have fun and get scared at the same time! FMI on any of the events or the museum, call 719-689-9540 or send an email to director@cripplecreekmuseum.com.



Life-Enhancing Journeys We need to talk

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

"We Need to Talk." This statement strikes fear into most people's hearts. What is it about these four little words that can fill a person with such dread? Generally, these words rarely come from strangers. They come from people who are important in your life, such as your partners, friends, bosses or family members. Without offering any hints as to what they want to talk about, it can seem demanding or manipulative. Receiving a message that makes you feel uncertain can cause feelings of anxiety, and those words can send the person to whom you are addressing into a panic, searching their recollection for what they might have done wrong. If your desire is to be heard, feel understood or to grow closer together, you might want to be cautious about using the phrase "we need to talk."

When you hear "we need to talk," you are on guard. Then, bracing yourself for the worst, you go into survival mode. All of this sends a warning to the Amygdala, the reactive or emotional brain structure, which gets triggered in one-tenth of a second. This part of your brain is constantly on the lookout for anything that may be harmful to you. Its function is to be concerned with your survival and goes into protection mode to defend yourself quickly. You cannot think, respond, find a solution, or discuss anything because you are in full-blown survival mode. Nothing usually gets resolved when you are experiencing anxiety. It would be great if those few words could inspire your curiosity instead of feeling attacked.

I recall an incident early in my marriage when my husband started his own business. He always came home after work yet there were times he came home late. My mind would go into a tailspin, wondering what was going on and who he was with. I worried because I had a sense of doom. I finally decided to talk to him about my fears while preparing myself for the worst. When my husband came home that day, he noticed the distressed look on my face, and I blurted out, "We need to talk." He immediately came over to me and asked me what was going on. Even though I had practiced what I wanted to say over and over in my head, my heart was racing and my palms were sweating. I told him about my fears and asked him what was going on. Smiling broadly, he put his arms around me and explained that as his business was growing, there were tasks he could only do after he closed his shop and the customers were gone. I was so relieved! Together, we came up with a solution and agreed that if either of us was going to be more than 15 minutes later than expected, we would notify each other. Now, more than 40 years later, we both have continued that practice. It is so much easier now that cell phones are everywhere.

Without actually having the "we need to talk" discussion, your mind will take over, creating its own answers to the issue. The mind will torment you using its negativity bias (which is the tendency to pay more attention to negative information than to positive information).

Talking comes naturally to most people, yet communicating clearly is different. Begin by cultivating a sense of safety (a relaxed atmosphere free of potential interruptions with no other people around) so the Amygdala can remain calm and you can have an open conversation. If you want to assist others in understanding your point of view and also find out other people's perspectives, communication is a skill you can acquire and improve upon.

Keep in mind that communicating is not about being right. It is about fixing or preventing a potential problem with a person with whom you are emotionally

attached. Find a time and place where you can talk calmly and slowly, taking conscious, deep breaths, and avoid reacting to any accusations, drama or denial. Pay attention to any "You" statements such as, "You did this...It's your fault..." from the other person.

■ What "we need to talk" is really expressing

What is usually underneath "we need to talk" is often a sense of vulnerability and fear. Recognize that these are natural feelings that everyone experiences. Acknowledge that you may feel uncomfortable with what you want to say. You obviously care enough about the other person to want to have this conversation even though your gut may be in a knot and your heart may be pounding. I have found that writing out what I want to say, like writing a script, makes it easier to express myself clearly, plus, I can prepare what I need to convey during the conversation.

■ Communicating face to face - IRL (in real life)

Here are some examples of how to say something in a way that causes less defensiveness (for both people involved in the conversation):

- "Hey, something's going on, and I'm unsure how to bring it up."
- "This is difficult for me to talk about and I'm really nervous about how to say it."
- "I got some upsetting news and wondered when we can talk about it."
- "I'm concerned about something and I'd like to get your take on it."
- "I'm hoping to have a better understand better something that is happening between us. Can we set aside some time to talk about it without interruptions?"
- "I care about us and I'd like to discuss something that's been bothering me. When can we do that?"

■ Communicating via text

Even though written communication is now so widespread, it still lacks the signals you are used to receiving when face-to-face. You can use "compensatory strategies" like including emojis to clarify the meaning (be sensitive to cultural differences when using emojis). When communicating remotely, figuring out what the sender means is still necessary. This makes the case for never sending someone a message saying: "We need to talk." Instead, consider:

- "Can we meet up IRL? I want to chat about something I can't really explain via text." (By telling them you have something to say that would translate better in real life rather than by text, they might better understand how important what you want to discuss is to you.)
- A face-to-face meeting suggests that you are interested in a conversation, whereas a "talk" implies that you have prepared a speech. You can take the uncertainty and fear out of the dreaded "talk" by making it clear that you want to discuss something with them, not just talk at them.
- "There's something on my mind. How about I come over later to chat?" (As you are the one looking to lead the discussion, you should keep the focus on "I" rather than "we," and "want" rather than "need.")
- "Are you free for a chat? There's something I'd like to discuss." (Keep your text casual to ensure that your partner does not start out the conversation feeling defensive while you are emphasizing that this is important to you).

If you receive a "we need to talk" message with no context, asking what it

is about might be worthwhile before you agree to a conversation.

Listening, especially to criticism, can be difficult. It requires energy, focus and self-awareness. There are ways to participate in the conversation and avoid getting defensive, by using what is available in your body, such as conscious breathing, bilateral movement (the ability to use the right and left sides of the body with alternating movements to keep the brain functioning — our brain tends to shut down when we are in our survival mode. Walking or tapping your toes left then right, moving back and forth, are two examples of bilateral movement), and mindfulness (a practice of paying attention to the present moment with acceptance and without judgment).

■ Not understanding what hurts

What do you do when you feel something troubling you but you cannot explain it? Start by revealing that you are unsure how to talk about it yet you felt in your gut that something was off. During the conversation, describe the situation and how it affected you. When appropriate, discuss what you would prefer to happen in the future. Start with questions like, "Would you be willing to...?"

■ Different views

What do you do when you may see it one way, yet the other person views it completely differently? Just because you had the hard conversation, there is no guarantee that anything will change. By allowing each person to retain their own interpretations. You then have the choice of either accepting or rejecting their response.

In conclusion

Expecting others to know what you are thinking or feeling is unreasonable. Hints are useless because they tend to be too vague. People cannot read your mind. Serious talks only happen when you care about maintaining a strong and healthy relationship with another person. Although it can be difficult, you are signaling to the other person that you are willing to take the risk to discuss what is on your mind.

What can never be open to discussion is any form of domestic violence — physical, psychological, emotional, spiritual, sexual or financial abuse. It should never be acceptable regardless of the excuse or reason offered by the abuser.

If your request is ignored, doubted, or debated, it can be painful because there is nothing you can do about it. At this point, you have to question if the relationship can continue if you are unable to speak freely about what is on your mind.

Now allow yourself to hear the phrase "We need to talk," differently. Instead of feeling defensive or on guard, remember that these words only come from someone who cares deeply about you and who has something on their mind in which you are involved. It is their way of saying you are really important to me so I am willing to take this risk and bare my soul, trusting that I can reveal my most private feelings, thoughts, and emotions to you and still feel accepted and supported.

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.

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Fitness ON the Mountain

A Letter to My Tribe

by Lori Martin

Dear Tribe,
I tried to not use the term “tribe” to describe the people most important to me but, it really is a fitting term. Google’s Dictionary describes a tribe as “a social division in a traditional society consisting of families or communities linked by social, economic, religious, or blood ties, with a common culture and dialect, typically having a recognized leader.” I personally, think it goes beyond that definition, though.

The amazing people I recognize as my tribe are quite diverse in the socio-economic group that goes beyond religion, blood or common culture and dialect. Rather than having a leader I relish in the knowledge that we all simply care about each other and we learn and we grow from the gifts we each possess.

A tribe consisting of all florists would put the florist out of business. Likewise, a tribe of a strangely, passionate people who want to help others to move better, more efficiently and in less pain would leave our tribe lacking in teachers and doctors and nurses, farmers, ranchers, musicians and artists.

That being said, the tribe I so very proudly belong to is ever growing and quite vast. It spans thousands of miles and its attributes are quite diverse in knowledge, skills and passion. Trying to categorize this group is not an easy task nor do I feel comfortable doing so in this article.

As I tend to do in my sleepless nights (I know, I’m working on that) is ponder life. In this recent and particular sleepless night, vivid images of person after person entered my mind along with their individual stories and their diagnoses. It was my tribe.

It was like being a fly on the wall at a big event and listening to every conversation. The topics spanned Multiple Sclerosis to Thyroid Disease to Diabetes to a plethora of other auto-immune diseases. Auto-immune diseases tend to overlap, so it is common that some people have multiple auto-immune diagnoses.

In one such gathering just a year ago, I was the only person not in pain from some elusive injury that somehow seemed to be missing a “root cause” to blame. Many are typical movement pattern issues others are more mysterious. I don’t make this observation to demean others. It was an “ah-ha” moment for me.

My untrained but very astute and questioning eye began to see the seriousness of the situation. The number of surgeries, the

pain medications, and the lack of results. None of it makes sense to me, the person who hates pain and passes out when I sprain an ankle.

While the individuals carried on like nothing was wrong, I could see the common denominator of all the complaints seemed to be stress. Stress is the underlying cause of most chronic conditions. Figuring out the cause of our stressors and eliminating them is not that easy a task.

According to the National Library of Medicine “Inflammation is the body’s immune system’s response to an irritant” and “it already starts when the body is trying to fight against a harmful irritant.”

The NIH goes on to list the causes of an inflammation:

- Pathogens/germs
- External injuries/scrapes/cuts
- Effects of chemicals or radiation
- There is also a very long list of diseases that cause inflammation.

Signs of inflammation are not easy to miss:

- Redness
- Heat
- Swelling
- Pain
- Loss of function

Recently, I received a small but very painful injury to my hand while playing with my dog. When I’ve said in the past “I have a disdain for pain” the National Library of Medicine article explains what I mean: generally feeling ill, exhaustion, and fever. All signals of the immune system taking control and ultimately, of healing! Hence, the reason we need to rest during times of inflammation.

The article goes on in more detail but, I didn’t need to read more to know that if my immune system didn’t hurry up and do its job, I was going to miss valuable time at work. Lucky for me, I had just received another shipment of DNA Vibes Jazz Band Live Red Light Therapy devices.

After setting up my DNA Vibe I laid my hand on it and promptly fell asleep. The next morning, I found it on the floor.

I went about my day still feeling pain however, much decreased in intensity. Today is Day 2. I still have some swelling but the pain is gone and my range-of-motion (ROM) is greater, as well.

Somewhere during the first 24 hours when I was still feeling the pain and reduced ROM my rather snarky tribesman asked me “well, didn’t you use your fancy light

Stress is the underlying cause of most chronic conditions.

device?”

I answered, “Why, yes I did but, I’m not sure how long because I fell into the best sleep.” My snarky friend has some pretty serious auto-immune conditions, sits for hours watching TV while scrolling Facebook and eating cookies. I let her borrow my DNA Vibe months ago when she was complaining of some pain. She used it one time for a very short duration and declared it is not working for her.

This friend is not alone with this particular mindset, but I figured she would ask more questions when she was ready to try again. I didn’t push the topic either, perhaps that is where I went wrong. I believe I did tell her it takes more than one session but, some people get relief within a one or two sessions.

Now months later, during this weird semi-dream state my eyes have been opened and pardon me for showing my frustration.

“Hey, all you tribe members out there... Why are you still in pain? Why are you still scheduling your surgeries? Why the need for pain meds? At least, give this amazing proven science a try, first? Isn’t your body worth that? How many more surgeries can your body handle? The anesthesia alone is wreaking havoc on you! These compensational injuries are real. You’ve corrected that foot but the recovery has you compensating with your opposite knee, then your hip, then your pelvis and spine.”

It’s never-ending, especially, if you don’t follow-up with the physical therapy exercises AFTER you are released from care. I know life is busy! You need to get back to your job, your hiking, caring for your family and your pets. It’s a very wise saying that goes, “You can’t take care of others if you don’t first take care of yourself.”

I get it!

As I started this new chapter of my life, I knew deep in my heart what I really wanted was to help others. It was clear as day, I also knew I couldn’t achieve those dreams unless I took care of myself first!

I have the tendency to want to give away my knowledge, my skills, my advice. At one point, my husband, in effort to talk me out of having my own business told me, “Go ahead and earn some money but, anything you earn is going to push us into the next tax bracket and you’re going to have to pay for that!”

Well, that did scare me because my husband makes a lot of money. I still had



this drive in me to help others. I worked on myself and on my business model for years before I developed my mission statement for my life: Helping others by helping myself, first!

So here I am. Helping myself so that I can help others, which at the moment probably looks like I’m failing but, in the last six months I have grown more than I have since the day the doctor placed my beautiful baby in my arms at age 22. That was my greatest growth period.

Getting back to your inflammation... If it were up to me, in my perfect world, none of you would need a device like my DNA Vibe Red Light. In a perfect world, you all would be more mindful of what your body is telling you and you would seek out professionals such as myself and so many others, to help correct your poor movement patterns. You wouldn’t be so headstrong. You would question your medical providers and your insurance companies. You would rally to take control over every aspect of your own care and be your biggest advocate.

The truth is you don’t have the time, the energy, the money or the desire to work on it all. You want or have to put your time and energy into taking care of your family, your animals, your job, your business. Yes, you may call yourself a researcher but, how can you be a true researcher if your mind is not open to possibilities?

My gratitude list would be incomplete without listing all the gifts I’ve been given, including ALL of you. I know you were each strategically, placed in my life by God and I am to learn from you all. I thank you ALL for your wisdom, support and advice and all the ways you have touched my life... and... if you can manage to change your mindset, you might be able to see that I have a PURPOSE in your life, as well.

Contact Lori by email lorimartinfitness@icloud.com and visit the website: www.lorimartinfitness.com

information about the guild is available at www.quiltersabovetheclouds.com.



2024 Raffle Quilt “Bear Necessities” is on display at the Woodland Park Library. Raffle tickets on sale every Friday and Saturday in March.

Fun facts about Daylight Saving Time

by Kathy Hansen

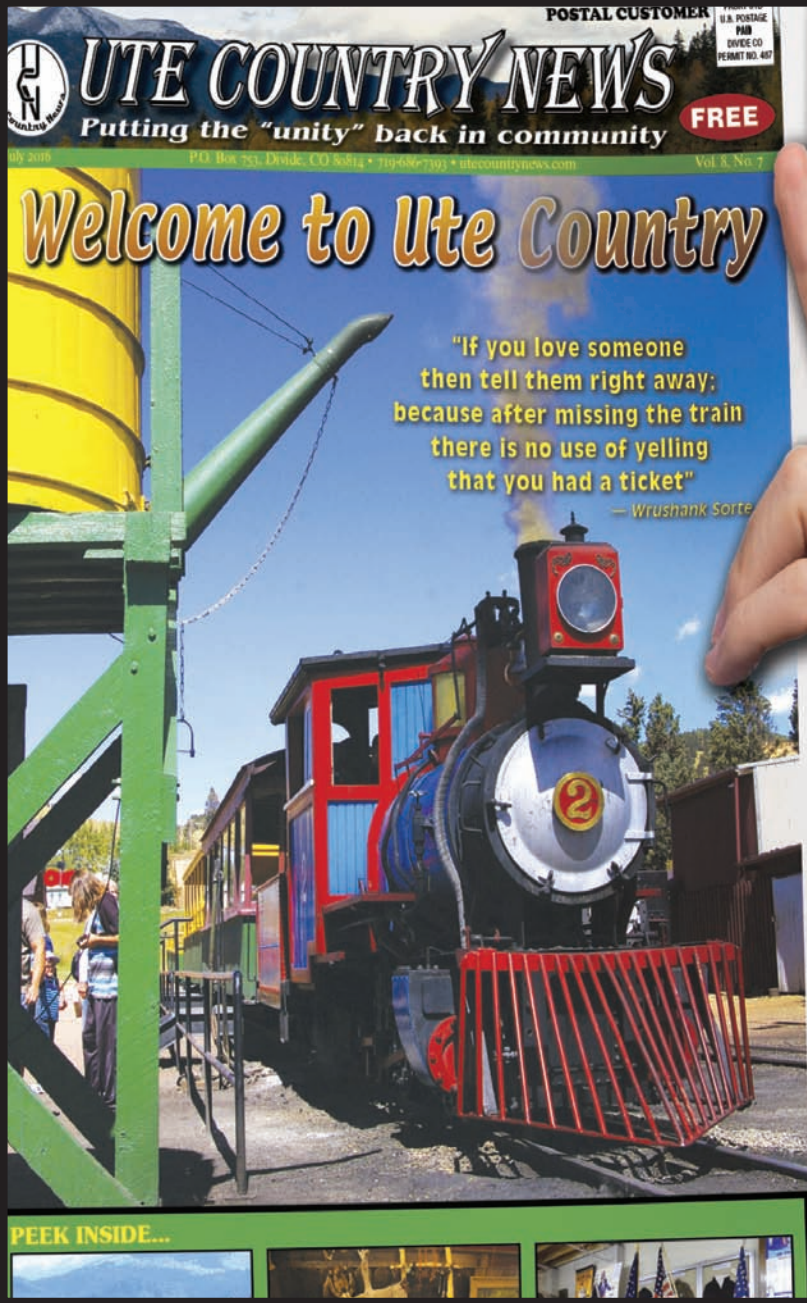
Wikipedia tells us daylight saving time is the practice of advancing clocks ahead by typically one hour in spring during warmer months so that darkness falls at one hour later clock time.

- Benjamin Franklin conceptualized the idea to conserve candles in 1784 in a satirical letter to the editor of *The Journal of Paris*.
- New Zealand entomologist and astronomer George Hudson proposed the idea of changing clocks by two hours every spring in 1895.
- British resident William Willett presented the energy saving idea in 1907.
- It was 1908 that Port Arthur in Ontario, Canada started using daylight saving time.
- April 30, 1916, is the date Germany and Austria-Hungary each organized the first nationwide implementation in their jurisdictions.

- There was another push for daylight saving time after WWI ended (1918). Contrary to popular belief, farmers were actually opposed to daylight saving time as darker mornings make morning chores more difficult.
- WWII started in 1939. The British and Germans both adopted daylight saving time. When the US joined the war, daylight saving time was adopted. The war ended in 1945, at which time Congress repealed daylight saving time, however many localities began to adopt it as it was becoming more popular.
- President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Uniform Time Act into law in 1966.
- The energy crisis of the 1970s impacted the United States, Canada, Western Europe, Australia and New Zealand. Countries that had not yet engaged in

daylight saving time, soon found impetus to join the effort to save energy. This time it was oil, not candles.

- On March 15, 2022, the Sunshine Protection Act passed in the Senate. This would put an end to the semiannual changing of the clocks, however, the bill has yet to pass in the House. Scientists suggest we should get rid of the time change and should stick to the standard time warning a later sleep time is associated with more substance use, physical and mental health problems, obesity, depression and heart disease to name a few.
- Currently, the only two states that do not abide daylight saving time are Hawaii (too close to the equator for the time change to make a difference) and Arizona (summers are so hot, having more daylight only means more heat, so they say no.)



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March is National Quilting month

by Lisa Morris

Quilters across America will celebrate National Quilting Month in March. National Quilting Day is held on March 16, 2024. During March, Quilters Above



Eileen McMillan titled this quilted wall hanging “Doggie Day Care.” It will be available for auction at TCRAS’ Wild Whiskers Fundraiser in September.

the Clouds Quilt Guild will exhibit their quilts at the Woodland Park Public Library, 218 East Midland Avenue, Woodland Park, CO. The exhibit is free to the public. The quilts are changed every week in March. While you’re out shopping or having lunch, stop by the Woodland Park Public Library to see the latest quilts on exhibit. The library is open Tuesday-Friday from 10-6 p.m. and Saturday from 10-4 p.m.; closed on Sunday and Monday. You can also purchase raffle tickets on Fridays and Saturdays during the month of March. The drawing will be held December 6, 2024, need not be present at the drawing to win.

Quilters Above the Clouds Guild will host its 18th Annual “Quilts in the Aspens” Quilt Show. The venue and dates have changed. The event will be a two-day quilt show held at the Woodland Park Public Library in Woodland Park, CO on Sunday, July 28 and Monday, July 29, 2024. Special Guest Speaker, Ricky

Tims, will attend the quilt show and present Master Class Lectures. He is known in the international world of quilting as a best-selling author, enthusiastic and encouraging teacher, and award-winning quilter. He is also a notable designer and spellbinding speaker.

The mission of Quilters Above the Clouds is to assist the community by utilizing the talents of our members to create quilts and related items for those in need. Those items are donated to non-profit agencies throughout Teller and Park counties. Quilters Above the Clouds is a non-profit organization whose primary purpose is promoting an interest in and appreciation of the art of quilting, share quilting information and education, sponsor local and nationally known speakers and provide workshops to encourage high standards of quilting techniques and designs, encourage creativity, and provide hand-crafted quilts to area non-profit agencies and individuals in need. More

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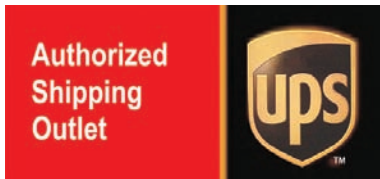
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The Plant Lady Seeds and Blessing Beads

MountainAires Market Celebrating 5 year anniversary

by Flip Boettcher
photo by Flip Boettcher

The MountainAires Market is proud to announce its 5th anniversary, said Olimpia Robinson, owner/operator. The market, which is located on State Highway 9 at the Guffey turn off, is housed in the historic, restored house which belonged to the West family, early Guffey homesteaders.

When the market first opened, the shelves were pretty bare, but now the store is stocked with all kinds of products. They offer in-season local organic produce; delicious gluten-free baked goods and other gluten-free items; coffees, teas, and smoothies at the coffee bar; coffee beans, bulk teas and bulk herbs; dog and cat food; skin care products including their own MountainAires Skin Care products made on-site; snacks galore; cleaning products; local meats; and dairy products. Pretty much everything is organic.

The market is stocked with unique artist's items including local Sundance Sheepskin slippers; knit socks; and wooden cutting boards. Robinson has added more crystals and mineral rocks, as well as jewelry. Robinson also has a limited selection of wooden furniture, more wooden bowls and pottery from Always Azul, which is located near Monte Vista.

If the market doesn't have what you are looking for, Robinson will order it for you.

Over the last five years, business has increased and Robinson is very grateful to the local residents who support her, she said.

Plan on a visit to the MountainAires Market, buy local and support some local artists, you will be glad you did and help them celebrate their 5th anniversary. The market is closed on Sundays and open 9-5 p.m. Monday-Saturday.



Olimpia Robinson owner/operator of the MountainAires Market in front of her new crystal/mineral rock display case.

Equinox and balancing eggs

by Kathy Hansen

Equinox is the time that the Earth is tilted parallel to its path of motion around the sun, which makes the length of day and night exactly the same. Some have postulated that since the sun and moon are equidistant from the Earth, the pull of gravity is equalized, and therefore, the egg is less likely to fall over. Harry E. Keller, PhD, CEO of Smart Science Education Inc states, "Even were there such a solar influence, it would only work in one place at a time, and that place would be moving at a speed on the surface of the Earth of about 1,000 miles per hour at the equator. You would not have time to balance the egg!"

So, for those of you who have tried to balance the egg and found you could, what explanation would follow?

The key would be finding an egg with a yolk centered in the shell. Balance involved center of gravity. If you find the right egg, standing an egg on its end is something you could do any day of the year. Patience anyone? You might need patience when you become "eggspasinated" while trying the balancing act!

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MARCH 29-30

Purchase your tickets at TheKingOfJerusalem.org/UTE or call 719-635-1111.

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AVAILABLE VIRTUALLY

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

BUENA VISTA

- 1 Peggy Badgett presents her artwork at BV Art and Photo on Main Street. Artist reception 4-6 p.m. Peggy's art will be displayed all month long!

CA ON CITY

- Library**
- 1 Dr. Seuss' Birthday party celebration 3 p.m. with guest readers!
 - 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

- 7 Jeff Dunham "Still Not Cancelled" tour at the Broadmoor
- 8 Sound Advice 8-11 p.m. at the Buzzed Crow Bistro in Powers Center 5853 Palmer Park Blvd. FMI 719-358-7651.
- 9 Pikes Peak State College will hold a special benefit to honor the legacy of Chef Henry Trujillo at 5 p.m. at the Broadmoor's Cheyenne Lodge at 4199 S Club Dr. Tickets can be purchased at pikespeak.edu/trujillo-dinner. Proceeds will support funding the newly established Chef Henry Trujillo Memorial Scholarship, which will provide financial support to PPSC students pursuing degrees and certificates in the culinary arts.
- 11-April 29 Voices of Grief support and education offering "Understanding your Grief" an 8-week workshop 9-11 a.m. FMI Sarah 719-505-2257 or Kathy 719-659-0447 or email info@voicesofgriefcenter.org.
- 16 Harlem Globetrotters at the Broadmoor

CRIPPLE CREEK

- 7 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.
- 9 VITA Free Income Tax Preparation 9-noon, by appointment only. Tax refunds available for Earned Income Credit (EIC), education credits, child tax credit, and child care expense credits! You may be eligible for past COVID stimulus checks. The VITA Program offers free tax help for taxpayers making \$60,000 or less. FMI 719-203-1265 or TellerCountyVITA@gmail.com.
- 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.
- 24 The Curse of Cripple Creek: Failed mining districts of the southern front range presented at 1 p.m. Golden Nugget Hotel. See page 5.
 - 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

- 29 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.

DIVIDE

- 1, 15, 29 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.
- 7, 21 Meet a Wolf Day at Colorado Wolf & Wildlife Center 2-3:30 p.m. Meet and Greet with a resident wolf and includes the educational tour with our signature wolf howl at the end. Fee is \$40 for adults, \$20 for kids 6-11. Advance reservations are required. 719-687-9742.
- 10, 24 Little Chapel Food Pantry Distribution 2-5 p.m. For more info 719-322-7610 or email littlechapelfoodpantry@outlook.com
- 16 Veterans' Appreciation Luncheon noon-2 p.m. at Little Chapel of the Hills, in the Fellowship Hall 69 CR 5, sponsored by the Little Chapel Food Pantry. Guests may arrive any time after 11:30 a.m. to visit with fellow vets! Theme will be St. Patrick's Day, with fun Irish food. Please RSVP to Ken or Judi 719-331-1087 (leave message if no answer) or email veteransdinner@gmail.com. Never a charge, and families welcome! We need to know how many will be attending so we have plenty of good food! We appreciate our Veterans! Please reserve space early.

FLORENCE

- 9 Second Saturday. Florence Bucks handed out all over town by our leprechaun. Participating merchants will be giving discounts or having raffles for prizes. Look for decorated windows and the pot of gold.
- 9 Art reception at Blue Spruce Gallery 4-6 p.m. See page 5.
- The Florence Pioneer Museum and Research Center 100 Front St is getting ready for its 60th birthday. Displays are getting set up for 1964 Florence. The museum is open during the winter. Go back in time to the swingin' 60s. FMI www.florencepioneermuseum.org.

JOHN C. FREMONT LIBRARY

- 1 Dr. Seuss' Birthday! We will give away grab bags to celebrate.
- 20 "Won't you be my neighbor" grab bags giveaway and coloring sheets for "Very Hungry Caterpillar" Day.
- Story Time every Friday 10:30 a.m.
- Artist of the month is Donna Paulsen.
- Check out our Seed Catalogue Swap and our Cookbook display!

FLORISSANT

- 23 Fundraiser Dinner at Florissant Fire Rescue (FFR) for CPR Robot 5-7 p.m. Florissant Fire Training Room 2606 Hwy 24 W. The Friends of FFR are calling it "Cabin Fever in Florissant" and will be providing bowls of hot soup and chili, bread, drinks and more for donation. The group recently identified an important need that did not make it onto the current budget. Our community has many aging citizens and others who are at risk of needing CPR. Recently a patient in our area was recovered, stabilized and able to be airlifted to Colorado Springs because Ute Pass Rescue has a CPR Robot. FFR does not own this important piece of equipment, but they are often the first to arrive on the scene for medical calls. Manual CPR is very strenuous and

within the theme to share! 11-12:30 p.m.

- 19 Free Legal Clinic 2-5 p.m. at Florissant Library. Call 719-748-3939 to sign-up.
- 22 Family Food Crafts at 11 a.m. Come make celery snails and caterpillars!
- 27 Vitalant Blood Drive from 11:30-3:45 p.m. Come to the library to donate blood! Use blood drive code 10054684 FMI vitalant.org
- 27 Teen XBOX Racing tournament at 3 p.m. Come play for prizes!

- 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.
- Natural Healthy Community Bonding from 3:30-5 p.m. every Wednesday. From the book: Mentally Clean and Intuitively Sober by Maka Wa. In this workshop you will learn intuitive confidence and accuracy.
- Camellia's Children's Dance Jam. Empowering Uninterrupted innocents from 10-12 p.m. every Wednesday. Children will engage in music, dance, as well as creative play that will enhance their motor skills and expand their imagination. Using elements of dance, we focus on fun and fitness to world music. Designed for children 2-12 years. FMI 719-748-3939.

GUFFEY

- 9 Community Education Class: CPR and First Aid at SPCFPD FMI office@luffyfire.net.
- Donation-based Yoga Sundays 11:30-1 p.m. at Guffey Charter School. Facebook.com/sunmountainyoga or yoga@renereduffey.com.

- COLORADO MOUNTAIN DISTILLERS**
Live music 5-8 p.m.
- 1 Patchwork Jack
 - 2 Roma Ransom

LIBRARY

- 5 Bee Keepers 10 a.m. They meet every first Monday of the month and 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 all 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 March discussion is *His and Hers* by Alice Fenney. The Guffey Literary Society is a wonderfully dynamic and diverse group. All are welcome to join.
- 27 Rocky Mountain Rural Life 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.

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

- 16 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

- 2 The NEW Carnivale/Gumbo Cook-Off date! Enjoy Mumbo Gumbo Cook-Off in Soda Springs Park 11-1 p.m. Gumbo samples are only \$0.75 each. Last ticket sales 12:30 p.m. Then Carnivale Parade up Manitou Ave begins at 1 p.m. FMI www.manitousprings.org.

WOODLAND PARK

- 2 Pampering Spa noon-2 p.m. at Mountain Vapor Lounge. See page 10.
- 16 Chili Cook off at WP Senior Organization 11-1 p.m. Open to all for \$5 fee. Everyone is welcome! Chili, cornbread, drinks and dessert. All Chili Cookers are invited to enter your favorite chili for \$20 entry fee. Drop by the Senior Center for a registration form by March 14. Limit of 12 chili entries. Cash prizes: 1st place = \$100, 2nd place = \$75, 3rd place = \$50 and People's Choice = \$100. Tasting starts at 11 a.m. Awards at 12:45 p.m.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

- 5 Crossroads Co-Parenting Seminar 4:30-8:30 p.m. Teller County court approved parenting and divorce seminar. \$35 fee. Pre-registration required. FMI Michelle@cpteller.org.
- Career Center 12-4 p.m. Tuesdays & Thursdays. Pikes Peak Workforce Center helps with job searching, resume assistance, and unemployment applications. Walk-ins welcome. FMI Erin@cpteller.org.
- City Market Fight Hunger Bag Fundraiser. For the month of March, whenever a \$2.50 reusable Fight Hunger Bag is purchased at the Woodland Park City Market, \$1 will be donated to Community Partnership's Exploring Food Together and EatPlayGrow programs.

- Family Café 9-12 p.m. Monday through Thursday. Enjoy coffee, Free Wi-Fi, Kid's Corner, and a space for parents and caregivers in our community to connect.
- 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.
- Pearson VUE Testing Center Mondays 9:30-5 p.m. Schedule your certification or licensure exam at www.pearsonvue.com. Fees vary. FMI Katy@cpteller.org.
- 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 Aimee@cpteller.org.
- Yoga with Leah Mondays 10-11 a.m. 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. All programs at Community Partnership 701 Gold Hill Place unless otherwise noted.

FMI 719-686-0705.

LIBRARY

- 1 Coffee Chats 10 a.m. Join us for coffee and conversation. Meet new friends in Woodland Park!
- 5 Woodland Park Book Club 10:30 a.m. Check our book clubs page to see what we're reading next!
- 6 Kids Craft Club. Drop in between 3 and 5 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.
- 6 Teen Craft Day 3:45-5:30 p.m. Let's make conversation heart boxes!
- 6 Evening Adult Fiction Book Club 5 p.m.
- 8 Comics Connections 4-5:30 p.m. Explore comics and learn illustration techniques with art educator and illustrator, Allison. This event is in partnership with CSU.
- 14 Reader's Circle Book Club 10:30 a.m. in the Large Meeting Room.
- 16 Soils and Amendments at WP Library 10:30-12:30 p.m. See page 23.
- 16 St. Patrick's Day Irish Dancers at 3 p.m. Come celebrate with our local Irish dancers!
- 19 AARP Smart Drivers Course. Call to reserve a spot. \$20 for AARP members and \$25 for non-members.
- 20 Fiber Arts Club 1 p.m. Come make and share your fiber art! Knitting, crocheting, weaving, bracelet making, whatever you like!
- 20 Teen Craft Day 3:45-5:30 p.m. in the Teen Room. Let's make conversation heart boxes!
- 20 Celebrating Diversity at 3:45 p.m. A social group for LGBTQIA teens and allies.
- 26 Community Discussions at 5 p.m. Let's get together as a community to discuss common debated topics in a respectful, moderated environment.
- 27 Evening Arts and Crafts for Adults at 5 p.m. Join us for an evening of crafting each month!
- 28 Tarot Club 3 p.m. Teens and up are welcome to join this group and learn all things tarot. March's theme is Intention.
- Line Dancing Above the Clouds at 6:30 p.m. every Monday and Thursday.
- 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 Story-time 10 a.m.
- Thursdays Tai Chi at 5 p.m.
- Fridays Tai Chi at 10 a.m.

- Reserve Our Gallery 9 Art reception 6-8 p.m. enjoy hors d'oeuvres and drinks. Featured artist Jerry Edwards. Current art show is "March Inside." Email RSVP to reserveourgallery@gmail.com.
- 12 SOAR meeting 9:30 a.m. Wear your most flowery shirt and we'll talk about your nonprofits BLOOM — Best Leverage Of Our Money. There's a way to leverage finances you already have in order to raise more money. FMI iwantto@soarwithnetworkfundraising.org
- 29 Meet a WP mayoral candidate in the shadows of the lounge. A password is required to get into the Lounge at Reserve Our Gallery. This is an evening event but the time is kept confidential until you reach out for the password. FMI reserveourgallery@gmail.com.

Mueller State Park

by Anna Miller

There is still a lot of snow at Mueller! The maintenance team, our backcountry resource tech, rangers, and VC staff and volunteers have been working hard to make the park a great place to be this time of year. So, if you see a staff member, say thank you! Continue to come prepared with crampons, layers of clothing, water and snacks. Check in at the Visitor Center for updates on trail and ski track conditions.

We know this time of year can sometimes lead to the winter blues, which means it is even more important to get outside and stay active! For the entire month of March, Mueller is hosting the March Into Spring Challenge! For this challenge participants will track their hours spent and miles hiked, snowshoed, or skied at the park. Starting March 1, come to the Visitor Center and ask the front desk for a challenge form for you to take home and track your hours and miles. COTREX is a great, free app you can use to track mileage. Note: Fat bikes users can participate, but only their hours, not miles will be counted. Bring your completed form back to the Visitor Center by Wednesday, April 3. The participants who spent the most time at the park or hiked the most miles will win a prize! Two winners will be announced



on Friday, April 5. So, get on the trails and March Into Spring at Mueller!

- 2 Dr. Seuss Day at Visitor Center 10-12 p.m.
- 25 Skins & Skulls at Visitor Center 10-12 p.m.
- 26 Nature BINGO! At Visitor Center 1-2 p.m.
- 27 All About Owls at Visitor Center 10-11 a.m.
- 29 Mueller Scavenger Hunt starts at Visitor Center 10-2 p.m.
- 30 Hug-A-Tree at Visitor Center 1-2 p.m. FMI 719-687-2366.

Soils and Amendments

by CSU Extension

The CSU Extension Teller County Master Gardeners will be holding their annual gardening classes at the Woodland Park Library lower-level the 3rd Saturday of the month through May from 10:30-12:30 p.m. The next class will be on Saturday, March 16 and will discuss Soils and Amendments. The class will be presented by El Paso Master Gardener Joan Nusbaum. Proper soil balance is the

key to a successful garden. This class will discuss this and the difference between compost and fertilizers and the use of mulch. Class size is limited to 40 on a first-come, first-served basis. Walk-ins are welcome on the day of class if/until the class is full. The cost is \$7 per class. Please contact Marie Bartol at 719-687-1290 with questions or for more information or to register.

Spread the Word
Pet Food Distributions for March 2024
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Help us keep pets at home with their families!
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Contact Robert Nuss (303) 929-5671 or arikaree3@aol.com

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