



# UTE COUNTRY NEWS

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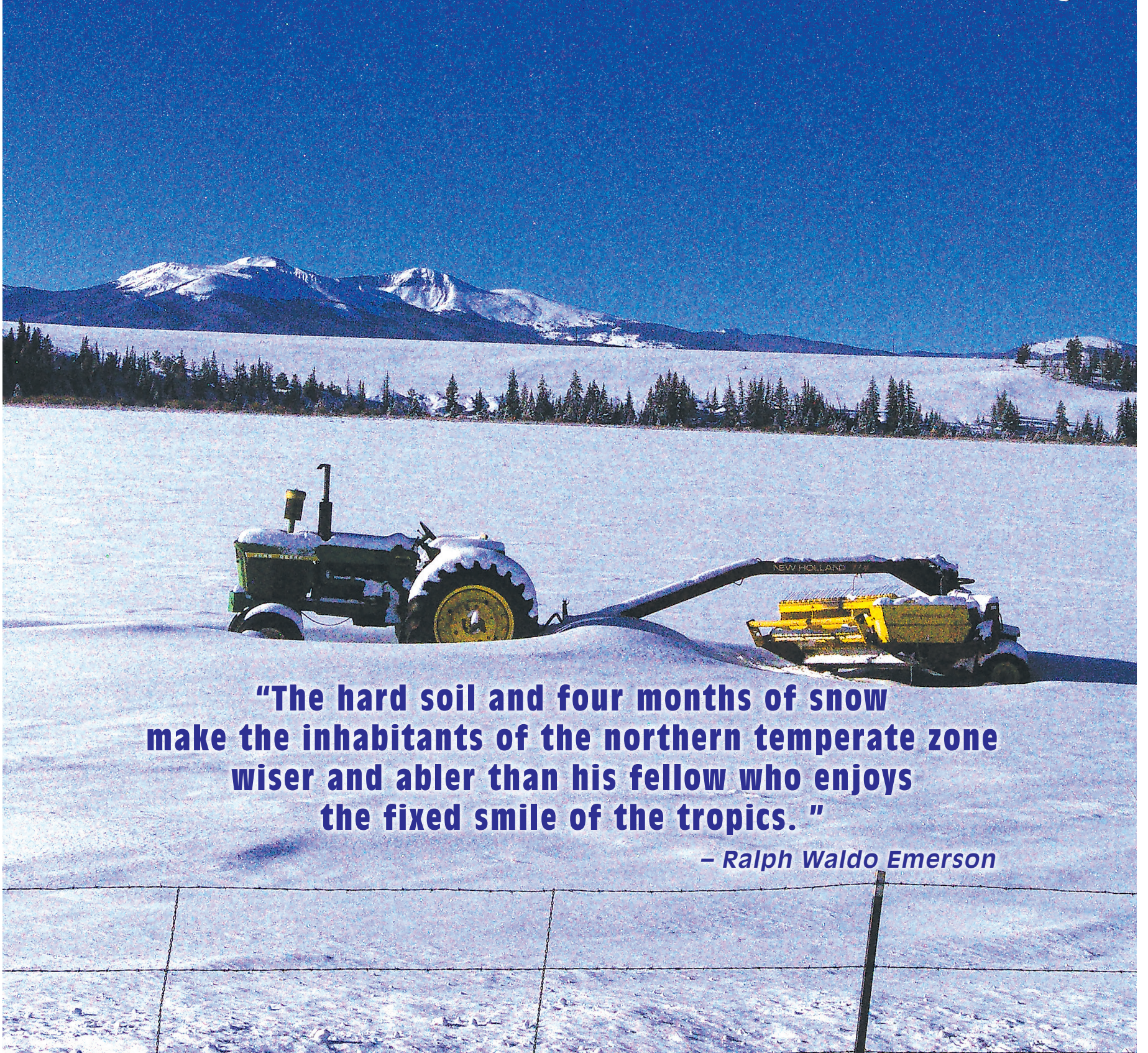
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February 2022

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Vol. 14, No. 2

## Welcome to Ute Country



**"The hard soil and four months of snow  
make the inhabitants of the northern temperate zone  
wiser and abler than his fellow who enjoys  
the fixed smile of the tropics. "**

*– Ralph Waldo Emerson*

### PEEK INSIDE...



*It's all about carnations*



*Unassuming but irreplaceable*



*TCRAS fostering hope and new beginnings*



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On Deck

Our February cover photo was taken on Hwy 9 between Hartsel and Fairplay, just north of Garo. We are always grateful for an abundant snow harvest! While our biggest snowfall months are March, April and May, we know that these lower yielding storms provide much needed water for the vegetation's roots to survive until spring. Any moisture is helpful in our high desert climate. We felt the quote was rather fitting for the season, for our readers and our content because when we have endured something challenging, we find our competence!

We have many articles that can help readers find their competence in February. *The Thymekeeper* helps us think critically about chemicals we use in our home and empowers us to choose wisely. *Life Enhancing Journeys* gives useful tips on talking about death and dying, a difficult subject for most. *Beasts of the Peaks* teaches us all about the Mayfly and the powerful part it plays in the cycle of life as it reminds us of the significance of "smaller roles" humans may sometimes play. *Panning for Good* visits TCRAS and gives a glimpse of the goodness this amazing organization emanates in our community that helps to connect animals with forever homes. To learn more about carnations, read *Growing Ideas* as Karen teaches us lots about this flower with a gentle reminder the simplest gift is love and kindness (and it is FREE!).

Need a new start? *Ute Country News* is currently seeking both sales staff and delivery drivers. If you are interested, please stop in Shipping Plus in Divide M-F 9-5:30 p.m., call us 719-686-7587 or email your intent to [utecountrynewspaper@gmail.com](mailto:utecountrynewspaper@gmail.com).

We would love to feature your pet in Critter Corner. All you need to do is email [utecountrynewspaper@gmail.com](mailto:utecountrynewspaper@gmail.com) or snail mail them to POB 753 Divide, CO 80814 or drop them off at Shipping Plus in Divide M-F 9-5:30 p.m.

Thank you,  
— Kathy & Jeff Hansen

# The Thymekeeper

## Critically rethinking chemicals in the home

by Mari Marques-Worden

One of the most important aspects of practicing herbalism often hinges on how sharp your detective skills are. Getting to the source of the problem can be a game changer.

For example, most people will assume that their sore throat or reoccurring headaches are a result of coming down with an illness or a physiological issue of some sort. Not all problems arise from inside. Your environment and what is in it plays a key role in maintaining good health. You may be sensitive or even allergic to something you are around on a daily basis. How does environment impact our health? Plenty, as you will see from history.

Suffice to say regulations on large entities like corporations haven't always had our best interest at heart. Marketing slogans like "safe and effective" aren't always true relatively speaking. There was a time when doctors preferred Camel cigarettes and that is just one egregious example. Some people will remember when planes sprayed loads of DDT directly over the tops of our heads as we frolicked as children in the summer sun. In addition to DDT, parents everywhere made sure we were slathering our bodies with bug repellents just to crank it up a notch. I can tell you I was more afraid of cooties than mosquitos back then. Not once did I give second thought to Malaria growing up in Nebraska, but marketers assured us we were safe from such maladies with their solutions.

The slogan was "DDT is good for Me-e-l!" with happy cartoon characters dancing and singing outdoors. They stated, "When properly used, DDT kills a host of destructive insect pests, and is a benefactor of all humanity." The words "properly used" are left to interpretation by the user. Heavily promoted by government and industry to housewives at the time, some ads showed housewives spraying the interior of cabinets. It was even infused into wallpaper that some lined their homes including nurseries.

Advertising had many convinced that disease laden insects could invade and wreak havoc in the home. "Medical science," "Non-Hazardous" and "Guaranteed" in bold letters stand out to the reader. Words are powerful when marketing experts use them to invoke emotion, especially fear.

Opposition to DDT came about with the 1962 publication of Rachel Carson's book *Silent Spring* in which she talks about the impacts of broadcasting dangerous chemicals into the environment and the potential health effects of such actions. The book cited claims that DDT and other pesticides caused cancer and that their agricultural use was a threat to wildlife, particularly birds. Not to mention children. With the growing environmental movement and public outcry, it led to a ban on DDT for agricultural use in 1972.

**Paris Green**

If anyone had been paying attention to history, it would have taught us that using dangerous chemicals in the environment could be catastrophic. Paris Green was introduced to society in the 19th century and it was such a spectacular deep green color that it became all the rage. Considered the color of the social elite, it quickly became the trend and was used in dyes, paint, garments and wall paper. It was as ubiquitous then as plastic is now. It eventually found its way into candy, paper, toys and medicine.

The emerald pigment was the creation of chemists who found that mixing copper with arsenic resulted in a dye that was brighter and longer lasting than other

greens on the market. Arsenic is a highly toxic substance that causes horrific damage not to mention death. A mere 1/8th of a teaspoon constitutes a fatal dose and workers at the time were working with gallons of it using their bare hands.

Since it was arsenic based it was also found to be an excellent pesticide and when lead was added it became lead arsenate and became even more deadly. Unfortunately, people didn't figure out until much later that it's deadly effects on humans.

by the news media leaving us all somewhat vulnerable to those who could gain from it. The videos of people in hazmat suits heavily spraying brings back memories of the days when DDT was sprayed from the back of trucks or low flying planes. Although I can't name the specific chemicals being sprayed today, I'm pretty sure they are designed to kill.

I don't own a television but it seemed every time I turned on the computer, I was inundated with ads and the notion that every single surface from your countertops to your hands to your grocery bags needed disinfecting.

Suddenly, I heard a whisper that some of those hand sanitizers *may* not be so good for you and that was all it took for me to slap on my detective hat. Upon further investigation, I found the culprit: Quats, short for quaternary ammonium compounds. They are potent disinfectant chemicals commonly found in household cleaners, wipes, sprays, sanitizers and are certified by the EPA as pesticides. For most households they are considered overkill on the level of killing a housefly with a sledge hammer but are found in a whole host of products.

Sure, they kill "germs" but the downside is they are lung irritants and can contribute to asthma and other respiratory problems. Quats are also a skin irritant. Keeping in mind that your skin is your largest organ of absorption, anything you put on it should be safe enough to put in your mouth. This could explain why the skin on the palms of my hand was peeling off when everywhere I went, there was a hand sanitizer guard at the door.

Emerging science shows us that exposure in mice resulted in harm to sperm

continued on page 4

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Community Partnership Family Resource Center would like to thank the many individuals, businesses, organizations, and funders who so generously donated in 2021. It is our great honor to invest these funds respectfully and responsibly back into our community. Thank you for preparing us for an impactful 2022.

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# The Thymekeeper

Critically rethinking chemicals in the home

continued from page 3

quality, reduced fertility and birth defects. We don't know if this could occur in humans, and it took months for the mice to regain normal fertility after discontinuing use on their cages.

**Quats linger**

Long after you've wiped that surface, exposure occurs every time you or your pet or your children make contact with it. The hand wipes strongly recommend you wash with soap and water after use. Seems there was no reason for a wipe in the first place! There are no studies to show that products with quats contribute to your health like there are that show soap and water to be beneficial. Products containing them recommend against the use of them on any food contact surfaces such as cutting boards, plates, cutlery, etc. These chemicals can contaminate your food long after cleaning has occurred.

Last but not least, overuse of antibiotics contributed greatly to the rise of the super-bugs. Consider the overuse of quats and what resistant entities may arise from their overuse. I'm beginning to see a disturbing pattern here.

**Avoiding quats in the home**

Look for cleaning products that don't advertise as antibacterial or check the label for active ingredients and avoid the ones that contain ingredients that look like these:

- Benzalkonium chloride
- Benzethonium chloride
- Alkyl dimethyl benzyl ammonium chlorides (C12-16)
- Alkyl dimethyl benzyl ammonium chloride (C14 60%, C16 30%, C12 5%, C18 5%)
- Alkyl dimethyl ethylbenzyl ammonium chloride (C12-14)
- Alkyl dimethyl ethylbenzyl ammonium chlorides (C12-18)
- Didecyl dimethyl ammonium chloride
- Dioctyl dimethyl ammonium chloride

When it comes down to it, we each have a responsibility to be true to ourselves and protect our families as best we can. Perhaps the first line of defense is putting on our thinking cap and recognizing advertisements serve the purpose of selling more products, so buyer beware. Also consider the platforms you visit. If you go to Social Media (the goal is connection, no qualifications required) or Entertainment Services (the goal is to make you feel and provide you with thoughts, no qualifications required) or News Media (the goal is to inform via journalists trained to seek honest answers, qualifications include a degree in journalism) to get your news it will be defined differently by all three of these sources. Perhaps the second line of defense is to make your own; you choose the ingredient combination that work best for you based on information you gathered from sources you trust, and purchase clean ingredients

from sources you trust.

Making your own cleaning products is simple, inexpensive and will leave your home smelling like my herb shop instead of a laboratory. You can simply make a strong tea with any of the antimicrobial herbs such as thyme, oregano or rosemary. The rinds from lemons, oranges and grapefruit can be infused in alcohol and are very effective. White vinegar can be used in addition.

My all around favorite DIY all purpose cleaner is as follows.

In a 16-ounce spray bottle, add 2 Tablespoons Castile soap, 1 Tablespoon witch hazel, 15-20 drops of Thieves essential oil blend and fill the rest with filtered or distilled water. [www.happyhomehappyheart.com/diy-thieves-cleaner-recipe/](http://www.happyhomehappyheart.com/diy-thieves-cleaner-recipe/)

Boost your immune system as you clean your home and make it smell wonderful at the same time.

- I caution against re-using old plastic spray bottles as many chemicals leach into the plastic.
- Thieves essential oil can be found at The Thymekeeper and Shipping Plus in Divide.

Mari Marques Worden is a State Certified Herbalist and owner of The Thymekeeper. For questions or more information contact: [Mari@mugsyspad@aol.com](mailto:Mari@mugsyspad@aol.com) or 719-439-7303. Mari is available for private consultation.

## Home Remedies with The Thymekeeper

Folks there couldn't be a better time to learn how to help ourselves simply and inexpensively using common sense and natural remedies. I'll share my recent experience dealing with a gnarly respiratory infection and what I used to help myself through it.

This class will lean heavily toward boosting the immune, we'll talk about herbs for the immune as well as antiviral herbs, what to do and what not to do. We'll make herbal tea, an easy immune boosting elixir (syrup) and herbal lozenges that you can share with friends and family. Everyone will leave with a sample.

Herbs and containers are available for purchase.

**When:** Sunday February 20th 1:30-3:30.

**Where:** The Thymekeeper 1870 CR 31 Florissant

**Cost:** \$25.00

We will be sure to smudge the class room and herb shop prior to your arrival in order to cleanse the air of airborne pathogens. We will also have a bottle of Thieves Blend oil to pass around as an immune boost. Pre-Registration is REQUIRED as space is limited.

## Adopt Me by Ark Valley Humane Society

**Trixie**

Trixie has been with the shelter for 141 days at the time of writing this. She is an extremely sweet and goofy dog, and ready for her forever home. Trixie is a 7-year-old Bull Terrier Mix. She has spent some time in an amazing foster home where he reported that she did amazing in his home! Trixie would prefer to be your one and only pet. She has plenty of love to give to the lucky family who adopts her. If you'd like to meet Trixie, please give the shelter a call at 719-395-2737. **Note:** At the time of writing this, Trixie has been with the shelter for 204 days

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



## Growing Ideas

It's all about carnations

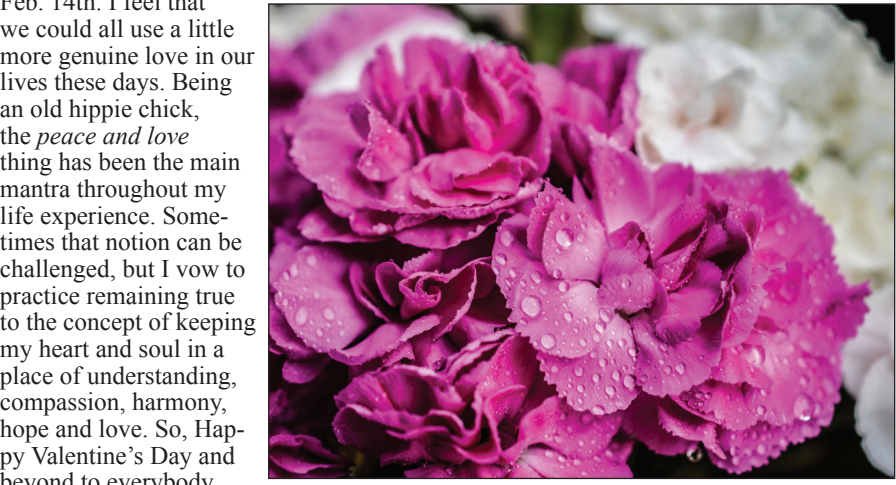
by Karen Anderson "The Plant Lady"

**New Year's Resolution: "Wag more... Grow less."**

— (Marquis at Vets Office)

February greetings and a belated happy new year from Mike and I to you and yours. Hope you are well and in good spirits. It's great to reconnect with our readers again after a short winter break.

February is the month of love which includes Valentine's Day on Monday Feb. 14th. I feel that we could all use a little more genuine love in our lives these days. Being an old hippie chick, the peace and love thing has been the main mantra throughout my life experience. Sometimes that notion can be challenged, but I vow to practice remaining true to the concept of keeping my heart and soul in a place of understanding, compassion, harmony, hope and love. So, Happy Valentine's Day and beyond to everybody.



In this article, I share with you my love for carnation flowers. Many may think of carnations as the poor man's version of flower gifting, but they are my favorite cut flowers for beauty, fragrance and longevity. Traditionally, roses are presented to our loved ones on Valentine's Day. I say, "Roses are yellow and roses are red, but why not try some carnations instead?" Many of the rose hybrids have been cultivated to deter pests, but in doing so, they lack that sweet scent, so if you plan to stick with gifting roses to your beloved, be sure to give them a good close whiff to make sure they have that hallmark scent before your purchase.

I prefer carnations (Dianthus caryophyllus) in the cut flower category for a number of reasons. They can be found in a wide range of colors, are fairly inexpensive, are exceptionally aromatic and best of all, they have an extraordinary longevity of 2-3 weeks. Carnations have a history dating back for more than 2,000 years and are rich with symbolism. Their name is derived from the words 'corone' or 'coronation' as the flowers were used for crowns and garlands in Greek ceremonies. A flower truly fit for royalty! They are the official birth flowers for the month of January. Here's a fun fact: If you have a can of Carnation Evaporated Milk in your food pantry, take a look at the label. Elbridge Amos Stuart, the creator of this brand of milk, was so inspired by the beauty of the flowers, that he decided to include them in his packaging design. Who knew?

Symbolically, the varied colors of carnations represent different meanings. Pink personifies a mother's undying and unconditional love. Red emphasizes profound love and affection. White represents

pure love and good luck. Light red stands for friendship and admiration. Purple symbolizes capriciousness, which is a word I had to look up; it means whimsical, fanciful, flighty, quirky, faddish and variable, which is probably why purple is my favorite color!

In caring for most cut flowers, the process is about the same. You will want to use some very sharp scissors to cut the stems to the desired length at a 45-degree

angle as this somehow allows better hydration to the flowers. An additive packet is usually included with your purchase of a bouquet, but as an alternative, you can use a little sugar in a vase of warm water to help maintain their color and vibrancy. It is always a good practice to change and provide fresh water every few days as it can become murky and even a bit sour. Fresh flowers should also be kept away from direct sunlight and heat in order to remain healthy and happy for the duration.

If you would like to Give the gift that keeps on giving for Valentine's Day or any other day, you may wish to consider some of my unique plant arrangements or choose from my creative collection of Love Beads (aka: Blessing Beads) on display at the Outpost Feed Store in Florissant, Shipping Plus in Divide, and at Mountain Naturals in Woodland Park. I will also be providing a limited supply of fresh flower arrangements using carnations of course, which will be available for purchase a few days before February 14th at all three locations.

We can express our love for each other in so many ways other than giving flowers, candy and jewelry, all of which are truly appreciated and enjoyed. More importantly (for me) is showing the love we carry in our hearts by treating our brothers and sisters and all inhabitants of this Earth with respect, gratitude, generosity of spirit, grace and random acts of kindness. In the simple and infamous words from John Lennon, "All you need is Love."

*If you have any inquiries regarding the world of plants, feel free to contact me at 719-748-3521 or e-mail me at [plantlady-speaks@gmail.com](mailto:plantlady-speaks@gmail.com).*

## Adopt Me by AARF

**Paris**

Having military parents can be tough, and when they get stationed where you can't go, it's heartbreaking! Paris was left with her owner's family when they left and needs a new home. Paris is 4 years old and has grown up happily with other dogs, small children and cats. She's affectionate and low key. Paris needs some reminding to potty outside but is an eager learner. To meet Paris call Dottie 719-761-5320.

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# A Look Inside the Artist

## Katherine Miezwa, Fiber and jewelry artist

by Mary Shell

I have known Katherine for over 10 years, watching her make beautiful creations in so many mediums...but not painting. A spiritual person at heart, she creates goddess pendants wrapping wire into intricate designs around stones and other objects. She seeks perfection in whatever she does and never compromises. She is passionate about everything she creates giving her creations a soul and purpose. She is drawn to ancient textile processing and natural materials.

**How long have you been doing making rugs?**  
I have been locker hooking on and off for 20 years.

**What got you interested in fibers and making rugs?**  
I was Living in Sterling, Colorado with no outlet for creativity until a fiber shop opened in the area. Over the years I took every class the instructor offered. I learned pine needle basketry, tapestry, loom weaving, beading and locker hooking. There was nothing I didn't want to try.

**What is your favorite thing to make?**  
I don't have a favorite thing to make, as each art form has its own rewards, challenges and purpose. I want everything I create to be useful. When I complete a rug, I always want it to be experienced under foot, for people to put it on the floor and enjoy the fibers under their feet.

**Tell me about the process.**  
My process for any piece of work begins with inspiration. It can come from



walk at the river, a dream or searching Pinterest for a color scheme. I always have several designs and ideas for projects going in different stages. Once I have drawn out the design, I color it. Sometimes I will do several color schemes depending on what fiber I have and what I would need to purchase. I then transfer the design to a 4-to-the-inch grid paper, which in is the size of my canvas holes. Transferring the design can take hours. Once the canvas is cut the edges must be bound before the locker hooking can begin. The roving must be worked to the right size to fit in the holes in the canvas. This is done by

walk at the river, a dream or searching Pinterest for a color scheme. I always have several designs and ideas for projects going in different stages. Once I have drawn out the design, I color it. Sometimes I will do several color schemes depending on what fiber I have and what I would need to purchase. I then transfer the design to a 4-to-the-inch grid paper, which in is the size of my canvas holes. Transferring the design can take hours. Once the canvas is cut the edges must be bound before the locker hooking can begin. The roving must be worked to the right size to fit in the holes in the canvas. This is done by

carefully stretching to roving and holding it underneath the canvas. The hook is threaded with cotton string and using the hook to pull the roving up through the canvas several times then passing the hook out the end locking the fiber on to the canvas. There are no knots in a rug, so every fiber or string end must be woven back into the rug. The result is a thick, plush material.

**What kind of tools and materials do you use?**  
The canvas I use is a stiff 4-to-the-inch canvas cut to size. Rovings are the result of wool after it is washed and carded. It is what is used to spin yarn. Rovings come in all colors and different types, depending on the animal they came from. A locker hook looks exactly like a crochet hook with an eye on the end. The only other tools needed are a tapestry needle and a pair of scissors.

**What's next for you?**  
I am teaching myself how to felt. This is a way to use up left over rovings. My sister has an alpaca, and she gave me the fleece to process, and I hope to learn to dye it using natural materials.

**What about jewelry making?**  
I love making goddess jewelry using natural materials such as stones and beads. Wire wrapping very hard on the hands and after years of creating wire wrap jewelry my fingers find it difficult to wrap these days.

You can find Katherine's work at Yarned & Dangerous at 301 Main Street, Cañon City, Colorado.  
See Mary Shell's work at www.mary-shellart.com

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# The Thymekeeper



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# New Chief

by Flip Boettcher

On January 1, 2022, the Southern Park County Fire Protection District got a new fire chief. The reins were formally passed from outgoing Chief Eugene Farmer to the incoming Chief Aric "Red" Stahly at the January 6, 2022, board of directors meeting where Stahly got his new badge pinned on by Board of Director Chairman Kenny Thomas. Essentially the two are swapping positions at the Guffey Fire Department and EMS. Farmer is stepping down to Deputy Chief and Stahly is stepping up to Chief. Farmer will remain part-time for a year to ensure a smooth transition; he will work two paid days and a swing day each week, he said. Stahly is grateful that Farmer's experience and expertise will be there for the first part of his tenure, he said.

Stahly came to Colorado from Michigan in 1996 and moved to Guffey in 2016. He joined the fire department in 2017. Stahly attended fire academy at Netco and took EMT school at UPRAD, both in Woodland Park. Stahly earned certifications as a Firefighter 1, Hazmat Operations and EMT.

Farmer's interest in the fire department started when his family bought him a 100-foot ladder truck, he said. He would display the flag from the top for 4th of July at the station. Farmer joined the fire department in 2014 and became chief in 2016. Farmer is a retired U.S. Navy Chief with 21 ½ years of service. In his seven years with the department, the largest fire they ever had was eight acres. The idea is to keep them small.

Since being chief, Farmer has accomplished a lot. Farmer got a new fire hydrant and water system at Station 1 installed; designing and building the Kubota RTV for fighting wild land fires; acquired the new water tender; upgraded the power service and purchased the stand-by generator at Station 1; replaced about half of the department vehicles including three ambulances; upgraded all the medical and firefighting equipment including the newest generation SCBAs (self-contained breathing apparatus) in all three engines, medical monitors and iPads in the ambulances.

Farmer, with the help of a great crew he said, improved the department's medical program reputation, decreased response time and improved overall service to the district. Farmer has seen an increase from 70 calls per year to around 200 calls per



The new chief, Aric Stahly, after taking his oath and pinning his badge on by Board of Directors Chairman Kenny Thomas, on the left. photo courtesy of Eugene Farmer



New Fire Chief Aric Stahly with his responding vehicle squad 9-3 and his dog, Big Nose Kate in front of the fire station. So named because she is nosy, not because she has a big nose!!! Kate has become the department's mascot. photo by Flip Boettcher

# Adopt Me


by TCRAS

## Foxy

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# The Shadow Knows *by Gilrund the Historian*

Ernest was still sleepy as he struggled to open his eyes. It had been a long sleep this winter and he would have liked to continue sleeping. But Groundhogs can only sleep so long and then it's back to work, digging and hunting for food and a mate.

Unless Spring is still a long way off, then it back to sleep.

But to find out when spring was coming, Ernest had to look out of his tunnel to see how the weather was.

This particular day, he didn't feel like walking all the way up to the entrance of his tunnel, he would much rather just go back to sleep.

Ernest got to his feet and started walking towards the tunnel entrance. It was a long walk, because all groundhogs knew to dig deep into the ground if they wanted to keep warm during the long winter months to sleep. Sometimes, he had to dig down over five feet so he could keep the cold snow and rain from getting down to him.

As he walked, he noticed that the tunnel seemed to stay warm. He was getting excited. Perhaps Spring would be early this year. That would be wonderful. It would give him more time to gather food and to find a mate.

He looked ahead and saw the light at the end of the tunnel and started to smile. On he walked and soon came to the hole in the ground and poked his head out to take a look.

YIPES! Here were humans all around at the edge of the forest and they were all watching him as he looked out of his hole.

They were dressed in their warm clothes, for the sky was covered in clouds and it looked like it may snow later in the day.

"What did they want?" he wondered as he looked around for the signs of Spring.

Ernest was a happy groundhog, for there were signs of Spring everywhere. He saw Snow Blossoms and birds singing. He could see the trees were budding. Just a little, but they were budding.

There was still a little snow on the ground, but in clear places he could see that the grasses were starting to come

up.

One thing that he did not see, was his shadow.

"Wonderful, wonderful!" thought Ernest, "Soon there would be food everywhere and now I can go looking for a mate. I know that I'm not the first to come out of my hole. There must be a female around here somewhere that would like to be with a cleaver, charming and handsome Groundhog like me."

Ernest noticed that there were some humans coming toward him and he quickly ducked back down into his hole and ran down the tunnel to his storage room to get something to eat.

It was sometime later, after Ernest had eaten his full in the warm darkness, that he started back up toward the surface to look around again.

When he reached the opening to his tunnel, he slowly raised his head to see if the humans were still there. They were gone, but they had left some fresh carrots and beans and even some blue berries and broccoli for him to eat.

He looked at the food and wanted desperately to eat it, but he was no dummy. He had heard that the humans would some-

times put harmful things on food so that they could catch animals and put them in cages.

Ernest thought and thought, then decided to go to the Sage Old Owl for advice.

Ernest wandered the forest for over an hour until he finally saw the old owl sitting on a branch many feet above him.

"Hello, old owl, I have a question for you. For I have been told that you know many things that the rest of us don't know," called Ernest.

"What is your question, newly awakened groundhog? Perhaps you would like to know why the humans were waiting at your burrow in the ground this morning. Is that your question?"

"Well, no," answered Ernest, "What I would really like to know is that, well, the humans that were watching me are gone now. But they left a lot of good food for me. As I'm sure you know, not all humans are nice to us and I'm wondering if I should eat the food that they left me? Do you know if it is safe to eat?"

"Wait here and I will find out if it is safe to eat," said the old owl as he took to the air and flew in the direction of Ernest's tunnel hole.

Ernest waited for what seemed to be a long time, but the owl flew back to its branch and when he had seated down again, he looked down at the groundhog and said, "I have inspected the food and found it to be good to eat, yes, it is safe."

Ernest thanked the Sage Old Owl and started back to his tunnel hole to eat the wonderful food that the humans had left for him to eat.

What Ernest didn't notice was that the old owl had berry juice dripping from his beak, and he had a smile on his old face that said that the berries were very good, and he had eaten quite a few.

When Ernest had returned to his tunnel entrance, he found someone else was already there.

There was another groundhog, and she was beautiful.

Ernest walked slowly toward her and smiled as he said, "This is my food, but

you may have all that you want. What is your name?"

The female looked at Ernest and smiled as she picked up a fresh carrot and took a big bite. "My name is Ethel. What's yours?"

"I'm Ernest," he replied as he walked closer and picked up another carrot and took a bite.

The two groundhogs stood there looking at each other and eating their carrots, then taking a piece of Broccoli and eating that too.

"How long have you lived here in this forest?" asked Ernest as he swallowed the bit of broccoli he had just chewed up.

"I'm new to this forest," replied Ethel, "I used to live in the forest far to the north, but it was too cold there and my mother told me to move south where it was warmer. So, here I am. Mother didn't tell me that there were such handsome males here. I'm glad that I listened to her and came down here."

Ernest grinned and

looked at Ethel as he offered her a large blueberry. She took it.

It was the start of the mating ritual for groundhogs and they both knew it.

Ethel bit into the blueberry and the juice ran down her chin and Ernest came forward to lick it off as he held her head in his paws. He stood back and whistled. Ethel finished her berry and whistled in return, as Ernest picked up a small carrot and started eating it at one end. Ethel smiled and started to eat the same carrot, but at the other end. The two groundhogs chewed and chewed as they came closer and closer to each other, until they touched noses.

They were now mates. Ernest was so excited that he jumped back and picked up another carrot and started eating it at one end and Ethel started eating at the other end. They ate four carrots that way and then started on the broccoli and ate all of that up.

They both started eating the beans until they were all gone. Ernest danced around in excitement, and then picked up a blueberry and took it to Ethel and offered it to her. She took the berry and ate it as he watched.

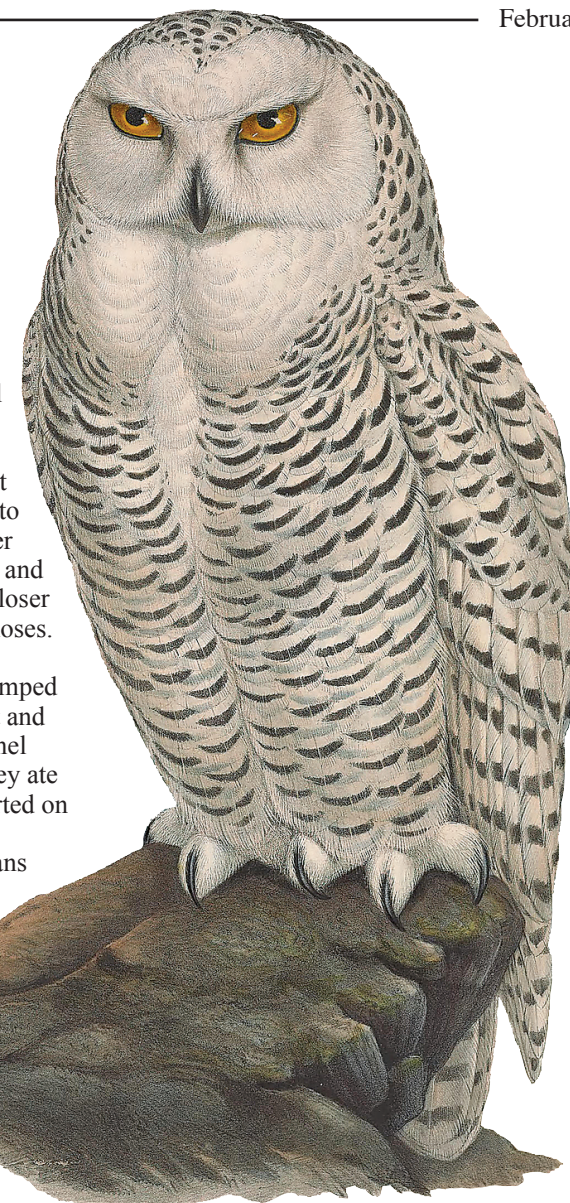
Then Ethel picked up a blueberry and offered it to Ernest. He took the blueberry and slowly ate it as he looked at Ethel watching him eat.

"We are a perfect match." He thought as he ate his blueberry and looked into Ethel's eyes.

Ernest finished his berry and the two of them dined on the rest of the berries that lay on the ground near Ernest's burrow.

When they had finished eating all the food, Ernest asked Ethel if she would like to visit his burrow and see how nice and warm it was.

Of course, she wanted to, so the two of them started down into the burrow and Ernest showed Ethel all around the several tunnels that he had made.



Both of them were full of food and sleepy. They curled up in the sleeping chamber of Ernest's burrow and slept for quite a while.

Time passed and soon Ethel gave birth to four pups, and she took very good care of them as Ernest provided food and the warmth of his burrow for them all.

The pups grew and in a couple of months were able to leave the burrow to be on their own.

Ernest and Ethel stayed together for several mating seasons, which was unusual for groundhogs. But there was a special "Something" between them that kept them together.

Something that isn't usually seen with groundhogs. It might have even been called "Love."

~ THE END ~

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

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# Life-Enhancing Journeys

## Talking about dying and death

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

In these pages over the past two months, I have provided information regarding somber subjects, Dementia (Dec 2021) and Caregivers (Jan 2022). It seems important to now consider the topic of death and dying. It is stressful, even unsettling, to think about your own mortality or the death of a loved one. If you are still reading this (I can understand why some will choose to turn the page), my intention is to open a conversation on a sensitive subject. It is important to consider your particular cultural, religious and spiritual beliefs on this topic, however, I will avoid focusing on those influences in this article.

Death seems to be viewed almost as a secret in the U.S. We either avoid talking about it altogether or converse about death in hushed tones. Although we acknowledge that eventually we all die, many of us opt for ignoring the subject by believing we will conquer aging and live forever. Doctors even use expressions like “lifesaving.” The reality is that no one truly saves lives. Medicine can prolong people’s lives, delay death, redirect death, yet we are unable to save lives on a permanent basis.

Fearing death is a natural part of the human condition. The mere thought of our own death or the death of our loved ones can result in a range of painful emotions including terror, emptiness, loneliness, grief and depression. These distressing emotions are constructed by experiences and beliefs from our past then become incorporated into our present lives. Some questions that may come up are: Why am I here? Where did I come from? Where will I go when I die? How can I live without my loved ones after they pass? Will I miss my family or miss the enjoyable aspects of life when I die? Will I experience pain and suffering? Is there life after death where I might reconnect with my departed loved ones? (This topic will be discussed in a later article). Although these questions may seem rhetorical, they can be motivating to continue this important conversation.

It is useful to ask straightforward questions; “In the event that I became too sick to speak for myself, who would I like to speak for me?” Then inquire, “Have I spoken to that person about the things that are important to me so we have a clear idea of what my end-of-life plans are?” Make sure to write down your end-of-life wishes and give copies to those who will be participating so your desires will be recognized. As obvious as this seems, few people talk about these end-of-life decisions or the sadness that usually accompanies it. Some believe that grief has an end point, however, that concept is misleading. It does not end after a year or after any amount of time; it ends when the person realizes they can live again.

*“Death is simply a shedding of the physical body like the butterfly shedding its cocoon. It is a transition to a higher state of consciousness where you continue to perceive, to understand, to laugh, and to be able to grow.”*

— Elisabeth Kubler-Ross, MD

Among the reasons we may fear death is that mortality is both unavoidable yet unexplainable. We know we will die yet we do not know how or when or what happens after we die. When we struggle with coming to terms with the concept of death, it can cause us to question the meaning of life itself, asking ourselves: Why does anything matter while we are alive if we all end up dead anyway? How you answer that question has a considerable influence on the quality of your life.

As Rollo May, existential psychologist said, “Death is the constant companion of human beings, whether it is recognized or denied. Death is not the opposite of life but a conscious parallel; one could not exist without the other.... it keeps us humble, putting us in the same boat with every other human being; and every other living creature...”

Based on studies using questionnaires such as the Collett-Lester Fear of Death and Dying Scale, there is evidence that we seem more bothered by the prospect of losing our loved ones than about dying ourselves. These studies also reveal that we worry more about the dying process, the pain and loneliness that might be involved, than about the end of life itself.

When we find ourselves getting closer to death particularly as we advance in age, the thought of one’s life ending becomes more realistic although some disregard one’s mortality. The awareness of our eventual demise offers us a choice; it can turn into dread or into acceptance.

I recall sitting by my mother’s bedside two weeks before she died when she looked at me with panic in her eyes and proclaimed, “I terrified of dying...” At that point I asked my mother if she wanted me to help alleviate her fear to which she whispered a weak yet affirmative response. My training in helping people heal from anxiety and trauma was useful and I proceeded to use EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing — a trauma recovery protocol) to reduce my mother’s fears. After about 15 minutes, my mother’s face relaxed, tears welled up in her eyes, and she declared, “Oh Barbara...I’m dancing with Uncle Alex (her older brother who used to take her dancing when she was a young girl) ... I know he’s there waiting for me... there’s nothing for me to be afraid of...” Adjusting her outlook on death enabled

my mother’s fear of dying to dissipate. As I remember the experience from 20 years ago, I still get choked up recalling how my mother allowed me to assist her in dying more peacefully.

When thinking about death as peaceful, even though there can be a profound sense of loss for those still alive, it is comforting to view the sense of peace as a cleansing process. It is a moment in which all the pain, traumas, conflicts and problems that we had experienced during our lifetime all fall away.

Some additional reasons for fearing death may be because we have disappointed of the way we have lived our lives. Research has shown that leaving a life well-lived tends to be easier than departing one that was filled with disappointments. Such regrets, unlike death, are avoidable, though one must take active steps to elude them.

*“Be very careful, then, how you live, not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity...”*

— The Bible, Ephesians 5:16-16

When I have talked with hospice professionals, they have shared that many people, on their death bed, expressed regrets such as, “I wish I was truer to myself rather than following others...” “I wish I treated myself kinder...” “What I regret the most are not the mistakes that I made...I regret most the things that I was too scared to try...” “I never let myself feel how a part of me died when she died...now we will be together...” Remorse is common as death approaches. Learn to live well today to have as few regrets in the future, whenever that time become manifest.

*“...A life well used brings a happy death.”*

— Leonardo da Vinci

What we know is that obviously we are all going to die, but how we die is important, not just to us, but to how that becomes incorporated into the lives of the people who live on afterwards. How we die lives on in the minds of everybody who survives us so make it the best farewell possible.

*“The way we die lives on in the memory of those who survive.”*

— Dame Cicely Saunders - Pioneer of the Hospice Movement

*“I know that grief is really for the people left behind...not for the ones who die...”*

— Tim Booth, musician

*“By seizing every opportunity for kindness, forgiveness, healing, and love that*

*crosses my path each day, I hope that my death, although perhaps sad for some, will be gracefully concluded.”*

— Lisa J. Shultz, author

*“I find my thoughts drifting to the Sabbath, the day of rest, the seventh day of the week, and perhaps the seventh day of one’s life as well, when one can feel that one’s work is done, and one may, in good conscience, rest.”*

— Oliver Sacks, MD, neurologist

To live our lives fully, we need to embrace the natural unfolding of birthing and dying, therefore allow yourself to search for a place of peace, connectedness, and inner freedom while on Earth, which Tara Brach, psychologist, calls a place of “true refuge.” This dependable sanctuary that you design for yourself can only be created by you and by nothing or nobody outside of yourself.

Recognizing how trauma gets locked into the tissues of our body, incorporating consistent movement can be so therapeutic. Find a way to schedule movement into your day or combine dancing while cleaning up or shake out any residue from the day before going to bed. When you move, notice whatever emotions come up, rage, peace, anger, joy, sadness, grief, etc. It is amazing how movement can reveal and release what the body has been holding on to.

It is only when we truly understand that we have a limited time in our body while on earth, and we are uncertain when our time is up, that we can begin to live each day to the fullest. Permit yourself to become more comfortable discussing death so that when someone needs you to be present with them, you can avoid your own fear and discomfort. Practice living in the present so you can share in the moment with those who need your love and attention. Please talk about end-of-life decisions with your loved ones for yourself and for them so when the heart stops beating everybody’s final wishes are respected. Cease being afraid. Every living being has the same finale so beginning a dialogue about death and dying with ourselves and with our loved ones is important and so courageous.

*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 Journeycounselingctr@gmail.com.*



# Beasts of the Peaks

## Unassuming but irreplaceable

by Jessica Stevens

Golden sunlight as bright as gold shone through the brightening cottonwood leaves, casting a glow over the shadows on the woodland paths below. The water in the creek bed ran slowly, as it does in the fall, and all was quiet in the forest’s rustling autumnal way.

The humming silence didn’t last long, however. Soon boisterous and jovial teenagers were heard ambling into the woods, gathering on the benches at the edge of the stream. Our teacher soon brought us to order and began the day’s lesson. Volunteers from the class donned waders as they splashed into the cold Cottonwood Creek to disturb the tiny residents therein.

When I went to school, Buena Vista High School had many exciting subjects and just as many intriguing teachers who taught them. Most students who took biology looked forward in earnest to at least one unit: stream ecology. Water is a vital component of the Rockies, especially in our arid valley. Much of our life and economy is founded upon the health of our watersheds. In school the purpose of this unit was to teach us how it all fits together and help us get our hands in the water to see how stream health really works.

I danced and pranced and kicked and frolicked, overturning rocks and woody debris with my rubberized feet. The sediment floated a distance downstream, where it was caught in screens and hauled to the shore for examination. Among the twigs and half-decomposed leaves, we found various little animals, like caddisfly, stonefly, and mayfly nymphs. These insects spend most of their life in their larval stage. Caddisfly nymphs encase themselves in a dress of pebbles they glue together themselves. Stoneflies are the insect-lions of the streambed.

Mayflies are one of the world’s most common insects and are a mealtime favorite of trout. They are named so because May is the most common month they emerge from the water for their mating season in the United Kingdom, though they can emerge really any time during the warm months. There are about 3,000 species of mayfly in the world and around 300 in North America. Their Latin name is *Ephemeroptera*, which comes from the Greek word *ephemeros*, which literally means “lasting a day” and the word pteron, which means “wing.” Mayflies are aquatic insects and prefer moving water to sedentary, so they are habitually found along streams and rivers. However, some species can be found in ponds and lakes.

Mayflies measure from a quarter inch long up to just over one inch and have long, curved bodies. Their wings are see-through iridescent, like a dragonfly, and they have two or three hair-like tendrils streaming off the back of their abdomen,

and they often have two extra-long front legs. They can be brown, yellow, green, or any shade in between. Nymphs look almost identical to adults, only they are shorter in length and lack wings.

Mayflies are interesting in that they only live for about 24 hours as adults. Depending on the temperature of the water and other factors, eggs can lie dormant for years. After hatching, mayfly nymphs can live in the water for months and sometimes years before they’re ready to emerge as adults and complete their life cycle. They molt an average of 50 times and explore the water, feasting on decaying plant matter and smaller insects, storing up energy for their final stand. Mayflies are a favorite of trout, so it’s important they hide in hard-to-reach places, away from fishy predators and carnivorous insects, like stoneflies.

When it’s time to rise to the surface, mayflies grow wings and sit atop the water, then fly to the nearby bank where they complete one final molt into their most mature form. After this final molt, they take to the skies to participate in what my high school science teacher lovingly called “mayfly orgies.” As crass as it sounds, this is accurate. Mayflies do not have properly formed mouths, and though they may drink water, they are unable to eat anything and thus their entire purpose is to reproduce. Flying around in search of a mate burns energy, so these insects swarm together above the water or land nearby and mate in large clouds of bug. Once a male performs his bobbing mating dance, he latches to a female with his extra-long front legs. She then glides back to the surface of the water and drops her eggs into the water. Sometimes she does this a little at a time or all at once. The eggs sink to the bottom and wait to hatch.

The life cycle of a mayfly is so interesting and short-lived that they’ve been a subject of human attention for thousands of years. Aristotle and Pliny the Elder have both studied the tiny insect with curiosity, and famous artists like Jan Sadeler and Albrecht Durer have painted them. Fishermen love to make lures which mimic the mayfly as their presence brings fish more readily.

Mayflies are animals that create bioturbation, the act of redistributing soil and sediment. Like worms do for garden soil, mayfly nymphs move the creek bed sediment around, aerating it and improving the breakdown of nutrients. Bioturbation greatly helps biodiversity and aids in the health of the ecosystem.

Though mayfly populations are stable, they are vulnerable to pollution. Observing the health of a mayfly population is important to gauging the health of a stream. Unfortunately, it seems that a

handful of species have gone extinct in the last few years, probably due to pollution.

Mayflies are not majestic like an elk or exhilarating like a wolf. I would venture to say that most people ignore the smallest of Rocky Mountain fauna when they think about our land’s wild creatures. However, these insects are just as important to the health of an ecosystem as any other member. What would our mountains be without the healthy streams and bountiful trout?

I understand that many businesses have been struggling this last year. Many of them have closed early or closed for good because they cannot find enough help to stay open. Many restaurants have been affected this way. One cause in this complex picture is that many people spurn the humble work of a dishwasher and want high-paying executive positions. Paul from the Bible equates members of the Church with parts of a body. Everyone wants to be a hand, or a foot, or an eye, because those parts are readily seen, important and do more fun work than a liver does. However, is not a liver more important to the longevity and health of a person than a hand? You can lose your hand, but you can’t lose your liver. Don’t misunderstand me; hands are important, too. I just think that the unromantic roles are undervalued.

Everybody wants to be the elk or the wolf. However, sometimes we find ourselves playing the part of the liver, or the part of the mayfly. It isn’t majestic and feels unimportant in our short-sighted view of the world. It feels common and being average does much to bruise our human ego. There is nothing wrong with being in a stage of life where you are the mayfly. Without the mayflies, restaurants can’t function, stores can’t sell their wares, the economy and the world sit stagnant. We all have our part to play, and it must be played. Thankfully, we are so much more than mayflies and may work to change our station in life if we so choose.

Enjoy the seasons in life when you are like an insignificant mayfly. These seasons build one’s character and strengthen a person to successfully fulfill the role of elk or wolf down the road.



Many species of birds and fish depend on the Mayfly for survival.

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# Panning for Good

TCRAS fostering hope and new beginnings

by Dr. Bec

Another year begins, and most of us are still standing, though struggles with grief and concern about the future are real. Yet, we continue to face our lives head on and move forward through pandemics, floods, fires, earthquakes, droughts, and many other challenges! How have we coped and conquered? One way many of us have done it is by tapping into the strength of furry friends. I have to admit I have not made it through the pandemic without adopting a puppy, watching the Hallmark channel and buying an air fryer! When our 17 and almost 20-year-old cats passed away last year, we deeply missed their sweet dispositions and other personality traits that added to our house feeling like a loving home. After a year or so, we decided to try puppy ownership. Chip is our sweet little Goldendoodle

(the animals) who couldn't speak for themselves. Angie then moved with her husband to Teller County for his work. With no job openings available in her field in Teller County, Angie first spent time employed in Colorado Springs at the Humane Society of the Pikes Peak Region. She also volunteered at TCRAS. Over time, with Executive Director Mary Steinbeiser's vision, Angie began using her experience, expertise, and networking connections to better the lives of animals in Teller County. Angie feels that, "Education is the key for the care of any animal. Our goals at TCRAS include doing our damndest to keep animals in homes so they don't have to come into shelters and rescues and to keep euthanasia rates down. Our animals are our guests and we

schedule the procedure.

**3. Fostering Program** - Helps TCRAS guests be able to mature or heal outside of a shelter environment. This program consists of volunteers that care for animals younger than two months or who have injuries or surgeries they need to heal from. Though the daily care and love are voluntarily gifted to the animals, all pet supplies such as food, litter boxes, toys, leashes, etc., medical care, and enrichment needs, such as a behavioral trainer are provided by TCRAS. Currently, the program has about 20 active foster homes, but they could always use more! If you are interested in volunteering to foster animals, please give TCRAS a call at 719-686-7707.

**4. Doggie Day Out** - Allows someone to come in and take one of the TCRAS dogs out to enjoy a doggie day and to shine a spotlight on that animal. The person who takes the dog out would write about their day in a post or two on social media such as Facebook, Instagram or Twitter and tag TCRAS. This has been working well for people who are active and love dogs but live where they can't have one and it also gets the faces of the dogs out there so they have a better chance of being adopted.

It warms my heart to know that many people in our community and state care deeply about animals. I think societies that radiate enough love to prioritize and cherish children and to treat animals with kindness and respect, will have the heart to solve any problems they may be faced with. Just as I was leaving TCRAS after my interview with Angie, two ladies with beautiful blankets stopped by. They were from a group called, Wrapped in Love - Colorado. This group makes blankets to be donated to dog and cat rescue programs throughout the state. If you would like to help with this effort, please contact Sharon Moore, the director at Sharons50@msn.com or check out their Facebook page, Wrapped in Love - Colorado. You know something is special when you hear tributes from many sources. TCRAS has a wonderful network of veterinarians they work with. Dr. Kip Madsen, a local veterinarian, shared that he had never seen a shelter with so many innovative outreach programs for their animals as TCRAS. He shared, "TCRAS and the workers there are truly amazing. Angie brings me interesting cases to solve and it is apparent how much she cares for every animal. The shelter even takes in dogs from other places that would have been euthanized so they can save them. There are so many things they do for the good of the animals that are over and above what typical shelters do." Shaun Bright who just finished fostering a litter of puppies for TCRAS shared, "They are incredible, the care they have for the animals is outstanding. Angie will go out of her way to help any animal in need." We are so fortunate to have a shelter who reaches out to the community and allows us all to share in the care and love of animals. While searching to find and write about places where good exists in our mountain communities, it doesn't take a lot of panning to see that TCRAS is pure gold!

**1. Paws in Hand** - Partnership with local veterinarians, animal trainers and behaviorists to provide needed support to effectively address behavioral and sometimes medical needs of pets who are struggling in their home environments. Situations could include problems with the new pet getting along with other pets in the home, destructive tendencies, aggressiveness, and animals who regularly escape. TCRAS will pay for a couple of sessions with trainers and support other intense needs through a grant from the Animal Assistance Foundation and the Petco Foundation. Please contact TCRAS at 719-686-7707 if you would like your pet to be considered for this program.

**2. Geri's Great Fix** - A spay/neuter voucher for low-income situations. To apply, set up an appointment with TCRAS (see contact information below) and if the situation works, a voucher for \$50 for cats and \$70 for dogs will be provided. After that, the owner contacts a vet to



Executive Director Angie Davis has dedicated her life to helping animals find forever homes. We love you Angie!

Why was the horse so happy? Because he lived in a stable environment.

The reason a dog has so many friends is that he wags his tail instead of his tongue.

**Quote:**  
"Animals are such agreeable friends—they ask no questions; they pass no criticisms."

— George Eliot

**Challenge:**  
This month's challenge is to enjoy a happy start to 2022 by experiencing the positive physical and mental benefits of interacting with animals by caring for and connecting with an animal in some way. Maybe feeding wild birds some extra good birdseed and talking to them while they eat it or taking extra special care of your cat or dog — maybe a new treat or toy and more play time. Maybe making blankets for rescue animals through the Wrapped in Love - Colorado program or volunteering time to feed, clean up after, stroke and love on the animals at a local shelter. Fostering animals through TCRAS could be a great way to intermittently enrich your life with animals who have an urgent need. Giving a shelter dog a wonderful day out through the Doggie Day Out program could be a lot of fun, definitely a win-win for both the volunteer and the dog. Best Wishes for a Happy and Healthy New Year!

**How I pledge to make the world a better place in 2022 from Dr. Bec:**  
Continue to search out what is good and share it! Support mountain town businesses by using Amazon less and getting out and shopping more.

Rebecca Frazier, PhD is an author and educational consultant. Her years as a classroom teacher, instructional coach, district leader of coaching programs and principal helped her understand the need to provide positive support to educators and to encourage people in general. She seeks to acknowledge what is positive as she shares her research found in her book, Joy of Coaching, by Corvin Press, available at Shipping Plus!, the Panning for Good column with the Ute Country News, and professional development, conference presentations and keynote addresses for educators. She believes when people notice and share what is good, a flow of positive energy is created that is critical to innovatively addressing difficult challenges. You may contact Dr. Bec at hello@coach-happy.com



Shelley Danielson and Sharon Moore from Wrapped in Love. Cover: Kathy Bovanzier, TCRAS employee holding up a Wrapped in Love blanket. We love you Kathy!

and we are in love! Animal ownership has many health benefits including an increase in physical activity, alleviating stress and depression, preventing allergies, lowering blood pressure, and less risk of having a heart attack or stroke (animalhealthfoundation.org). It seems animals can help us get through almost anything, and like the Teller County Regional Animal Shelter's (TCRAS) slogan states, they foster hope and new beginnings. Angie Davis, the Executive Director of TCRAS began her lifelong commitment to better the lives of animals when, as a teenager, she began working at the San Rafael Wildlife Rehabilitation Center in California. She describes that time of her life in this way, "I had no hope, no idea of what life was. Animals helped save my life. I was having a teenage pity party and animals brought me out of it. How could I feel sorry for myself when there were these animals who had been through terrible experiences and were hurt through no fault of their own?" Her experiences included 17 years working in Denver as part of the Dumb Friends League, a well-established shelter in Denver that focuses on animal welfare. "Dumb" in this case means that the shelter and the workers there were dedicated to advocating or speaking for the ones

## Beside the Waterfall

by Steven Wade Veatch

Fountain Creek rushes

Over granite and sandstone

And plunging falls form

Uncovering layers of time

Revealing the history of the Earth

While beside the waterfall

My days flow by as fast



Image of Fountain Creek running through Ute Pass, from the postcard collection of S.W. Veatch.

## Where is Katee this month?

Katee and her friend Zeus will be collecting food and treats from businesses and friends in Woodland Park during the month of February. Katee wants to thank everyone for supporting the Pet Food Pantry with donations so that her canine and feline friends can stay at home with their families.

You can drop off donations at TCRAS, Blue's Natural Pet Market or the UPS Store in the Safeway Shopping Center. You can also donate online at www.PetFoodPantryTC.com. Thank you for being so supportive!



## Call for local artists

by Rita Randolph

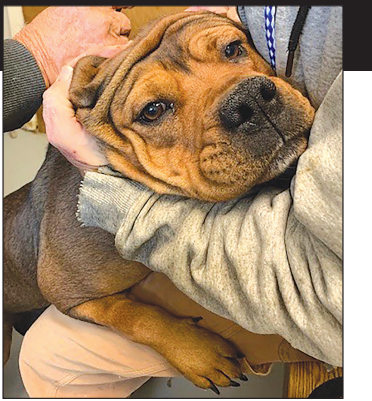
The 37th Annual Mountain Arts Festival is accepting applications for artists from the Pikes Peak Region. The festival is August 6 and 7 on the green between the Ute Pass Cultural Center and the Woodland Park Public Library. Eligibility: Any artist or craftsman exhibiting his or her own handmade works of art is eligible. A committee comprised of members of the Mountain Artists will judge all applications. Criteria for judging include quality, salability, and uniqueness of item(s). The Mountain Arts Festival draws art lovers from all over the state and is highly regarded among artists who have exhibited there. With up to 80 exhibitors, there is a surprising variety of art at the show, including but not limited to paintings, sculpture, woodwork, textile arts, mural artists, metalworks, and jewelry. The deadline for applications is May 1, 2022, and interested artists can download the application from the Mountain Artists website: www.themountainartists.org.

## Adopt Me

by SLV Animal Welfare Society

### Princess

This is 2 ½ year-old Princess. She is sweet, sociable and loves attention. She had been used for breeding. We rescued her with 11 puppies. She is a Sharpei/Rottie Mix, spayed, microchipped, and current on all vaccinations. We still have 3 of her puppies waiting for homes. To meet Princess or her pups, call 719-587-WOOF (9663). This space donated by the Ute Country News to promote shelter animal adoption.



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# SPCFPD Water Tender

by Flip Boettcher

The Southern Park County Fire Protection District (SPCFPD) has a shiny, new, red “baby” and (then) Fire Chief Eugene Farmer is very proud of it (as of January 1, 2022, Eugene is now Deputy Fire Chief). This compact, husky 4X4 water tender can haul 1,850 gallons of water almost anywhere, according to Farmer. This is only the third new vehicle the department has purchased and the first one in 15 years.

With the passage of the recent mil levy increase, the department was able to purchase the Kenworth truck and paid \$128,000 cash for it out of the department’s capital improvements fund, said Farmer. The original projection for buying the truck was four years, but Farmer made it happen in just two years.

The truck was driven to Sterling, Colorado from Canada, where the baffled water tank, all hoses, hose reels, valves and pump were added. The pump, the heart of the truck, is tucked way up underneath to protect it. Everything was specially designed by Farmer specifically for this area and this district’s needs depending on where the tender might have to go to haul water. Water is very critical for a fire department.

Farmer ordered the truck in 2020 and

it was finished last April, 2021 and has 2,485 miles on it, most of those are from Canada. Tender 9-1 has been out on three calls so far, one to Hartsel, one to assist 4-Mile Fire Department and one to the Teaspoon Ranch fire east of Guffey.

The *Ute Country News* got to take a ride around Guffey in the new tender with Farmer. One nice thing about the truck is that when you start it up and let it idle in the station, it doesn’t smoke the place out like the old tenders. The truck is easy to drive and has a lot of power. It easily went up the rough two-track above and behind station #1 in Guffey, where we took a picture.

The truck is automatic, push button to boot, and has lots of bells and whistles. There is a quiet horn and a blast-you-off-the-road horn. Priming the pump used to be quite a deal on the old tenders, but the pump is connected to the cruise control and very easy.

The only thing left to do on the tender is to add the emergency lights, said Farmer. By the end of 2022, the whole fire department fleet should be 4X4 vehicles, stated Farmer. If not for Farmer getting the new truck here and functional, it would probably still be in the planning stages.

Then Chief Eugene Farmer with the department’s new water tender up behind the Guffey fire station. photo by Flip Boettcher



one for board of directors, one for department and one for public information.

The fire department is looking for volunteers. When Farmer became chief six years ago, the call volume was about 70 calls per year. That volume has grown to around 200 calls per year. More calls equal more volunteers needed.

The department will train you up to national standards in wildland firefighting, structure firefighting, emergency services and more. They also supply all the equipment. Other skills are needed too, like computer, mechanical, administrative, maintenance and communication.

If you are interested call the station at 719-689-9479 or come by the station during business hours Monday-Sunday 9-3 p.m. unless they are called out, someone will be there. Training is Tuesday nights starting at 5 p.m.

# Beaver Brook Station

by Steven Wade Veatch

A recently discovered historic photograph (far right) reveals a Colorado Central Railroad locomotive at Beaver Brook station, located in Clear Creek Canyon in Jefferson County, Colorado. Beaver Brook was one of several depots and water stops in the canyon on the narrow-gauge line that went from Golden to the goldfields of Central City and Blackhawk.

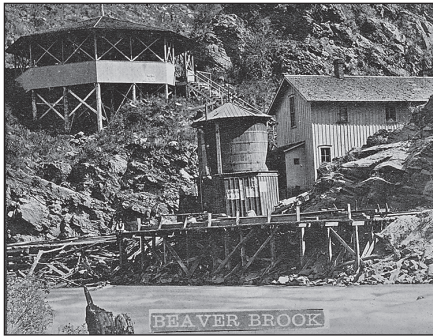
A gold rush to the area started in 1859, following gold discoveries in the gravel of Clear Creek. George A. Jackson made a strike early that year near what would become Idaho Springs, where Chicago Creek joins Clear Creek. A few months later, John H. Gregory panned \$80 in nuggets out of gravels of the North Fork of Clear Creek not far from Jackson’s discovery. His location became known as Gregory Gulch. Prospectors and miners streamed into the area. Soon Black Hawk, Central City, and Nevada were established. These early discoveries launched the second largest gold excitement in the nation’s history.

Prospectors, miners, and entrepreneurs developed access to the area. Edward Berthoud completed the Clear Creek Wagon Road by 1862. The Colorado Central Railroad followed in the 1870s and was extended through

Clear Creek canyon in 1872. The trip through the canyon was a wild ride. The train lurched and swayed as it slowly steamed along tracks above the creek. Its whistle pierced the air. Valve gears hissed, chuffed, and clanked. Wheels clacked on the rail joints in a rhythm that lulled the passengers into daydreams. When the train went around curves, the wheel flanges squealed and snapped riders out of their reverie. Cinders from the smokestack blew through open windows onto passengers who were packed into seats. The smells of coal smoke and lube oil from the locomotive filled the canyon.

The Colorado Central Railroad also brought wide-eyed tourists who enjoyed waterfalls, wildlife, and cliffs as the train rolled through the scenic canyon. Beaver Brook station (near right) was midway through the canyon and became a favored tourist stop. At Beaver Brook station, passengers marveled at the steep canyon walls, stretched their legs, enjoyed lunch, and accessed hiking trails. The railroad also built a picturesque pavilion perched on the slope above the station. Passengers spent time outside on the platform of the pavilion, where they ate picnics and enjoyed the views and the fresh mountain air.

This narrow-gauge line became part of the



Photograph of the Beaver Brook station and water tank. A steep wooden staircase leads up to a picnic pavilion on the canyon wall next to the wooden station. Photo by Charles Weiffle; photo source: Library of Congress, reproduction Number LC-DIG-sterco-1s01668.

Colorado & Southern Railway and continued operations through Clear Creek Canyon until 1941, when the railroad became unprofitable and the rails were removed. Today, some say that if you listen carefully, you can still hear the whistle blow as the train winds its way through Clear Creek Canyon.

**Editor’s Note:** Steve found the above right photo in the archives of the Cripple Creek District Museum. This photo is actually what prompted his research and writing on this project.



The Beaver Brook station on the Colorado Central Railroad. This station was frequently washed out by Clear Creek. Debris from flooding is evident in the photo. Locomotive number five (visible on the dome behind the smokestack) was built in 1873 by Porter-Bell. This number places the photo date before 1885, when number five was changed to number 31. Two men are taking a break at the front of the locomotive. Photographer and photo date unknown. Photo courtesy of the Cripple Creek District Museum.

## ~OUT AND ABOUT~

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

### AVAILABLE VIRTUALLY

- 11 Crossroads of Parenting & Divorce 9:30-1:30 p.m. via zoom. Teller County Court approved co-parenting class. Registration fee required. FMI Michelle@cpteller.org or 719-686-0705.
- NAMI Colorado: <http://www.namicolorado.org>
- Suicide prevention: <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/> or 1-800-273-8255

### BUENA VISTA

- 5 UAS Club Central 9-10 a.m. at Central Colorado Regional Airport. FMI 719-581-2010.
- 19 BV HOPE meeting 3 p.m. FMI BVHope.org.

### CAÑON CITY

- 2 Free Legal Clinic 2-5 p.m. at Cañon City Library. Call 719-269-9020 to sign-up.
- B.O.O.K. Babies on our Knees Monday 10:30 a.m.
- Story time and craft Tuesday and Thursday 10:30 a.m.

- Virtual story time Wednesday 10:30 a.m.
- Lego Club 1st Friday each month 3-4 p.m.
- Break out box 2nd Friday each month 3-4 p.m.
- Filler Friday (different activity each month) 3rd Friday each month 3-4
- Chess Club Wednesday 2 p.m.
- New Neighbors Genealogy 1st Friday 1 p.m.
- Metaphysical Group 2nd and 4th Saturday 10:30 a.m.
- United Health Care 2nd and 4th Thursday 9:30 a.m.
- Fremont Brain Injury Support 1st Tuesday 12:30 p.m.
- All at 516 Macon Ave. FMI 719-269-9020.

### CRIPPLE CREEK

- 4 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.

### ASPEN MINE CENTER

- 25 Commodities distribution (drive up basis) 9-2 p.m.
- Join us 4-7 p.m. to read about several love stories from Florence including one on top of a smoke stack! We are located

- Wednesdays Luncheon 11:30-1 p.m. upstairs dining room, every Wed. FREE!
- Thursdays Mexican Train 10:30 p.m. FMI 719-689-3584 x124.

### GED Classes Mondays & Wednesdays 1-3 p.m. FMI Michelle@cpteller.org or 719-686-0705.

### DIVIDE

- 14, 28 Little Chapel Food Pantry distribution, via drive-up. FMI 719-322-7610.
- Mondays FREE Yoga with Leah 10-11 a.m. at Pikes Peak Community Club. Limited class size. Bring your own mat and props. All levels welcome. FMI Michelle@cpteller.org or 719-686-0705.

### FLORENCE

- 5 The Florence Pioneer Museum and Research Center will be having an evening of romance, wine and chocolates! Join us 4-7 p.m. to read about several love stories from Florence including one on top of a smoke stack! We are located

at 100 E. Front St. FMI 719-784-1904 or [www.florence-pioneermuseum.org](http://www.florence-pioneermuseum.org).

### FLORISSANT

- 10 Free Legal Clinic 2-5 p.m. at Florissant Library. Call 719-748-3939 to sign-up.
- 20 Home Remedies with the Thymekeeper 1:30-3:30. Pre-registration REQUIRED. FMI page 2.

### GRANGE

- 12 Pine Needle Basket class. All levels of expertise invited. We will learn a new method of basket making with a new stitch. If you are interested in needle felting, we will have supplies and instruction.
- 15 Special Pine Needle Basket and Needle Felting class 9-12 p.m. for those who work on Saturdays. Donations accepted for both classes. FMI 719-510-2325.

### SALIDA

- 9 Free Legal Clinic 2-5 p.m. at Salida Library. Call 719-539-4826 to sign-up.

### VICTOR

- The Lowell Thomas Museum and gift shop will be open weekends
- 12 from 10-5 p.m.
- 13 from 10-4 p.m.
- 19 from 10-5 p.m.
- 20 from 10-4 p.m.
- All dates/times weather permitting. FMI call 719-689-5509 or Victormuseum.com.

### WOODLAND PARK

- 10 Free Legal Clinic 2-5 p.m. at Woodland Park Library. Call 719-748-3939 to sign-up.

### COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

- Through 14 Active Parenting First Five Years 5-7 p.m. at Mountain View United Methodist Church. For parents of children from birth to age 5. Build a strong bond to give your child a solid foundation to grow upon. Meal and childcare provided. FMI Michelle@cpteller.org or 719-686-0705.
- 28-April 11 Active Parenting of Teens 5-7 p.m. at Mountain

View United Methodist Church. For parents of preteens and teens. Yes, it’s possible to parent your teenager and still get along with them! Learn how to turn challenges into opportunities. Meal and childcare provided. FMI Michelle@cpteller.org or 719-686-0705.

- GED Classes Mondays & Wednesdays 5-7 p.m. FMI Michelle@cpteller.org or 719-686-0705.
- Playgroup 9:30-11 a.m. Mondays & Wednesdays at The Resource Exchange (TRE) 509 Scott Ave., Suite 203 B. Parent or caregiver with children ages 5 & under. Older siblings welcome. FMI Jackie@cpteller.org or 719-686-0705.

Ute Pass Historical Society and Gift Shop is located at 231 E. Henrietta Ave., next to the library. Hours are 10-noon, Wed., Thurs. and Friday. The Gift Shop has the 2022 14-month Pictorial Calendars available for \$14. We also have a great selection of historical books, cookbooks, Indian art, jewelry and gifts. FMI 719-686-7512.

# Mueller State Park

Mueller is a popular place to enjoy winter outdoor activities! Choose from a couple of great sledding hills, miles of trails to hike and snowshoe or endless opportunities for cross-country skiing. The winter woods are so peaceful and quiet or you may hear squeals of delight from the sledding hills! Some wildlife are still active such as deer, elk, fox and coyote. You can watch for animal tracks in the snow or see songbirds flitting about in search of food. Several

guided hikes are planned to explore the trails or to open your eyes to nature. Come on up to Mueller to have some fun in the snow!

- 4 Hike: Elk Meadow\* to Murphy’s Cut meet 9 a.m.
- 5 Hike: Outlook Ridge\* meet 11 a.m.
- 5 Nature Crafts 2 p.m. at Visitor Center
- 11 Hike: Outlook Ridge\* Loop meet 9 a.m.
- 12 Hike: Snowshoe and Ski hike meet 11 a.m. Black Bear TH

- 16 Hike: Full Moon Hike meet 6 p.m. Outlook Ridge TH
- 18 Hike: Cahill Cabin and Cahill Pond meet 9 a.m. Black Bear TH
- 19 Hike: Outlook Ridge\* Trail meet 9 a.m.
- 19 Hike: Homestead Trail and Bacon Rock meet 11 a.m. Black Bear TH
- 25 Hike: Outlook Ridge\* Loop meet 9 a.m.
- 26 Hike: Osborn Homestead meet 9 a.m. Black Bear TH
- 26 Hike: Preacher’s Hollow\* meet 11 a.m.

- 26 Hug-a-Tree meet 2 p.m. Visitor Center
- 27 Winter Wonder Forest Bathing Walk meet 12:30-3 p.m. Outlook Ridge TH
- 28 Hike: Dark Sky Hike meet 6:30 p.m. at Outlook Ridge TH

Mueller events are free. However, a \$9-day pass or \$80 annual-park pass per vehicle is required to enter the park. FMI 719-687-2366. \*Indicates to meet at the Trailhead (TH) of the same name.

## ~UTE COUNTRY BUSINESS~



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