



UTE COUNTRY NEWS

Putting the "unity" back in community™

FREE

February 2026

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Vol. 18, No. 2

Welcome to Ute Country



**"For a good life:
Work like a dog.
Eat like a horse.
Think like a fox.
And play like a rabbit."**

— George Allen

PEEK INSIDE...



Where's the Moose?

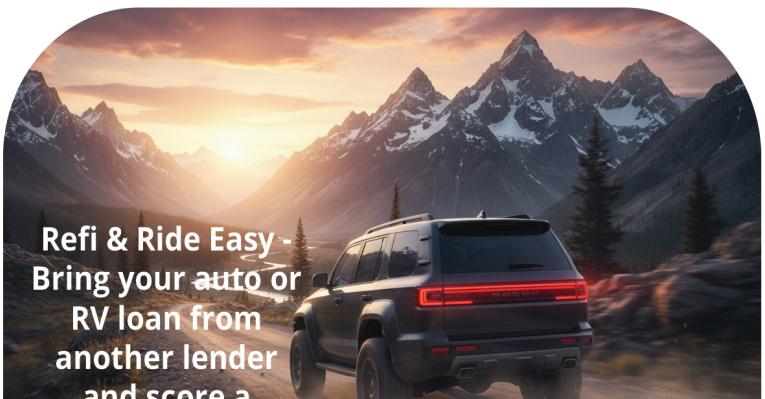


A Look Inside the Artist
Russell Thornberry, Flintknapping



Currant Creek Pioneer Cemetery

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WHAT'S BLACK & WHITE AND READ ALL OVER?

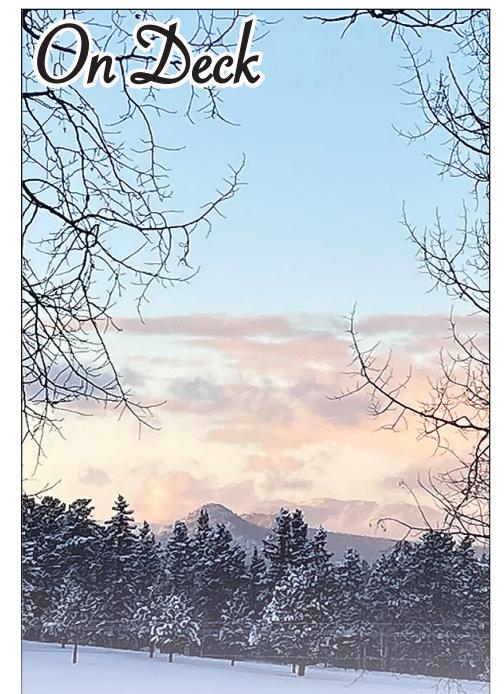


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The fox in our cover photo ran through our yard back in January of 2025. Observing wildlife is one of our favorite reasons for living in the rural mountains. Especially now with snow, looking at tracks to see who was visiting is a joy we share with our cats. These simple aspects of life are truly those that bring the most joy and fill our hearts. We felt the quote fit quite well given we witnessed the fox that set down its lunch to look around, then played in the snow for about 20 minutes before taking the rabbit to his favorite munching spot.

Our February issue has a lot to offer! Whether you wish to read about working, eating, thinking or playing, we've got you covered. Colorado Pharmgirl shares the journey of her career in "A Salesgirl." "Market at the Guffey Bakery" opens an additional grocery option for those living in or driving through Guffey. "How to Handle the Hack" will encourage you to put on your thinking cap when you are viewing your emails and choosing whether to open. A Look Inside the Artist features Russell Thornberry, who through his curiosity of how Native Americans engaged in flintknapping, turned his hobby into a small business.

Do you have any cute or interesting photos of your pets indoors or outdoors? We would love to share it with our readers! If you would please send them via email to utecountrynewspaper@gmail.com, drop in to scan the photo at Shipping Plus or snail mail them to us at POB 753 Divide, CO 80814, we are happy to publish them!

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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Oyate Herbals

National Cancer Prevention Month

by Tammie Lowell, PHT, CMH, founder of Oyate Herbals

Han (Greetings!)
Welcome to Cannapop Wi - Moon When Trees Crack From The Cold.

Do you too feel like you might "crack from the cold"? What can we learn from our tree friends (the standing ones we Lakota say) during this time? When the sun warms the trees and they expand, then night comes along and swiftly cools and shrinks their layers, the shrinking can be uneven, and the outside no longer fits around the inside. The outer layers might split with a loud POP. Once these cracks exist, they open the tree to disease and make it much more difficult to live and thrive through the rest of the winter and beyond.

We too can learn from the standing ones and keep ourselves from "cracking". We can keep ourselves hydrated, keep our cells, joints and nervous systems lubricated with healthy fats, cover our skin with protective layers (like quality clothing, herbal lotions and healing salves), remain flexible and keep moving where we are, and address "repairs" right away to prevent more damage. We here at Oyate Herbals have plenty of traditional medicines and ideas to assist you with making it through this cold time of year and helping you from "cracking" and causing damage and opening yourself and your loved ones to disease. Hot tea anyone?

When I think back to this time last year, I unfortunately found myself in a position of "cracking" the cracking was not from the cold as in the temperature, it was from the events I had just encountered. My sister was being treated in Colorado for her cancer. She was told that she qualified for a liver transplant, so I took her to Utah for that transplant. The hospital in Utah was able to perform diagnostic tests which showed that she had breast cancer, which was metastasizing to her liver and quickly impacting other organs as well. My sister was unaware that she had breast cancer! This revelation meant that she was no longer eligible for the transplant. The situation was significantly worse than we initially imagined, yet it answered many questions as to why treatments were ineffective — the battle was much bigger than we thought! She fought so very hard, but creator had other plans for her, and she took her journey on the 18th of January 2025. She was only 49 years old, and she left behind a 12-year-old autistic daughter that was her whole world. She was the caretaker of our mother, so when she passed, it left my mom in a very uncomfortable place of not knowing what was going to happen or where she was going to go. The hardest part for me was not being able to help save my little sister. She always looked up to me and trusted me to have the right answers and protect her as big sis.

Do you have any cute or interesting photos of your pets indoors or outdoors? We would love to share it with our readers! If you would please send them via email to utecountrynewspaper@gmail.com, drop in to scan the photo at Shipping Plus or snail mail them to us at POB 753 Divide, CO 80814, we are happy to publish them!

Four days after my sister passed, I made the long trip from Utah back to Colorado with my mom in an urn and with tears in my eyes, I handed her to our mom. Right then and there I realized that there were cracks in my heart that would never completely mend. My sister begged me to make sure that everything was going as best as it could, from assuring the doctors are on top of it and doing the best they could, to assuring her autistic daughter and mom would continue to get appropriate care, to tending to her final wishes. To look into my sister's eyes while I told her there is nothing more that can be done to save her life was just as devastating.

I am no stranger to these different types of cancer; my husband Jon lost his battle with Glioblastoma brain cancer in 2021. Two years and two days later, my father passed away from lung cancer. I personally was diagnosed with a blood disease 13 years ago that turned leukemia (with the help of traditional herbal medicine and diet I'm stable now). I guess that why I am so adamant about people taking care of themselves, avoiding the "cracks and pitfalls" that can open us up to disease. As a Phytotherapist, I see people on a regular basis that either themselves or a loved one has been diagnosed with some sort of cancer. I'm

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also sure in some way shape or form, you too probably have encountered cancer in your life. So, these are a few reasons why I have made it a topic of special studies in my practice with both prevention and treatment recommendations that can be done with or without allopathic medicine.

The topic of herbs in cancer management is an increasingly relevant area of study and practice. Many individuals and medical professionals are exploring herbal options as complementary therapies alongside conventional treatments. Herbs have been regarded for centuries in various cultures for their healing properties, and there is growing interest in understanding how these natural compounds interact with cancer biology.

Cancer itself is a complex disease that requires diverse approaches for effective management. As traditional allopathic treatments like chemotherapy and radiotherapy often come with significant side effects, herbal remedies may offer supportive benefits. I have done a lot of research into the biochemical properties of herbs and traditional plant medicines and have found that they contain many mechanisms that enhance treatment efficacy or mitigate adverse effects.

Prevention, awareness, understanding of the body, mind, spirit and emotional connection and balance are the keys to avoiding disease. If you would like to know more about this topic or would like to talk to me regarding traditional herbal medicines, please feel free to email, call or text me.

*Mitakuye Opiye wašé (Good day relatives)
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on your path*

You can reach Tammie at Oyate Herbals LLC, 719-661-0410.



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Where's the Moose?

by Tracie Bennett

I'm embarrassed to say I've never had a chance to participate in The Moose is Loose event. Every year, I head out for the Tucson Gem, Mineral and Fossil Show for either the company I was working for, or my own company. This year is different! No booth in Tucson!

Tanner Coy had a vision to create this event in 2000 when Tweeds Fine Furnishings was still located in Cascade. "In October, you knew that sales were going to go down until the return of the tourist season the next summer," he said. "What could we do to generate business in the depths of winter? Promote ourselves!" Postcards were mailed out to the community and low and behold! It worked! "People came out to see what this was all about," Tanner said. "The sale worked."

In 2010, Tanner looked at a way to make Moose is Loose even more successful. "If you can't pay to promote it more, how do you get more people out?" he asked. "You add more business to the event and grow it beyond Tweeds." Tanner reached out to a handful of local businesses that first year to come onboard. "The businesses had to be willing to run a sale and we would include them in the promotions at no charge," he said. "This had been a rising tide raising all the boats. Businesses get a win. Customers get a win. It's definitely the best time to shop in Woodland Park."

"Promotions, give aways, discounts. It's the most comprehensive collaboration among various factions of the town," Tanner said. "We are focused on generating activity in town by getting people out and about to celebrate the Woodland Park lifestyle."

Events this year include the 3rd year Coffee Crawl, 2nd year Paint the Town and 2nd year Scavenger Hunt. The Coffee Crawl is a ticketed event that includes six stops with a guided tour by the Moose. Each stop has curated beverages designed by each location.

Paint the Town is similar to the Coffee Crawl, but on steroids. Also a ticketed event, Paint the Town is a progressive dinner with food, beverage and art at each location. Only

100 tickets are available this year. Two groups of 50 travel between the locations enjoying appetizers, beverages and time to peruse the art at that location. The dessert location is at Tweeds where the two groups come together for coffee and dessert beverages. Featured artist at Tweeds is Jeff Musgrave from Peak Antler. After the dessert course, folks will head to Judges for the after party.

The annual Scavenger Hunt is app based this year. "This event is back by popular demand," Tanner said. "It was incredibly well received last year." The app will show locations that are the stops on the hunt. "There are one or more challenges at each location," according to Tanner. "Interaction with the business locations is primary to the hunt." This year there will be up to 25 locations with 100 different challenges between them. "The cool thing about this is people are paid to play," Tanner said. "Moose bucks are awarded for completion and can then be used to shop at participating businesses."

The overarching theme this year is ACTS OF KINDNESS focusing on the goodness of people in our community," Tanner explained. "The Moose is our "Super Moose" and will oversee folks participating and their willingness to do good deeds. You can win additional prizes by participating." Folks will be helping build a list of good deeds that can be done in the community, including carrying groceries for someone who needs a little extra help, filling a trash bag with litter, donating canned goods, to volunteering at the Senior Center. Moose appreciation cards will be available for people to pick up to give to someone THEY appreciate.

After 10 years, the coloring contest and essay contest is also happening again this year. "People are asked to vote for their favorites," Tanner said. "Each kid will get a gift from the Moose. Each age group will have a prize. This year is all about the Moose doing good deeds and raising up the community." Moose Is Loose is about more than just good deals. It's about celebrating



Additional information can be found at mooseisloosese.com

Market at the Guffey Bakery

by Flip Boettcher

photo by Flip Boettcher

There's no two ways about it, Guffey is a long way from anywhere to do grocery shopping. It costs a lot to drive off the hill anywhere, especially if you don't need all that much, it cuts into your budget and time.

Maybe you just ran out of something or wanted to make something special but didn't have all the ingredients or just forgot something on your last shopping trip. Soon there will be another option for area residents. Something that's convenient, affordable and there to support the community.

February 1 will be the Soft Opening of the Market at the Guffey Bakery with the Grand Opening to follow month or two later.

The market will feature fresh produce, milk, eggs, cheese, sliced lunch meats, canned goods, prepackaged dry goods in small quantities like flour and sugar, all kinds of snacks, and paper goods like paper plates, napkins and plastic wear.

There will be USDA beef, pork and chicken in the freezer, as well as individual frozen meals made on site like lasagna.

The market will also feature packages with items to make your own sandwiches — sliced bread, sliced cheese and sliced lunch meats.



Bakery Owner Dana Peters on the left and new helper and Chef Zach Garretson taking a break, standing in front of some of the items that will be available at the Market at the Bakery.

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A Look Inside the Artist Russell Thornberry, Flintknapping

by Mary Shell

I have interviewed many artists in the years of doing this column, but I never interviewed an artist that works in such an ancient craft. Paints, canvases, brushes, clay and paper are readily available in art stores, but this art entails going out into nature looking for the right stones to precisely chip away at until it is a perfect tool to make knives. I appreciate Russell's ability to show the world the beauty and utility of such artistic pieces.

How long have you been making knives?

In the mid 90s I found a gorgeous flint arrowhead in northern Mexico and for the first time I wondered how the Native Americans made tools of stone through the process called flintknapping.

What kind of knives do you make and what's the difference?

I make stone knives, arrowheads and spear points. My knife blades are made from a variety of flint, agate and jasper from all around North America and other countries. Each type of stone has its own specific characteristics in appearance and hardness. Some are very ornate and appeal to the eye. Handles are made from wood and/or antler. I make knives with ultimate eye appeal for those who want to display them as an art form. I also make knives for outdoorsmen who want to use them in the field.

What made you choose making knives for a living?

My flintknapping endeavors began purely as a learning curiosity. I never thought about marketing. Then people began asking to buy my creations and it grew from there. Flintknapping is not my livelihood but rather a hobby that turned into a small business.

Who inspires you?

I am inspired by my peers who have refined the flintknapping art to the highest degree. It is forever a learning process. I especially enjoy the fact that there is always something new to discover.

How do you choose your materials and why?

I choose my materials with two criteria in mind: appearance and knappability. Knappability is defined by the amount of silica in the stone. The higher the silica content the better the stone responds to the knapping process.

How long does it take to make one of your masterpieces?

It takes about an hour to make a stone blade. The complexity of the handle varies greatly. For instance, I can make an antler handle in an hour. If the handle is made of wood, it takes longer and if there is hand carving involved it can take several hours.

What was your worse experience in making one of your knives?

I suppose the worst experience is breaking a blade of exceptional quality as you near completion. It happens!

What would you like to try next?

Refining is always the next step. Currently I am working on refining the edge work on blades and points.

How would you explain your process?

It is very hard to explain the details of flintknapping. It's much easier to understand if you can actually watch the process. But here is the general explanation: Flintknapping is the process of systematically breaking a stone to create a useful tool.

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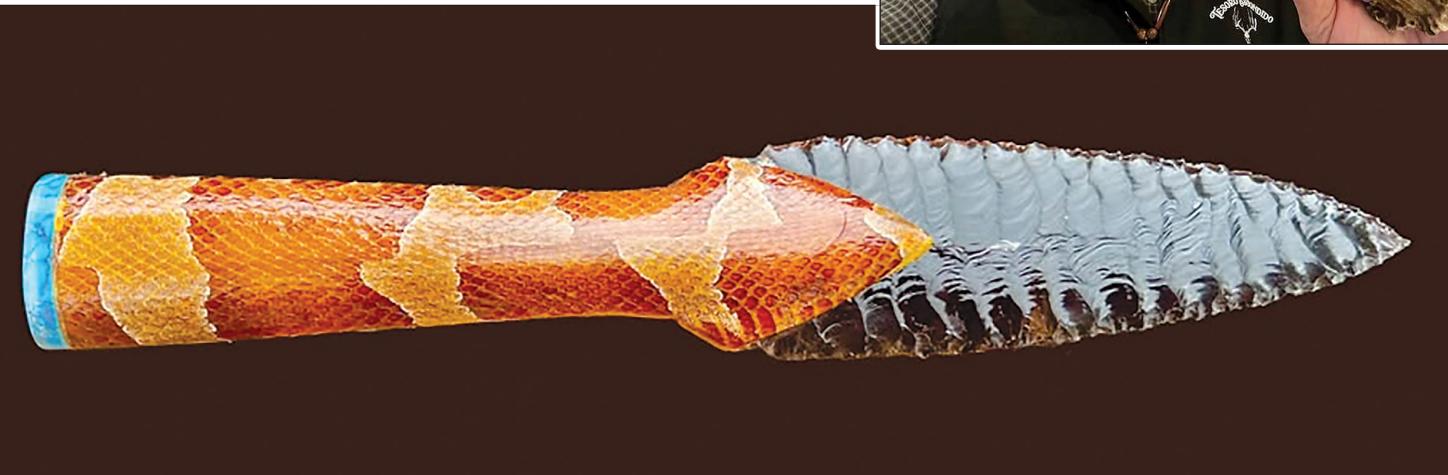
Please add anything you think people would be interested in learning about you.

For 25 years I was the editor-in-chief of Buckmaster's Whitetail Magazine. Prior to that I was a hunting and fishing guide and outfitter in Alberta, Canada. Before that I was a professional musician.

I have your website (www.russell-thornberryoriginals.com), is there any other way for people to contact you?

I can be reached via email at russellthornberry@gmail.com, or by phone at 719-440 1314.

You can also reach Mary Shell at www.maryshellart.com



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Guffey at 130 years - part III

by Flip Boettcher

The Guffey School began in 1895 at an unknown location and according to longtime resident Charlie Dell, it was a town school and his aunt taught in that first school. Later on, the five Hammond sisters Maud, Blanch, Grace, Mary and Babe taught there. The Hammonds were some of the earliest homesteaders in the area along Currant Creek along with the Dells.

Several years later, an addition to the existing school was begun and the school became a district school.

In March 1918, the electors of a joint school district between Fremont and Park counties met for a vote in Guffey: 76 of 79 voters voted to organize a Joint School District. Guffey School was in Joint District 49.

A schoolboard of directors was elected and at an April meeting the voters of Joint District 49 met and voted a one-time-only levy tax of seven mills for the purpose of selecting and buying a new school site, constructing a schoolhouse and furnishing it.

Lots 1, 18, 19 and 20 in block 18 were purchased and two contractors from Cripple Creek, J.C. Harker "Hawkie" and his father with the lowest bid of \$3790 were selected to build the schoolhouse.

According to Charlie, many of the old buildings in Guffey and buildings the county donated were torn down and the lumber re-used to build the new schoolhouse. Everyone helped, even the kids, said Charlie and "after that we had the cleanest little town you ever saw."

Unfortunately, with WWI, the cost of building materials almost doubled, and the school could not be completed at its first estimated cost. The board decided to complete only the three rooms, leaving the exterior, the hall and the water unfinished.

Originally, the school was heated with wood and had two chimneys. A water tank was also added to the attic that was filled by a hand pump that supplied water to the school.

By September of that year, the three rooms were complete, but the school had to close from early October to early December because of the flu epidemic. Finally, the school opened December 3, 1918, with three teachers: 1-4 grades, 5-8 grades and high school for the 34 students.

Also in 1918, the teacherage was built across the street from the school for teacher housing. According to Maude Marie (West) Ownbey in "Guffey: 100 Years of Memories," the outside of the teacherage was built from dynamite boxes, that's what is under the wooden siding. All the window glass came from Cripple Creek after the 1896 fires. "That's recycling Guffey-style," she said.

Lillian Fayette (Pike) Langerock came to Guffey in 1928 when she was 10 years old and went to the Guffey School. Lillian remembers one teacher, Mrs. Koontz, had parties at the teacherage for the students. There were taffy pulls and candy making parties on the marble countertop in the kitchen, card parties, Halloween parties, and cookouts in the creek bed south of the school with "potatoes fried over an open fire (full of ashes), wieners and marshmallows, and we loved it," she said.

In the 1950s the school temporarily closed and closed permanently in 1961 when the state ordered all school districts to redistrict. Since there were so few students it was not feasible to maintain the Guffey School. It was at this time that Guffey was among the other schools in this part of Park County to combine under District RE-2 (rural education).

The students were bused to Canon City. For school on a tuition basis until the Guffey School reopened in 1981-82 with 19 students in grades K-6, after the RE-2 district board voted to modernize the former school building to accommodate the growing number of students in the area.

Guffey saw many teachers come and go. Most were single women, many who had attended school in Guffey, left to go to college and returned to teach for a few years. A college degree was required to teach there. They were paid \$90 per month plus housing in the teacherage across the street.

In 1995, the RE-2 school district created the combined Charter Schools in Lake George and Guffey, but by summer 1999, the two schools decided to split, becoming two separate charter schools. Guffey remains the Guffey Community Charter School and is very community oriented. School enrollment is low this year with only 15 students, but mostly enrollment



Old Guffey School at its present location, built 1918. Pic probably taken in 1918. Notice how small the blue spruce in front is; it is probably 100+ feet tall today!



Guffey School, built in 1915.

Old Guffey School, not built in 1915, but 1895. unknown location.

for school on a tuition basis until the Guffey School reopened in 1981-82 with 19 students in grades K-6, after the RE-2 district board voted to modernize the former school building to accommodate the growing number of students in the area.

In the meantime, the Guffey General Store was sold to a Mr. Collins in 1923 with the store and post office, his wife Elsie was postmaster from 1924-1928. The store had gas pumps and the first radio for miles around. According to longtime resident Franklin Nash, they went over to the store to listen to the radio and sometimes heard a voice, but mostly they heard static.

The store sold again in 1928. Residents were lucky to have the store during WWII with owner Mrs. Jack having commodities found nowhere else. The store burned down in 1948 and moved across Main Street. The store was sold again in 1953, burned down again in 1959 and moved to the now vacant schoolhouse. There were no gas pumps.

Longtime resident Pat Ownbey moved to

is between 20 and 30+ students. The school is starting a yearly enrollment campaign. (For more see the November 6, 2017 ^ article "100 Years of the Guffey School.")

The idea of a cat as town mayor was born at the GGS. Guffey was being ignored by the county, so a group sitting around the store wood stove decided a cat could "pussy foot around with the best of the government officials," so they elected Paisley, the store cat, mayor. Paisley became a legend and over the years Guffey has had several cats and dogs as town mayor.

In 1994, Bruce Buffington purchased the store and moved it into an old hardware store on Eighth Street on the south end of town. Buffington had always wanted to have a bar, so general store items were phased out, and it became the Freshwater Saloon, which is now vacant.

In 2019, the MountainAries Market opened at the corner of State Highway 9 and the Guffey turnoff. For more information see Ute Country News March 2019 issue, page 21 "Evolution of the Guffey General Store."

To be continued...

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Colorado Pharmgirl

A Salesgirl
by Peggy Badgett

I grew up working in the family business, a health food store. From the age of 11, I helped stock shelves and run the cash register. My starting wage was a bowl of bean soup at the local diner every Saturday afternoon with my father; probably the best salary I ever received. I treasured those times with him and learned about life through his stories. An added benefit was manning the store with my grandmother whom I was very close to. We worked hard but still found chances to play gin rummy between customers.

The business blossomed inside the small town's only shopping mall. My father was a great salesman, taught me selling skills and vast knowledge of supplements. How to approach customers with a smile. Ask them if they have questions. Place a quality product in their hands. Lead them to the reference books we stocked. I became known as "the health food store girl." I loved helping people. As I delved more deeply into understanding how vitamins and herbs worked, I realized I wanted a career in health care. Much to my family's dismay, I opted for pharmacy college instead of taking over that little business. After graduation, I enjoyed a 12-year career in research, but raising kids in the Chicago suburbs wasn't attractive. We moved to the country, bought my father's second health food store in a neighboring town, and became part of the American dream.

Owning a small business allowed me to re-enter the sales arena while having days off to play with my brood. After water fights, picking wild violets, and watching thunderstorms from our front porch swing, I studied for a masters' degree in nutrition after everyone was asleep. That knowledge, combined with my pharmacy background, gave our store a great reputation. I worked with local physicians to improve the outcomes of their patients, and spoke to area groups about interactions with prescriptions, supplements and basic nutrition. Sadly, when the recession hit, our store floundered and died. To support our family, I took a position as a retail staff pharmacist.

Fast forward 20 years. After my youngest fledged the farm's nest, I realized the new era of pharmacy practice in chain stores didn't fit me. Immunizations, time limits for checking prescriptions, increased volumes, and drive-throughs changed the profession. Juggling the stressful pharmacy shifts along with a 20 acre farm where something was always breaking was breaking me. So I quit my job, sold the beloved place where I raised my kids, and headed west to rediscover my artistic abilities and experience new adventures.

I had acquired an old motorhome a few years back. It was great for traveling around the Midwest, but the little engine sounded like it might explode on mountain passes. So I decided to sell it. How? Facebook marketplace seemed to be the best option. It allowed me to connect with potential buyers anonymously and meet them in a public place to show it. My first showing was an awakening. The young man showed up with his mother. She stayed in their car while we took the camper for a test drive. Then, as he peered under the hood and crawled around beneath the engine, the hairs on the back of my

neck raised. I looked over to see the mom glaring the stink eye at me from their car. When her son lowballed the price and whined about minor mechanical issues, I politely declined his offer, waved as they drove away, and mentally congratulated myself on not being cursed. Another candidate took a corner on three wheels (the camper has duals on the back) during her test drive; miraculously we didn't roll. I breathed a sigh of relief as she and her parents drove away. The small amount of money I'd get from selling the camper wasn't worth the effort and anxiety, so I kept it as my new art store and spare bedroom. It was a smart decision.

Again, the haunting thing.

Separating random browsers from true buyers over the internet is a challenge. The van I'd purchased last spring was a perfect introduction to the life, but I don't have the patience or skills to build it out myself. On my last camping trip to Ridgway, Colorado, the temps dipped below freezing. Sleeping conditions in the van were not any better than sleeping in a nylon tent. So when my son told me he was selling his fully outfitted van, complete with solar, heat, and refrigerator, I decided to snag his and sell mine. I'm not getting any younger, and honestly, I'd rather

write or paint than electrocute myself rigging up a system wrong. The first potential buyers arrived with their mother. The little voice inside my head immediately raised red flags. I ignored it and spent an hour showing them all the mechanical work I'd done on the van. As a pharmacist, honesty has always been an integral part of my identity, but the kids wanted guarantees. For a used vehicle, the mom stayed in the car checking Kelly Blue Book values and messaging them on their phones. Not buyers I wanted to deal with.

Again, the haunting thing.

I have met some very cool people along my lifelong sales journey. There are good, wonderful souls out there, and I am buoyed by their enthusiasm for life and experiences. But after this van is sold, I'm hanging up my used car salesgirl cap. I'd rather be hiking.

Peggy Badgett is an artist and writer. Her book "Rooster in the Drive-Through" is for sale at Shipping Plus in Divide. She has several years' worth of adventures you can read for free on her website pharmgirl.org, and can be reached at coloradopharmgirl@gmail.com.



Peggy at the top of Midland Hill outside Buena Vista, CO.

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The Serengeti's Shadow

by Carlee Spears

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Dark mane flowing

Ambush in the golden grass

Teeth like ivory daggers

Onward the lionesses strike together

Roar the shakes the land



A pride of lions sneaks up on a herd of water buffalo. This is an acrostic style poem. Artwork by the author using AI tools.

Carlee Spears is a motivated 14-year-old eighth-grader from rural Michigan who balances academic excellence with a love for the outdoors. Homeschooled in a setting that fosters both independence and creativity, she thrives under the mentorship of her uncle, Steven Veatch, who guides her development in reading and writing. When she isn't honing her literary skills, Carlee is a dedicated athlete, competing on her school's volleyball and basketball teams, and an aspiring agriculturalist with a passion for raising rabbits.

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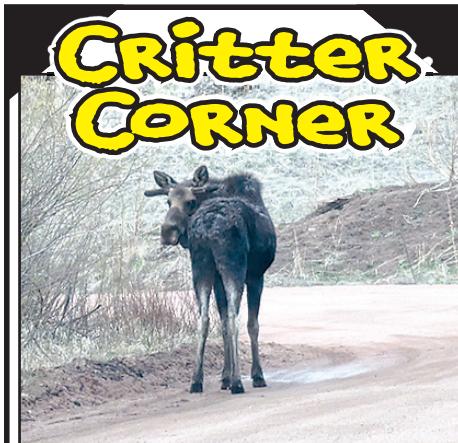
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or in the brush, the moose are definitely on the loose in Florissant - Tracie Bennett, Florissant, CO

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Dutch Angel Dragons

by Gilrund the Historian

"What are they?" asked Danny as he and his three friends watched four of the creatures fly above the playground of his school.

"They kind of look like dragons, but there is something different about them," answered Andy.

"Yeah, they look like they are part Pegasus and part dragon." Replied Sandy, "They are all different colors too."

Mrs. Winslow, their teacher, was standing with the children as they watched the strange creatures fly overhead. She smiled and said, "Those are Dutch Angel Dragons, children. You were almost right in your description of them. They are part horse and part dragon, and they came to be, according to legend, because of the love of a young woman for her horse whose name was Dutch. The story goes that the young woman found her horse very sick one day and tried everything she knew to help Dutch, but he died and the girl's heart was broken. When she buried the horse, she went to a sorcerer and asked if he could bring back her beloved horse to her some day in a stronger form.

"Well, it was only a few weeks and there appeared in the girl's barn another creature like the ones we just saw flying over us. This one was bigger than her horse and looked like a dragon, but it was covered with caramel-colored fur with black legs that went down to clawed feet. The ears were much bigger, as were the eyes. The wings were huge and feathered, similar to a bird. The tail was long and thick like a dragon and the head was that of a horse.

"The girl didn't know what to think. What is this creature that is here in my horse's stall? Then she remembered her request to the old sorcerer. She had gotten what she had asked for. It was a sort of horse but much stronger and more powerful. Also, as far as she knew, Dragons never got sick. This horse could fly like an angel, so she called it Dutch the Angel Dragon. Over time as more of the creatures appeared, they were called Dutch Angel Dragons.

"They had many attributes of dragons and horses. They could talk and laugh and dance if they wanted, and they were friendly to humans. As time went on, other things were discovered about this creature and some of them were not good. Some were even scary.

"The young girl found out many of the things that her dragon could do while they went on adventures. The most well-known one was a treasure hunt. If you would like, I can tell you about it after class."

"Hours and hours they flew along the front of the mountain range looking and listening for the young woman singing her love song.

"Day after day they flew along the mountains and still found and heard nothing.

"Jet Fire suggested that they may be looking over the wrong mountain range. Dutch suggested that it may be just a story and not true."

"Don't say that!" returned Crissy and Jet Fire.

"I say that we look for another western mountain range and continue our search there," suggested Crissy.

"The next day the three of them flew over the mountain range and further west looking for another mountain range.

"Crissy loved the adventures she and her Angel Dragon were having. Mom and Dad were a little concerned, but Dutch was very

protective of Crissy, so they let her have her fun.

"One day as Crissy was selling fruit in the village, she heard talk of a vast treasure that had been hidden in the mountains far to the west of the village by an evil king long ago. Many people had searched for the treasure, but it had never been found.

"Some said that it was protected by a curse that had been placed on it by the king so that it never would be found.

"Crissy told her parents that she was going to find the treasure and Dad would never have to work the farm again. They could live in the city and have an easy life.

"Dad laughed and said that she could look all she wanted, but he didn't think she would ever find the treasure. But if she did, he would enjoy the easy life that Crissy promised.

"Crissy and Dutch left the next day and flew west toward the mountains where the treasure was supposed to be hidden. Here was only one clue that Crissy had heard of that would lead to where the treasure would be found. They had to look and listen, for there was a cave in the side of a mountain in which a young woman would stand every day and sing a beautiful song of love for the man she wasn't allowed to marry because the evil king wanted her for himself. She wouldn't have anything to do with the evil king, so the king had a spell placed on her that she would stay in the mountain cave where the treasure was hidden and sing for her lover to find her. But he never did and she is still there waiting and singing for him every day.

"Crissy and Dutch flew to the mountain range where the treasure was supposed to be hidden and searched for several days until they met up with another Angel Dragon whose name was Jet Fire. He was bigger than Dutch.

"He was a light red color with yellow claws and very strong. Crissy and Dutch found that Jet Fire was looking for the treasure too, so they joined forces.

"Hours and hours they flew along the front of the mountain range looking and listening for the young woman singing her love song.

"Day after day they flew along the mountains and still found and heard nothing.

"Jet Fire suggested that they may be looking over the wrong mountain range. Dutch suggested that it may be just a story and not true."

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"The next day the three of them flew over the mountain range and further west looking for another mountain range.

"On and on they flew until Dutch, using his "extended vision" saw another mountain range far ahead of them.

"By the end of the day, they were there at the south end of the new mountain range and they rested for the remainder of the day.

"Morning came with a beautiful song being sung somewhere nearby. Dutch and Jet Fire awoke listening and looking for where the singing was coming. It was a song of love being sung by a young human woman."

"We've found her!" cried Crissy as she looked up the mountain range, "Let's go!"

"Crissy jumped on Dutch's back and the three of them took to the air looking and listening.

"They hadn't flown far before they saw the cave that held the young human woman who stood in a beautiful white dress and white shoes. She was singing with her arms extended and her head back, her beautiful long dark hair hanging almost to the ground as she sang her song that filled the air in the mountains.

"Crissy, Dutch and Jet Fire flew above the mountain listening to the words that she sang as their eyes filled with tears. It was a song of lost love. It was beautiful but it was very sad.

"The three friends flew down and landed just below the cave and then climbed up quickly to the cave and met the young woman. Her name was Andrea and she welcomed them to her cave. She told them it was good to see others, for she had been alone for so long.

"They talked of many things and Andrea found that she had been on the mountain for over five hundred years. The spell that had been placed on her had kept her young and beautiful, but she had lost her first love. Crissy told her that there were many young men that would love to meet her.

"Andrea just smiled and answered their many questions, especially the one about the hidden treasure that was supposed to be in the cave where she had been all these years.

"Andrea smiled and told them to follow her as she turned and walked back into the large cave.

"They didn't have to walk very far before they saw the treasure that had been hidden in the cave for so long. There were gold and silver, jewels and gold nuggets, stacked in piles and in trunks and sacks. But what got the Angel Dragons was the stacks and piles of candy and dice that was off to one side of the big cave.

"The red color of Jet Fire brightened to a shining crimson as he ran deeper into the cave and dove into the huge piles of candy and dice. Dutch was right behind him as the two Angel Dragons played in what to Dutch Angel Dragons was a true treasure for them.

"Andrea and Crissy just stood and stared at the two Angel Dragons having the time of their lives diving in and out of their treasure, eating the candy and tossing the dice here and there as they laughed and shouted of how happy they were.



"Cris-

sy

walked with Adriana down to the other treasure and Crissy knew that with only a small part of it she and her family could live the good life in the city for ever.

"Andrea looked at all of the treasure and smiled as she watched Crissy run her hands through some of the gold and silver coins.

"It was then that Andrea realized that the curse must have been broken, because she felt older and very tired. She looked down at her hands and saw that they were the hands of a very old woman. She stumbled over to one of the closed trunks and sat down as she watched Crissy and the Angle Dragons play in their treasures.

"Then she knew no more. With the curse broken Andrea had aged suddenly and was now just a skeleton sitting on a trunk filled with gold and silver coins.

"Crissy looked up from her treasure and saw the skeleton, then screamed out to Dutch and Jet Fire, "She's gone! Look, Andrea is gone. What has happened to her?"

"Dutch climbed out of the candy and walked over to Crissy. "The curse is broken," he said. "She has gone to be with her lost love at last."

"So, all of this is ours now," said Jet Fire, "She had it all of that time and could do nothing with it because of one evil man's anger. How very sad for her and her loved one. I would like to have helped her, but what could we do?"

"That is just one of the many stories of the Dutch Angel Dragons," said Mrs. Wilson, "I have heard many more of them, but it is getting late and your parents will be wondering where you are. Have a good evening and have a fun weekend. I'll see you again on Monday."

Mrs. Wilson watched as the three boys left the classroom and started walking home from the school, each of them discussing what she had just told them.

"I wonder what their parents will think when they get home and tell them what they heard today." She thought as she picked up her purse and smiled as the dice fell out onto the floor.

"As Mrs. Wilson picked up the dice she smiled again and thought, "It really was a great adventure. I miss Dutch, my Angel Dragon, but he chose to stay in the mountains with the treasure. I wonder what Jet Fire is doing now. It's been a long time since I've seen him. We did have many adventures together."



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How to handle the hack

by Kathy Hansen



The subject line in the email is inviting: "Get Ready to Celebrate," "You're Cordially Invited," "Let's Get Together," "An Invitation You Don't Want to Miss," "Let's Turn Up the Fun" and more intriguing words that reel you in. Then you open the email, see an invitation, follow the instructions to click on it, only to find out this is actually an advertisement to go paperless by using their app to invite people to your next event. Toward the bottom the Google and Apple logo are present to build recognition and trust. You've been hacked! It showed up immediately after a Microsoft update, which could have been a coincidence.

What isn't clear at that moment, but becomes cumbersome after the next system update, is that by clicking on the invitation, you just invited this hacker into your email.

The surprise to me was that it went beyond those listed in my "Contacts" going back to emails I had sent over 16 YEARS ago and possibly more! I've had 3 computers since then yet emails from a job I had that long ago were appearing.

Suddenly, emails are pouring in saying, "I couldn't open your invitation..." wanting to be included in the promised celebration. I've spent days replying to emails explaining I did not initiate the invite, and that it suddenly appeared after a Microsoft update. At one point, my Gmail account was disabled, with no explanation as to why (I could make a good guess) and my reply requesting more info remains unanswered.

I am not an IT person, computer programmer or virus killer, only a user and my knowledge is limited, so is my time. There was no way I could possibly notify everyone I have ever emailed to let them know DO NOT OPEN THE INVITE! I felt angry, frustrated and taken advantage of. Surely the billionaire of Google and Apple can afford to do their own marketing research.

I found a few helpful tips on Reddit and other posts and will share what I learned.

First, change your passwords.

Next, be sure to look in your trash folder. While this did NOT happen to us, it did to others. They found emails they had not seen or read in their trash folder — this indicates the hacker was hiding something. It can potentially mean that the hacker was harvesting data on other programs.

Check your bank accounts DAILY to as-

sure only authorized transactions have taken place.

Any errors or payments you did NOT authorized should be reported immediately. Most banks and credit unions have someone in the "Fraud" department, so ask for that when you call. Your banking institution would rather catch these earlier rather than later.

Check your credit report.

All three credit reporting agencies offer a free report once per year. Contact information is at the end of this article.

Consider freezing your credit.

Several credit card companies have simple ways to freeze your account online with a click. Just remember to unfreeze when you're ready to make a purchase.

Explore additional malware protection.

A free 14 day trial from www.malwarebytes.com is available and was recommended by a local IT person. They offer reasonably priced upgrades.

Here is what I found interesting. Prior to the hack, both the "Spam" and "Trash" folders would indicate how many items were in there. Since the hack, that no longer happens even though there are items in both, numbers no longer appear to indicate something is in there.

Most of all, be sure you are alert and clear thinking when you are checking your email. Do not click on something you are uncertain about. Be ready to play devil's advocate. It seems most people can assume that a newspaper doesn't offer judo lessons. Maybe choose to NOT click on unrecognized senders, content or nonsensical subject lines. Don't let your curiosity get the better of you!

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Adopt Us

by TCRAS

Cola

Cola is a 2.5-year-old, neutered-male Husky-Shepherd mix. He is amazing! This gorgeous boy is very sweet, but slow to trust. Due to his nervous behavior meeting new people, we recommend that he is visited more than once prior to his adoption. He may be slow to trust but once you earn his trust, he will be a shadow! Granted, he will be a shadow that is still scared of sudden movements, extra loud noises and of course... his own shadow! Cola is food motivated, which has been helping with his training. He enjoys walks but is still learning the polite leash manners. Luckily, he has been making some canine friends to help show him the ropes! He enjoys playing but can be picky about his canine companions. Please call TCRAS if you want to learn more about him or to set up a first meeting 719-686-7707.

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Life After the Kids Leave Home

A fulfilling, unhurried next chapter

by Karen Weeks

Empty nesters — parents whose children have recently moved out — often describe this phase as quietly disorienting. The house is calmer. The calendar suddenly has space. The big question emerges early: Now what? This stage isn't about filling every hour. It's about choosing what deserves your time, energy, and attention — and leaving room to breathe.

A quick orientation for this stage

This chapter works best when it balances purpose with rest. You don't need a total reinvention. You need a few meaningful anchors, a lighter schedule, and permission to experiment without pressure.

Reclaiming time without overbooking your life

The most common mistake new empty nesters make is saying "yes" to everything at once. Freedom can feel urgent. Resist that instinct.

Instead, aim for intentional variety:

- One activity that gives structure
- One that stretches you
- One that brings joy
- One that restores you

That's enough.

Low-pressure ways to rediscover yourself

Some pursuits are energizing precisely because they're optional. They don't have outcomes.

They don't require mastery.

- Long walks in a familiar neighborhood, taken at different times of day
- Reading purely for pleasure, not self-improvement
- Taking a class unrelated to your career or past roles
- Reconnecting with old friends without needing an "occasion"

These aren't filler activities. They're recalibration tools.

A practical reset: how to design a week that

feels right
Use this simple how-to as a starting point, not a rulebook.

1. Block two non-negotiable rest windows, mornings or evenings that stay unscheduled.
2. Choose one recurring commitment, volunteering, a class, or a standing social plan.
3. Leave one weekday intentionally open, this becomes your flexibility buffer.
4. Add one curiosity experiment per month. Try it. Drop it if it doesn't fit.
5. Review monthly, not daily; over-monitoring drains the joy.

Considering a small business or passion project

For some empty nesters, this stage opens the door to long-postponed ideas. Starting a small business can be energizing — not because it fills time, but because it gives direction. The process usually begins with clarifying what you enjoy, researching whether there's demand, choosing a simple structure, and handling basics like registration and finances. Many people prefer using an all-in-one platform like ZenBusiness, which can help business owners form an LLC, manage compliance, build a website, and organize financial tasks without unnecessary complexity.

This path isn't about chasing hustle. It's about building something on your terms.

Common questions empty nesters ask: Is it normal to feel both relieved and sad?

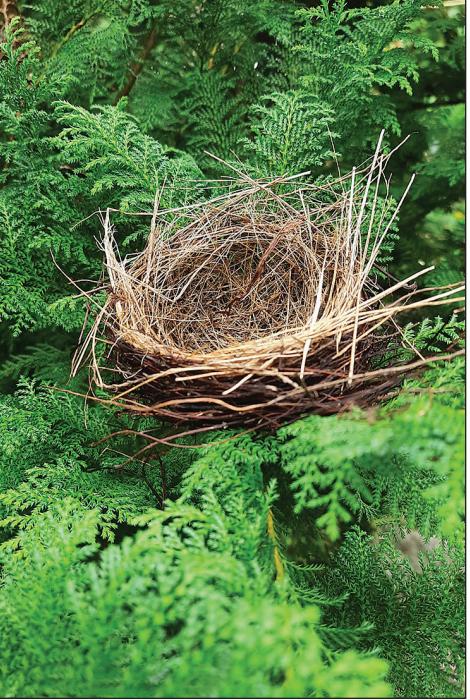
Yes. Mixed emotions are common and don't cancel each other out.

Do I need a "big project" right away?

No. Many people benefit from a quiet adjustment period first.

What if my partner and I want different things now?

That's normal too. Parallel interests can coexist with shared time.



Empty nesters — parents whose children have recently moved out — often describe this phase as quietly disorienting.



Trooper Tips

The Fast and The Furious(ly Reckless)

by Trooper Hunter Mathews

Everyone has seen, or at the very least, heard of the successful movie franchise, "The Fast and the Furious." Currently, with 10 movies and multiple spin-offs, it gives us the adrenaline rush of driving fast cars, seeing huge explosions, and the theme of *Family*. But... the one constant that gets overshadowed is the number of vehicles that were crashed or destroyed throughout the series to successfully pull off the extreme speeds and cool maneuvers.

Over the course of the 10 main movies, it's estimated that 1,400 cars were destroyed to produce that adrenaline rush, and many others avoided collisions due to the advanced skills of professional drivers. If professional drivers mess up with that level of frequency, what does that mean for the civilians speeding in Colorado in an uncontrolled environment? In 2025, preliminary numbers show that the Colorado State Patrol covered 2,865 crashes where speed was found to be a causal factor leading to the crash, with 467 resulting in injuries, and 34 resulting in someone dying.

Dominic Toretto said, "Without family, you've got nothing," so remind those you love that there is a posted legal speed limit for a reason. Colorado's interstates are not racetracks, and the people who are occupying the roads are most likely not professional drivers. Keep yourself and everyone else on the roadway safe by driving the speed limit to your destination.

Donkey

by Wyatt C. Spears

Humble, grey

Trudging, straining, enduring

Hooves, rocks, veins, ore

Radiant, precious

Gold!



A donkey and a prospector in Cripple Creek, CO—the World's Greatest Gold Camp. Photo courtesy of the Cripple Creek District Museum. CCDM 808.

Wyatt is a 16-year-old high school junior living in rural Michigan, where he balances a busy homeschool schedule with a love for sports. A dedicated athlete, Wyatt stays active playing both volleyball and basketball for his school teams. When he's not competing, he's often found gaming or making the most of his new driver's license to head out and hang with friends. Wyatt also has a new interest in writing, a passion he's refining under the mentorship of his uncle, Steven Veatch, who helps guide him through the worlds of reading and writing.

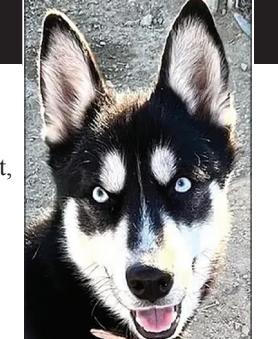
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by SLV Animal Welfare Society

Kiana

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Currant Creek Pioneer Cemetery

by Flip Boettcher
photos courtesy of Steve Platt

Over time, cemeteries tend to deteriorate without regular care, upkeep and maintenance. Headstones start leaning, topple over and break; markers get moved around by wildlife and cattle; grave sites sink; and trees and shrubs grow up around grave sites.

Two people, Steve Platt and Linda Allred, are working on doing restoration work in pioneer cemeteries and pioneer sections in larger cemeteries in Teller and Park counties; they hope to expand their efforts into Summit County, as well.

Platt is retired but was on the Park County Historic Preservation Advisory Commission (PCHPAC) for 25 years doing cemetery work and is currently on the Park County Cemetery Board.

Allred, an architect in Woodland Park and also vice-chair of the Woodland Park Historical Preservation Committee, has been doing cemetery restoration work with Platt for a few years now.

Platt and Allred have done restoration work in the Como Cemetery, the Divide Cemetery, the Shawnee Cemetery and the Pioneer section of the Woodland Park Cemetery.

The Currant Creek Pioneer Cemetery (CCPC) is located under the pines on a gentle slope above Currant Creek near Guffey and is privately owned. There is no public access and the owners' permission is necessary to visit the cemetery. Two years ago when this writer, Doug Stiverson, the great, great, great grandson of relatives interred there and Doug's cousin visited the CCPC, we noticed that it was in desperate need of some restoration work, but we were not able to do it.

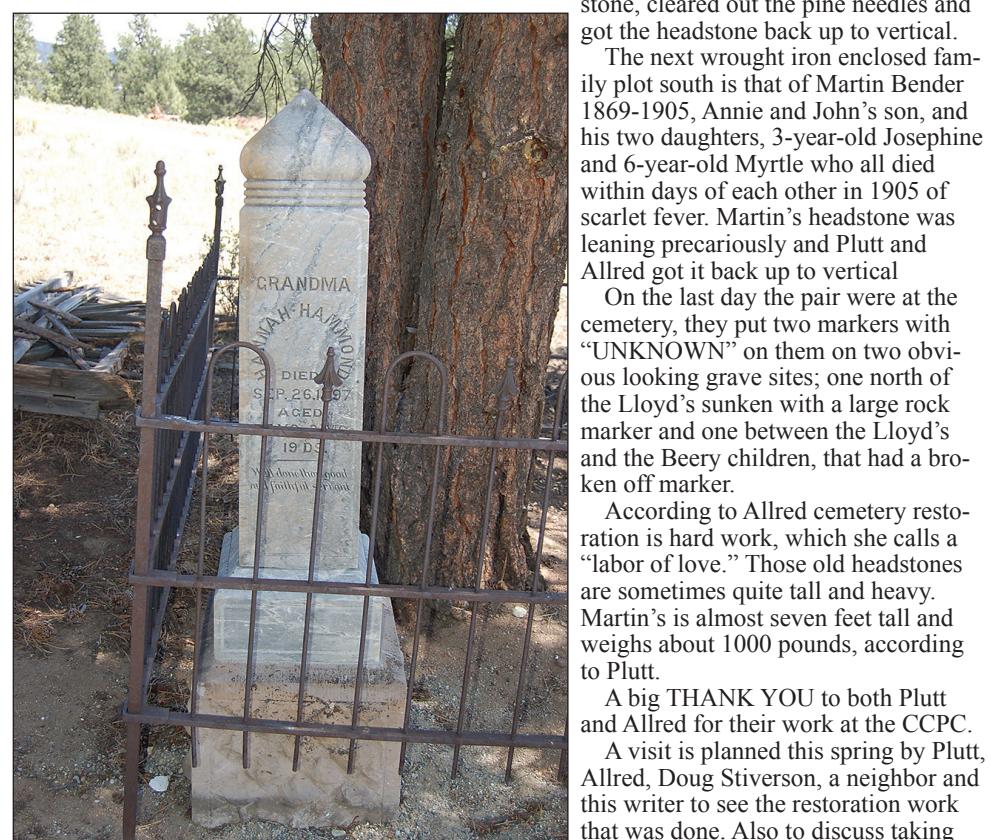
Platt, who had visited the CCPC several years before, found out from his realtor friend in Divide, who recently sold some property adjacent to the cemetery, that it was in dire



Hannah Hammond's fallen over headstone.



Martin Bender's leaning headstone.



Hannah's upright headstone. note the huge pine tree nestled by her grave site.

Cover: The Beery children's upright, mended headstones. keep the cows out.



The Beery children's scattered headstones.

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Miller is a 9-year-old senior pup at Ark Valley Humane Society who is hoping to find a warm, loving home where he can enjoy a peaceful next chapter of his life. This gentle, calm boy is currently loving life in his foster home, where his foster family can't say enough good things about him. They've said he is the best-behaved shelter dog they've ever fostered! Miller is quiet, crate trained, potty trained and does not chew on things that aren't his. He's enjoyed hikes and strolls through town and remains unfazed by other dogs along the way. He has also met two dogs at the shelter through the fence and did wonderfully. Miller is a fan favorite amongst staff, volunteers and his foster family due to his wonderful personality. If you're looking for an easygoing companion who will seamlessly fit into your life, Miller may be the perfect match. Help this sweet senior boy get his second chance and the loving home he truly deserves. You can make an appointment to meet Miller by calling 719-395-2737.

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



Life-Enhancing Journeys Journey Through Love: Stages of relationships

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

Since February often brings Valentine's Day to mind, this article focuses on relationships. The concepts I share are inspired by our relationship mentors, Gay and Kathryn Hendricks, renowned relationship experts who lived in Colorado Springs during the 1980s. My husband and I have gained valuable insights into how relationships naturally change over time, especially during stressful periods. Even after 50 years, Mark and I still apply what we learned. Dr. Kathryn Hendricks taught us that personal growth and meaningful change often occur through interactions within relationships, highlighting the importance of trust, respect, connection, and communication. Falling in love often feels magical and exhilarating, creating a quick burst of excitement. However, maintaining love requires effort, understanding, acceptance and compromise. It involves facing challenges, communicating clearly, and evolving together over time. Understanding these developmental stages can help couples navigate their shared journey more smoothly and with greater insight. Whether starting a new relationship or strengthening an existing one, this advice is intended to promote ongoing connection, understanding, and personal growth.

At this point, partners might want their significant other to change, believing it will fix all the relationship problems.

They often blame each other but forget that a good relationship requires both people to work on themselves and reflect on their actions. In this stage, to move beyond it, each partner focuses on self-improvement and personal growth. The relationship can naturally grow and strengthen, encouraging both parties to deepen their commitment. Research shows that self-awareness and personal growth are key to building real, lasting connections with others.

Stage 3 - The Choice Point - Two Possible Options

The Unconscious Choice occurs when people avoid confronting issues and refuse to work on the relationship. Since many of us lack formal training in conflict management, we often find ourselves reacting by exploding, blaming, withdrawing, or simply ignoring the issue. Recognizing this helps us be more compassionate with ourselves and others as we work toward healthier ways to handle conflicts.

When these reactions seem like our only choices, the same pattern simply restarts instead of resolving.

• **Withholding** — Refers to the act of deliberately hiding or suppressing your true emotions, often as a way to protect yourself from potential emotional pain. This involves intentionally refraining from openly expressing your genuine feelings, which can result in emotional dishonesty, detachment, or misunderstandings in your relationship.

• **Withdrawing** — Distancing yourself from your relationship usually means hiding or suppressing how you really feel and what you are thinking. This often happens because you are scared, confused, or worried about starting an argument. As a result, a person may decide to step back or take a break to protect themselves or to better understand their feelings.

• **Curiosity**: Instead of withdrawing or blaming your partner when problems arise, you bravely reflect and ask yourself, "Could my upbringing or beliefs be affecting this?" or just, "Hmm, I wonder?" This simple habit of curiosity transforms a critical, judgmental attitude into a more aware, open, and conscious mindset that acknowledges your role and patterns in the relationship. This process results in a harmonious relationship in which problems are less likely to recur, making your connection more resilient and joyful. When challenges arise, you will know how to address them together.

• **Projecting** — How you feel about yourself internally, you transfer it onto your partner. You believe your partner needs self-improvement, causing you to blame them entirely for the difficulties you are experiencing. You view the problems as solely their fault, without acknowledging that your own actions may have contributed.

Choosing this option can result in ongoing problems that likely will leave partners feeling frustrated and more inclined to blame each other. When you feel the need to protect or defend yourself around your partner, intimacy often decreases. This can cause you to hide your feelings and become more emotionally distant.

Avoiding working on the relationship, known as taking the Unconscious Choice, can result in major problems and may lead to its downfall. This often happens because of a reluctance to face personal problems and responsibilities in the relationship.



Or

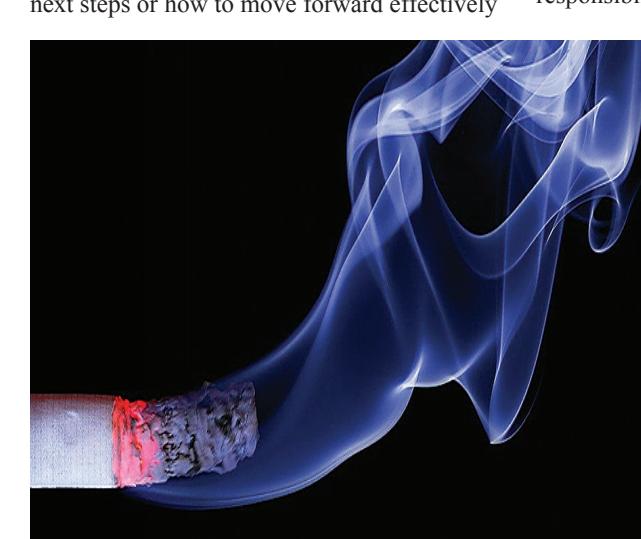
The Lasting Love Choice

Choosing to work on the relationship during this phase helps create stability by focusing on reinforcing a solid foundation. Partners establish routines and a sense of security. They learn to balance individuality and togetherness.

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By recognizing these five stages, you can find meaningful and motivating ways to strengthen your relationship and build a more trustworthy, authentic connection. Each stage offers a distinct opportunity to grow together, deepen your intimacy, and build a lasting bond. Based on my experience, dedicating effort to this goal is certainly worthwhile.

Barbara Pickholz-Weiner, RN, BSN, CACIII, MAC, EMDRRI 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 Brain...Breathe and Core...Move

by Lori Martin

Most have witnessed an infant roll from front to back and back to front. I always wonder how a helpless little baby learns this simple movement? Here is my take:

The Brain

Curiosity, desire, enthusiasm, and a lot of failures occur as the little ones strive to explore their new world from new perspectives. Messages are sent through the nervous system.

Breath

Baby learns to use breath more efficiently, inhaling first (pre-exertion) then, exhaling on the action (exertion).

Core Muscles

Nobody teaches a baby how to co-contract the core muscles to lift a leg or two in the air and reach for its' toes.

Movement

The baby constantly learns, refines, evolves and develops new movements. The baby is learning to move efficiently.

Watching a baby sit for the first time is quite fascinating. In this new position, the baby has to integrate the brain, breath, core to keep itself from toppling over. Stabilizing the little body doesn't happen on the first try. Eventually, the baby successfully learns to sit upright in perfect posture. Until the next challenge presents itself.

Place your hand on the baby's back and feel the micro muscle contractions necessary to keep the baby upright. These contractions can be in response to internal or external forces. Internal movements such as a sneeze, or sudden burst of giggles incite the motion. External movements might be from the cat rubbing up to the baby's back. The baby's core musculature is reacting on a micro-muscular level.

The child grows and matures physically. Sports, fashion, relationships and other activities enter the scene. The growing body is affected by all of the child's choices, interests, habits, etc., often times, creating imbalances.

Balancing their lives and activities can help the child move through to adult life with a good sense of movement, confidence and posture. Most of us get to adulthood with some compromise or another.

Some imbalances are preventable, but some are not.

These kids, now adults, might choose a career that disrupts their natural movement patterns leading to bad posture and and/or injuries. Chronic neck and/or low back pain are two common long term effects of excessive sitting, especially computer usage.

Move!

Taking regular breaks from sitting will help combat those imbalances. Get up and walk, take the stairs, and standard seated calf raises are all ways to keep blood flowing.

Ideas

1. Do whatever floats your boat!

Walk the dog, You Tube workouts, the gym and/or workout at home. Whatever you do, remember this: Working your abdominals is NOT the same as working your core. Over-training the abdominals by focusing only on the muscles in the front of your body weakens the muscles in the back of your body.

In every session or class I teach, I say the following: "Every repetition of every exercise is an opportunity to work your core."

When training any muscle group our first focus is on breath and co-contracting the entire core musculature. Practicing this through-

out the day during inactive moments will help create the single best habit necessary for living a fit, healthy and movement centered life.

The muscles of the back of the torso and the muscles of the front of the torso; the CORE muscles must work together equally to stabilize the spine.

- This is isometric exercise the finest.
- The spine remains in neutral posture (never rounded or arched).
- There should be little to no movement of the spine.

Example Workout:

3 sets of 10 repetitions of 5 different exercises
Bicep curl, triceps extension, lateral shoulder raise, seated leg extension, seated leg curl
Engaging our core while executing this program = 150 core strength co-contractions.

1. Stabilizes the spine preparing it for the load of added weight and movement.
2. Trains the core to engage during all movements.
3. Creates a more efficient workout.
4. Offers greater progress toward strength gains.
5. Lessens the chance of injury.

Like the baby, we engage the entire core on the exhale.

Why would we not want to work our core with every bicep curl, chest press or squat? Why not engage our core with every push of the vacuum or while doing dishes or raking leaves?

Mobility of the spine:

In addition to Spinal Stabilization, we have movement:

- Spinal Flexion — Bending forward (rounding your spine into a C-spine).
- Spinal Extension — Bending backward (not exaggerated arching of the spine).
- Spinal Rotation — Think twisting of the spine.

- Lateral Flexion — Spine bends to left and right.

All of these movements involve the spine. Therefore, they involve the entire core musculature.

Esthetics

We have become conditioned to the esthetics of having defined or ripped abdominals while ignoring the muscles of the back. This conditioning has left many with no understanding of how to activate the muscles of the back and the posterior chain.

Suggestions

1. Foundation Training — Free You Tube videos or class at Community Partnership.
2. Mobility exercise of the spine in the above positions.
3. Isometric exercise while on unstable surface.

Ex: Isometric

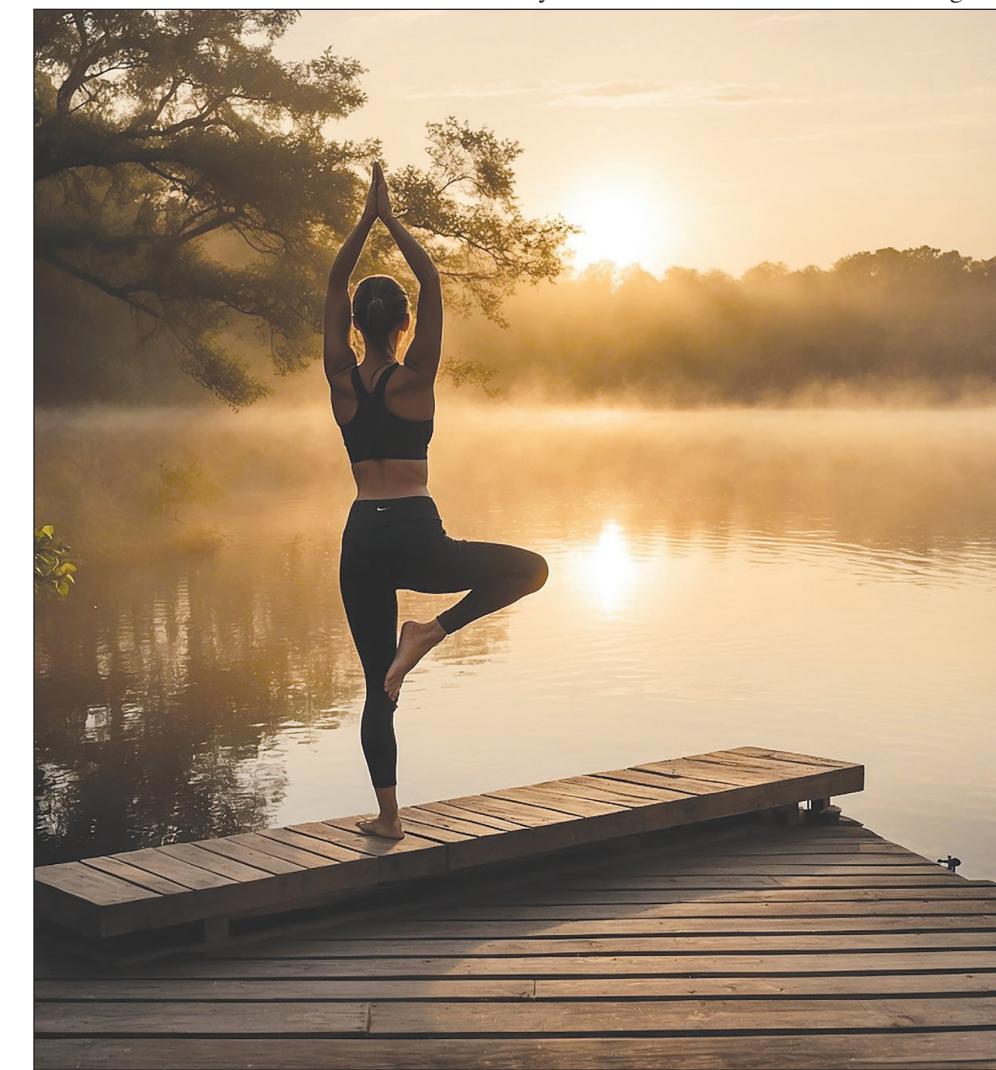
Lying on the back with knees bent or you can stand against a wall.

Place a small Pilates ball, Bosu, or cushion between the shoulder blades.

Press into the unstable ball, etc.

- On the exhale, co-contract the entire core as you apply pressure into the ball without pushing through the legs or feet while, the spine remains in neutral.
- Imagine your feet are on a piece of glass and you don't want to break it.

Eventually, we achieve "ah ha" status and we can move on:



thoracic vertebrae).

4. The inhale
5. At the perfect moment, on impact, the exhale, the engaging of the core muscles. Perfectly in sync, the tether ball sails. Perfect tension on the rope at the perfect speed and with maximum power.

Only focusing on the strength of your abdominals and the forward movement as you impact the ball will create an imbalance at impact and will likely lead to a botched hit.

Of course, this is only a run-down of how a properly trained core can optimize your performance and/or daily activities and it is the basis for most sports. The strength of the lower body is another component. That tether baller will also add power to the impact as he/she steps toward the incoming ball.

My uncle trained in the military as a boxer. He came home for a holiday. My dad was standing in front of the stove. He stood inches in front of my dad as he told him in his southern accent, "Ellis, I can put you right there on that stove with a punch from this close (2 inches). My Dad learned a valuable lesson that day when he said in his southern voice, "Jim, you're telling me that you can put me on top of the stove with no room to take a proper swing at me? I don't believe it!"

This is one of the stories that set me on my path in fitness and kickboxing.

Uncle Jim brought his fist up at a right angle, elbow bent next to his rib cage.

The Lesson?

Never underestimate the power of a strong core and properly trained lower body, a perfectly timed spinal rotation and the importance of breath.

The arm itself is simply a piece of the mechanism. The core should be the actual engine in all movements.

I think my dad could have used a little DNA Vibe time after that demonstration.

If you find yourself questioning whether your body could use some help with movement, contact me:

lorimartinfitness@icloud.com
www.dnavibe.com/lorimartinfitness

New Main Street Designations

by Shannon Gray

The Department of Local Affairs' (DOLA) Colorado Main Street Program has designated the City of Cripple Creek, City of Woodland Park, City of Fort Morgan, and Town of Kiowa as official Main Street communities. These four communities join 27 other cities and towns in the Colorado Main Street Program, which offers support for community-led downtown revitalization and helps communities thrive by providing a customizable framework to focus efforts, energy, and resources to create a more vibrant community.

The City of Cripple Creek in central Colorado is a preserved gold-mining town that was the site of the state's last major gold rush.

Significant for its gold mining history from the late 1800s, many of the current buildings were constructed after two devastating fires in 1896, featuring primarily Victorian architecture with commercial and Queen Anne elements. Today, it offers a unique mix of historic tours, entertainment such as casinos, and dramatic mountain views nestled at more than 9,400 feet.

The City of Cripple Creek will host the local Main Street program, and envisions a lively mountain town where history and modern energy come together with a walkable, welcoming downtown, filled with restored buildings, inviting gathering spaces, and year-round experiences that inspire pride in the locals and captivates its visitors.

Just north of Cripple Creek is Woodland Park, the City Above the Clouds, a basecamp for adventure to dine, shop, and play. Woodland Park's downtown embodies a relaxed, small-town mountain atmosphere, shaped by its history and natural surroundings. The district features a blend of small-scale commercial buildings, historic structures, and more modern developments, all unified by rustic mountain-inspired architectural elements.

The local Main Street program will reside with the City of Woodland Park, with the purpose of strengthening its downtown by supporting local businesses and cultivating partnerships to create vibrant, welcoming spaces that showcase our community's character and make Woodland Park a destination of choice.

On the Eastern Plains, the City of Fort Morgan is the county seat of Morgan County and a commercial, industrial, and recreational hub for northeast Colorado. It offers 5.5 miles of nature trails located in more than 240 acres of a wildlife park and area located along the South Platte River. Fort Morgan is also home to several notable legends, including Big Band leader Glenn Miller, three NFL football players, and the final resting place of Philip K. Dick, notable science fiction writer.

~OUT AND ABOUT~

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

AVAILABLE ONLINE

• NAMI Colorado <http://www.nami-colorado.org/>
• Suicide prevention: <https://suicidepreventionline.org/> or dial 988

CAÑON CITY

Sundays Paint with Mary Shell — see ad page 8.

• 1st Friday Lego Club 3 p.m.
• 2nd Friday Breakout Box 3 p.m.
• 3rd Friday Creative Crafting 3 p.m.
• Saturdays D&D for teens 12-2 p.m., adults and younger kids 2-4 p.m. Registration is required.

DIVIDE

9, 23 Little Chapel Food Pantry distribution 2-5 p.m.

13, 27 Teller Senior Coalition BINGO! 10-11:30 a.m. at Little Chapel Church 69 CR 5. Please call to set up a ride 719-687-0256 and join us for doughnuts, coffee and FUN!

28 Part II of Living Safely in wildfire country 2-4:30 p.m. at Summit Elementary School.

COLORADO WOLF AND WILDLIFE CENTER

8 Bring Your Sweetheart 9-11 a.m. and celebrate history! Join us on a mini tour of our resident animals and take a special tour on Chinook's nature trail, where you will hear the story of "The Lovers." Guests will receive a flower, snacks and seasonal drinks 12 and older \$40, 8-11 year olds \$20. Reservations required.

FLORISSANT

7-8 "New Year, New Us" couples workshop. For empty nesters, couples who have drifted apart or newlyweds wishing to build a strong foundation. Register mustangwesdom.com/new-year-new-us.

21 PPHS hosts Chautauqua, Birdman, Joe LaFleur at 2 p.m. see page 19.

FLORISSANT GRANGE

3 Fiber Arts Club 11 a.m. All are invited to join this club of fiber artists! Some of these arts include crocheting, knitting, felting, needle point, sewing, macramé and more.

7 Divide Library Grand Opening 1-4 p.m. Join us and celebrate the opening of the new library in Divide! Enjoy refreshments and take in all the new things we're offering!

• Wiggle Wednesdays Storytime every Wednesday 10 a.m. Come get your wiggles out at this new storytime for ages 0-5!

FAIRPLAY

WIZARDS OF THE PEAK 1, 15 Armatd Park Days 12-1:30 p.m. FREE at South Park Rec Center

1 Catan Group 2 p.m.
7 One Shot Saturday 7 p.m.

8 Chess Group 2 p.m.

15 Word Game Group 2 p.m.

22 Artgard Arts & Science Day 12 p.m.

• Mondays Cribbage Group 6 p.m.

• Mondays bi-weekly Boozy Board Games 6 p.m. FREE at Snitching Lady Distillery

• Wednesdays Trivia Night 6:30 p.m. FREE at Snitching Lady

• Thursdays Stranger Things D&D Club 4:30 p.m. FREE at South Park Rec Center

• Fridays Learn to Play 6 p.m. featured game Love Letter

• Fridays Night Magic 7 p.m.

• Saturdays Adult RPGs 6 p.m. and 7 p.m. Different RPG each week.

FLORENCE

1-14 Annual Sweetheart Sale at Blue Spruce Gallery. The gallery offers 20% off everything. Choose from oil paintings, watercolors, blown glass, beaded and custom silver jewelry, photography, stoneware pottery, sculpture, Native American items and more. The Sweetheart Show is a member show for the gallery, and many of the artists bring in new work. The show opens Feb 9 and runs through March 9, with the reception on Feb 14, 4-6:30 p.m. That Saturday will be a "Something Chocolate" theme in Florence and visitors to Florence will find special treats in many of the downtown merchants. Blue Spruce Gallery is located at 205 Main St. FMI 719-784-1339.

• The Florence Pioneer Museum and Research Center 100 E Front St., is open! Join us for "The Road to Statehood" display about how Colorado became a centennial state. Follow the signs to learn how long it really took Colorado to become Colorado! Visit our website for house and calendar www.florencepioneermuseum.org.

14 VITA tax 8:30-1 p.m. Please call for appointment — see page 5.

28 Commodities distribution 9-1 p.m.

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

• Tuesdays Moral Recognition Therapy 5-7 p.m. at ACCC building.

• Wednesdays Luncheon 11:30-1 p.m. upstairs dining room, every Wed, donations greatly appreciated, but not required.

• Mexican Train on Thursday 10:30 a.m.

• First and third Thursday is for Adult Children of Alcoholics 6:30-8 p.m.

• Interested in ESL? Please contact Ann 719-493-0867.

JOHN C FREMONT LIBRARY 5 Matthew Valdez will be doing a presentation about John C. Fremont at 2 p.m.

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Call us at 719.667.3814 to find out more!

The Pikes Peak Workforce Center works for the success of regional businesses with no-cost, tailored services connecting you to employment-ready job seekers.



Resources available to you include:

- Recruit & Select
- Hiring Events
- Job Fairs
- Analytical Research
- On-the-Job Training
- Transitions & Layoffs
- Pre-Employment Assessment



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--Tony L. Perry, President / CEO



Kathryn Perry
SVP Lending / CFO

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Jack Galsterer
AVP Construction Officer

NMLS 2230404



Craig Spivey
AVP Mortgage Loan Officer

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