



# UTE COUNTRY NEWS

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April 2025

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Vol. 17, No. 4

## Welcome to Ute Country

**"People are just as wonderful as sunsets if you let them be. When I look at a sunset, I don't find myself saying, "Soften the orange a bit on the right hand corner." I don't try to control a sunset. I watch with awe as it unfolds."**

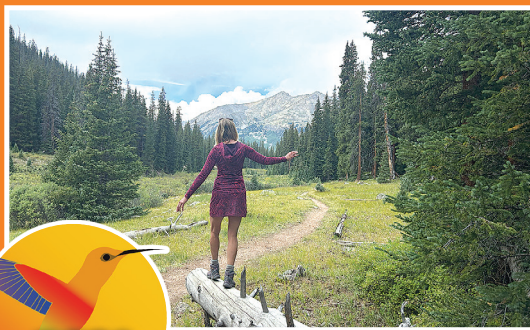
**— Carl Rogers**

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## On Deck

Jeff took our April cover photo last October. It was an even more beautiful sunset in person. Sometimes we just have to stop and absorb the beauty, taking in the moment before bringing out the camera. We love the quote. It speaks to how each individual has something special to offer; how we often feel a need to control someone else when the best course of action might be to let them be; it speaks to the opportunity of awe if we have the patience to allow people to grow without our interference.

Many of our April articles exemplify Carl Roger's words: *A Look Inside the Artist* is a great example of how Heather McKinnon allows her art to unfold. *Colorado Pharmgirl* shares her process in "Finding Balance." "The 14th Pie Palooza" is a tasty example of how letting people explore their culinary preferences can help fund a school. "Colorado Right-to-Farm and Ranch Laws" will shed some light on the rights of ranchers and what neighbors can do. Anyone concerned about the spread of wildfire might be interested in reading "COSWAP Grant Challenged by Sheriff and commissioner" because it is \$60,000 in FREE money for fire mitigation, which could potentially save MANY properties. Sadly, we did not have space for "People See, People Do, you can kindle kindness, too" however, we still welcome your tales of kindness experienced or witnessed — it will be longer next month!

Are you sick of seeing our cat pictures? To see something else in Critter Corner, please submit your photo — 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.

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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

### Understanding community the Lakota way

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



Community means we help each other because we're in this together.

Han (Greetings!) Welcome to April wihakakta cêpapi (wihakakta means 'the fifth child' so called because it was usually the last child or the youngest; cêpa means fat; the youngest child or wife had to crack the bones and people would get fat from the marrow). In Lakota culture, April roughly corresponds to the time of the first full moon of spring, or "Magaksica Agli Wi," which marks the beginning of a new year with the return of life and the renewal of nature.

The Lakota year traditionally begins with the first full moon of spring, which is around the time ducks return from their winter homes in the south.

With spring and the rebirth of everything I think about family, and what family means to me. To me, family also means community, and your family or community doesn't always have family that are blood relatives.

#### What is the definition of community?

A social group of any size whose members reside in a specific locality, share government, and often have a common cultural and historical heritage, a locality inhabited by such a group.

For me this is a very simplistic and vague concept of what I was taught about community as a Lakota woman. Community for us does not always reside in a specific location. Community or "TiyoSPAye," is a deeply ingrained value, encompassing extended family, kinship, and a strong sense of interconnectedness, emphasizing living in harmony, taking care of one another, and trusting each other. TiyoSPAye translates to "people" or "community" and represents the extended family and kinship networks that are central to our Lakota way of life.

Coming out of a hard winter and spring right around the corner, I reflect on how it was for the elders, the young ones and the people over on the reservations. Some of them do not even have running water, central heating or transportation for the many miles of distance they need to travel to get to any type of grocery store or even health care.

If it wasn't for our strong beliefs in community, many of these people would freeze or starve to death during the wintertime. We all come together to take care of our sacred elders and remote families. We check in on them and make sure that they have the things they need to survive. In return, then those families may make a blanket, or a skirt or a ribbon shirt for the person that helped them out throughout that time. The gifts are always shared around so that the energy of love and gratitude is always felt, and that essence of community is truly embraced.



Kodi and Tammie Lowell – Kodi is Tammie's daughter.

This is something that is a way of life for us; we embrace community as a part of who we are. I think about the different places that each person is in their lives, and I look back thinking about how the sacred elders with all their knowledge, share this with the young ones. I ponder how they take the ones that are troubled and lost, under their wing and teach them. This way they may grow and get through the problems that they may be facing at the time. No one is pushed away or judged for their mistakes. We all understand that it is about a journey; a journey that everyone

has to walk, and we all walk it in different ways. But we come together to help everyone to become true human beings. The little ones that have parents that are struggling with addiction are taken in by their grandparents or aunts or someone else in the community. These little sacred ones are our future. They are brought in as true family and are taught in a good way, so that they may grow up to be respectful loving and caring adults. We all come together and participate in ceremony and celebrations, young and old, weak or strong, it does not matter, all our welcome. We come together as people, as humble human beings and this is how we all learn; by sharing and supporting each other, which helps us to become closer and more balanced as a community and a tribe.

So, I urge you in these times that we are in to think about your neighbors, think about the community that you are in. Do you know of somebody that is alone and struggling? Are we being judgmental about certain things with our neighbors, our friends, and family? What energy are we putting out into the world? Are we being helpful and of service? Or are we adding to the problem? Everyone must walk their own path; right, wrong or indifferent. It is our path to walk but we should have loving support; kindness, respect and understanding when we struggle.

Struggling is part of a learning and growing process. Maybe next time when you see somebody who's having a hard time, or is very angry and upset, stop to think about what they are going through, to understand why they were acting a certain way. We could stop blaming

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Oyate Herbals  
Understanding community the Lakota way

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everybody else and take accountability for our own actions, our community and the things that are going on. I really truly believe we would not have a lot of the mental health issues or even regular health issues that are prevalent in this world.

One of the reasons I named my business Oyate Herbals is because of the people who supported me through all my struggles, while getting where I needed to go. Oyate

means “people” or “nation,” representing a sense of community and belonging.

I do what I do for the people. That is my walk, that is who I am. So, with that being said, I want everyone to know that I embrace the epitome of humanity and community. If someone is struggling or needs help, or just to talk, I am always here to try and assist. I also realize that what they are going through might be

exactly what they need to go through, to get them to where they need to be. I’m willing to be that support system to help them understand the process.

I pray that you have or may build a strong community so we can get through these very difficult times we are in. Please reach out if you need anything from traditional herbal medicines or advice on them or you just need some understanding

and clarifications on life’s difficulties that may be on your journey. We all need help sometimes. Embrace community!

Anpetu Waste Mitakuye Oyate. (Good day relatives)  
Many Blessings and May you walk in balance.  
Tammie Lowell of Oyate Herbals, LLC can be reached at 719-661-0410.

Tales From the Big Sky Ranch Bed and Biscuit  
Uncle Brinkley and his little shadow

by Kendra Hall

Hello, and thanks for reading. I own a dog boarding business, Big Sky Ranch Bed and Biscuit located in Jefferson, Colorado. Every day I laugh, love and share my life with all my dog boarding buddies. I am writing an anthology of heartwarming and whimsical stories inspired by my dog guests and my life at the Bed and Biscuit. Below is an anecdote about a loving yellow lab Brinkley and an English Cream Retriever, Jackson:

It was a warm summer day at the Bed and Biscuit, and Hannah was eagerly awaiting the arrival of a four-month-old English Cream Retriever named Jackson. It was his first vacation and stay at the dog boarding home in the mountains.

As the car pulled up to the back play yard and greeting area, Hannah spotted a timid white puppy face peering through the back window.

“Hi Jackson,” she said softly as his dad lead him into the play area.

“He hasn’t been away from home before,” he said, sounding a little worried. The puppy’s mom looked on with concern.

“We’ll take good care of him.” Hannah reached down and gently petted the dog’s head.

His pure white puppy fur was thick and soft. He looked up at her with big brown

eyes, as if to say, “I am not quite sure what is happening.”

After the car pulled away, Hannah led him in the house to meet his new friends. During introductions with the other dogs, Jackson was nervous and unsure at first. Then it was Brinkley’s turn to meet the puppy. Brinkley, a lab who was equally as white as Jackson, was a frequent guest.

The two dogs touched noses in greeting. Jackson wagged his tail for the first time since arriving. Brinkley then nuzzled his head and gave a soft “chuff,” as if to say, “It’s okay, I will make sure you’re safe.” With introductions completed, it was time to head outside to the play area. Hannah opened the door, and the dogs bounded out. Jackson hesitated, unsure if he should follow.

Brinkley gently nudged him forward and then turned to lead the way. The puppy almost tripped over his paws as he tried to keep up.

From that moment on, Jackson was Brinkley’s little shadow. The older dog showed Jackson around the yard, taking him along the fence line to sniff out all the most interesting scents. Next, it was time for Jackson to get to know his fellow boarding guests.

Brinkley took the puppy to his sister, Bella, first. Bella was a sleek black dog with a tail that curled joyfully over her back. She was a sweet dog who loved wrapping her front legs around the caretakers’ necks to give hugs, just as a human. Bella had been in a shelter for a long time, and Hannah always thought Bella’s endearing hugs were her way of expressing gratitude for being rescued.

When Bella and Jackson were satisfied with their greeting, the other dogs came over to inspect the puppy one by one. All the while, Brinkley stayed close by Jackson’s side.

Hannah managed the playgroup while capturing some superb photos. She was glad it was a fairly laid-back group for Jackson’s first day. Smiling, she snapped pictures of the

two white dogs exploring the large yard together. If Jackson stopped to sniff something, Brinkley either joined in or waited patiently for him to continue on. The pair often walked side by side, with Brinkley always keeping a protective eye on his little protégé.

Hannah’s heart swelled as she watched the puppy’s confidence grow. A bond was clearly forming between the two. “Uncle Brinkley, you’re such a sweet boy,” she said, chuckling at the fitting nickname.

Normally, Brinkley was his playful self, always inviting others to chase or be chased. He often made Hannah laugh by spinning comically in front of another dog, encouraging them to play. He moved with precision, almost like a ballerina, always landing his front paws exactly where they had left the ground. Hannah had not witnessed this nurturing and protective side of Brinkley before Jackson’s arrival.

When outdoor time was over, Hannah led the dogs back inside. Brinkley waited patiently at the bottom of the stairs to ensure Jackson made it to the top. Hannah learned later that Jackson lived in a single-story home and had not yet experienced stairs.

Once inside, the dogs settled into their chosen spots for a nap. Some lounged on the couch, while others went to their designated place where they felt at home and safe. Maddie, the boarding owner’s dog, stretched out on the sun-warmed tile floor.

Jackson hesitated, unsure of where to go. Hannah chose a pen for him with two beds, in case Brinkley wanted to join him. The dog guests were free to come and go as they pleased during the day, the pen doors left open. So if Brinkley wanted, he could be by his little buddy.

“This is your spot, Jackson,” Hannah said, pointing to the pen. As if understanding, he walked in.

“You can go in too Brinkley, if you



I’ll keep you safe!

want,” Hannah said. Brinkley happily followed, laying down on the bed next to his new friend. Not long after, Jackson curled up next to him, and fell asleep, his tail wagging as he dreamed. Soon, Brinkley was snoring contentedly beside him.

Over the next week, the bond between the little puppy and his much larger friend grew stronger. On the day Jackson’s family came to pick him up, Hannah brought Brinkley outside to say goodbye.

As Jackson’s parents excitedly greeted their dog, Brinkley stood nearby, his eyes twinkling with affection. It was as if he were proud of the confident, happy dog guest Jackson had become.

Since that first week together, Brinkley and Jackson have had overlapping stays from time to time, much to Hannah’s delight. Now fully grown and nearly the same size as Brinkley, Jackson still looks to him for guidance.

Among the caretakers, Brinkley is now lovingly referred to as “Uncle Brinkley” a title he has more than earned.

Lee Kendra Hall, owner of Big Sky Ranch Bed and Biscuit can be reached at 970-333-0277 or BigSkyRanchBedandBiscuit.com Coming soon! Tales from the Bed and Biscuit, Volume 1 and Wags to Riches: Start Your Successful Pet Care Business Today! Please email WagsToRiches1234@gmail.com if you would like to be notified when the books are released.



Brinkley and his little protégé

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Panning for Good  
Exploring Dog Training and Therapy Dog Onboarding - part II

by Dr. Bec

Last month, I wrote about how my dog Chip learned to behave and eventually became a therapy dog over time. This month, I’d like to highlight two very important people, Rick Cavin and Janet Bennet, who made it possible for Chip and me to become a certified Pet Therapy Team.

Rick Cavin, head of the Pet Ambassadors program at Penrose Hospital.

Rick Cavin is a retired Army major who oversaw counter narcotics operations which included working with ambassadors of countries in Europe and Africa to stop international terrorists and drug traffickers. Rick has been the head of the Pet Ambassadors program at Penrose Hospital in Colorado Springs for 13 years. He spent seven years being a volunteer dog trainer learning everything he could about dog behavior. During that time, he took Willow, his English Golden Retriever, to a variety of different dog classes where people often said she would make a great therapy dog. Rick then took Willow to therapy dog classes and an incredible journey began.

Willow and Rick started working at Pikes Peak Hospice which is located inside Penrose Hospital. Rick was regularly asked to bring Willow to patient rooms in the hospital, which he couldn’t do because he wasn’t affiliated with the hospital. Finally, the CEO of the hospital asked him to start a Pet Therapy Program and Rick said, “Yes,” but under one condition, that he could run the program his own way. He was given permission to do just that and the Pet Therapy program at Penrose hospital now has 34 dogs with specific shifts, making it the largest Pet Therapy program in the United States.

Rick chooses a pet therapy team to work at Penrose Hospital based on a few factors:

- Certification through Alliance of Therapy Dogs (ATD) — ensuring a well-behaved dog that has passed numerous tests and a handler that has been trained to do Pet Therapy work.
- Current vaccinations and yearly fecal test to ensure dog is healthy for hospital work.
- The ability of the dog to handle the hospital — sights, sounds, smells and a variety of people coming and going.
- The ability of the pet handler to effectively communicate with patients and staff.
- Willingness of pet handler to commit to a schedule and follow ATD pet therapy team rules and hospital volunteer requirements.
- All dog breeds are welcome except for wolves or wolf-hybrids.

Pictured are (left to right) Mindie Arrellano, volunteer coordinator at Penrose Hospital, Rick Cavin, Dr. Bec, and Chip.

Rick explained that his longevity with the Pet Ambassadors program stems from the enjoyment he finds when seeing what the dogs do for the patients and nursing staff. He shared a favorite memory of visiting a teenage girl who had been in a terrible car accident and had broken 26 bones. During her recovery, she was afraid to try to walk. When Rick and his dog Timber, an English Golden Retriever, came to the door, the doctor told the little girl, “If you want to pet this dog, you’re going to have to walk over here to do it.” A furry friend was the motivation she needed! She finally walked and continued on her recovery journey. Rick also shared that the love dogs give the nursing staff boosts morale, is a helpful momentary diversion, and coping mechanism supporting them as they regularly shoulder difficult life and death situations.

Janet Bennet, ATD Evaluator, Belgian Sheepdog Breeder, Dog Trainer, Vet Technician, AKC Ambassador

Janet Bennet is an amazing resource for all things dog related! She grew up in Colorado Springs with her “Lassie looking” Shetland Sheepdog gifted to her at age 10, graduated from Air Academy High School and then participated in many dog-related situations in a variety of locations throughout the years, while traveling extensively due to her husband’s military assignments. Soon after being married, Janet purchased Yukon Jack, a Belgian Sheepdog, and began taking him to obedience classes. Instructors in the classes told her she should enter him in shows because of his intelligence and behavior. This she did, and he performed incredibly well! With Yukon Jack as the initial stud and the purchase of a female, Shadow, Janet founded Blue Moon Belgian Sheepdogs and became a breeder of champion Belgian Sheepdogs. She currently has five dogs with the most recent litter being born 4 months ago.

During the year 2000, Janet was living in Virginia and had become a popular pet sitter (300+ families and multiple staff). She saw the need for a Humane Society in the area that could help the county shelter increase pet adoptions. The county shelter was euthanizing 95% of pets at the time, but with the help of the newly founded Culpepper Humane Society, headed by Janet, that statistic was turned on its head with 95% of shelter pets being adopted.

Janet is currently a vet tech at Compassion Animal Hospital, an evaluator for the Alliance of Therapy Dogs and an American Kennel Club ambassador. This title allows her to officially share useful information about the American Kennel Club (AKC) in the community. For example, she can officially visit elementary schools and teach about pet care. She is also a 4H Dog Club Volunteer Trainer and continues to show her dogs at shows sponsored by the AKC, the United Kennel Club (UKC), which she describes as a more relaxed version of the AKC, and the International All Breed Canine Association (IABCA). At these shows, her dogs compete in a variety of events.

These include:

- **Conformation** — dog is judged against the breed’s standard.
- **Scent Work** — detecting cotton swabs saturated with essential oils Anise,

AKC Judge Joyce Vanek and Janet Bennet with her dog Zeppelin, Best of Breed 2019. Cover: Zeppelin, Janet Bennet’s Belgian Sheepdog showing his herding prowess!

Cypress, Clove and Birch.

- **Rally** — stations where dogs perform certain exercises.
- **Obedience** — dog follows handler’s

Chip admiring the Ambassadors wall at Penrose Hospital.

commands and perform specific tasks.

- **Herding** — aptitude to herd livestock.
- **Agility** — obstacle course with props.
- **Barn Hunt** — finding a rat amidst obstacles.
- **Trick Dog** — dog performs a certain number of tricks.
- **Fast CAT** — 100 yards like a greyhound race with a lure-Janet’s dog Ciri can run almost 30 mph and is top 5 in the USA.

Janet’s dog Ciri can run almost 30 mph and is in the top 5 in the USA for both Fast CAT and Barn Hunt! If your dog is not a purebred and you would like to have your dog participate in AKC competitions, there are ways to work that out. You can get a Purebred Alternative Listing PAL or do AKC Canine Partners which is a program for all dogs. Learn more at https://www.akc.org/register/information/canine-partners

Janet is a well-known, respected dog trainer in Woodland Park and surrounding areas. She is currently training AKC STAR Puppy (Social, Training, Activity and Responsibility) and Scent Work in Lone Tree and is offering an AKC STAR Puppy class in Woodland Park on Monday, May 5th.

When I asked Janet to share some of her favorite dog training tips, she immediately said, “Crate training and using a crate in the car to keep dogs safe. When dogs are used to crates, it reduces anxiety when they go to the vet or a groomer, or when an emergency situation arises and they have to be contained.” She uses Ruff

Land Kennels https://rufflandkennels.com for her dogs when traveling. Janet also said, “The most important command is, ‘Come’ and if your dog won’t come to you, it’s safest to keep your dog on a leash.” Janet and other dog trainers are looking for a consistent venue in the Woodland Park area. If you have an idea for a large, indoor space, please give Janet a call.

Even with all her accomplishments and busy schedule, Janet has a relaxed and happy presence which calmed me down when she was Chip’s ATD evaluator. She helped us cross the finish line as we walked the involved and exciting path that led to becoming a certified Pet Therapy Team.

The work of training a dog doesn’t really end. Chip has to be reminded at times and has a mischievous streak. He is an angel when working at the hospital, but at home, pulling on the leash and unwanted barking is something we have to keep on top of. I have learned that I have to know exactly what I want to train and then be consistent. We are still a work in progress, so don’t rule your dog out of being able to do therapy work if you still have a few things to work on.

Many thanks to Rick and Janet who have and do volunteer a great deal of time to enrich the lives of both dogs and their owners. They have helped Chip and me, and many others learn skills that can be used to infuse joy and comfort into a variety of difficult situations.

Quotes:

If you do enter your dogs in competitions, always remember, “Dogs don’t care about the ribbon,” and “No matter what, you always take the best dog home.”

— Janet Bennet

Joke:

Q: Why are border collies such good listeners?

A: Because you can tell they really herd you.

Challenge:

Find healthy treats for your pets. Chip started getting fat, and though I tried to tell the vet it was muscle, she wasn’t having it. It turns out I wasn’t overfeeding him; I was over-treating him! I had to find lower calorie options. Low fat, part skim cheese and Zuke’s Mini Naturals have worked for us.

Rick can be reached at rickc1948@aol.com Janet can be reached at 719-505-2194 or jeb915@gmail.com

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# A Look Inside the Artist Heather McKinnon, Mandala art by Mary Shell

Of all the art forms out there, there is one that is created purely for the enjoyment of the soul. It doesn't have a face, or show seasons, or follow any order, other than the order it creates... Mandalas. Mandalas are as old as mankind itself, and for the pure purpose of reflection. Heather and I are members of a local Facebook page for local artists called Creatives of Fremont County Colorado. I posted looking for artists to interview and she responded. We have been chatting ever since, and we are both giving art classes at a non-profit event in Colorado Springs. Once I saw her work I was amazed at her precision, color combinations and designs. Simply mesmerizing.

## How long have you been creating art?

My whole life, basically. I always drew pictures, mostly of horses. I loved Art class in school, I always aced that class. After that, I did not draw or paint for many years. After moving to Cañon City in 2017, I discovered the painted river rocks people left for others to find along the Arkansas River Walk. I found one painted with a Mandala and I thought to myself "I could do that" and I did. Over the past 7.5 years since my husband gave me a set of acrylic paints, I have consistently practiced, and I have created a huge body of work. I am a naive artist, and I paint intuitively. No training, no schooling, just practice, practice, practice. Since moving to Colorado Springs in 2020 and finding my first artistic "home" at Art 111, I have been consistently showing and selling art. Only COVID slowed me down for a short while. I am currently part of Cottonwood Center for The Arts and their AIRWAY (Artist In Residence) program.

## How long have you been creating mandalas?

Since 2017

## Adopt Me by Ark Valley Humane Society

### Rusty

Rusty is almost 7 years old and is a special cat looking for a special home. Rusty was brought into Ark-Valley Humane Society as a found stray. After he was experiencing some minor gastrointestinal health issues, Rusty was tested and found positive for Feline Coronavirus (FCoV). FCoV is a common viral infection in cats. It generally causes an asymptomatic infection and can cause mild diarrhea. This virus is species-specific and does NOT pose any risks to humans or canines. Rusty will need to be in an indoor-only home. Rusty is a very affectionate cat! He enjoys curling around people's legs and getting pets. Rusty will make a wonderful feline companion to his adoptive home! This space donated by the Ute Country News to promote shelter animal adoption.



Barbara Pickholz-Weiner

## What directs you in creating your art?

The universal "God" as I know it. I always set an intention to delight the eye and lift the spirit of the viewer and to bring them closer to their God. I ask for directions, a clear channel, blessing for my tools and paints, and then ideas just flow. Every "element" that I paint in the Mandala, each row, begins with an "spark" of inspiration when I think "I wonder what it would look like if I did this..." and then I do it. Sometimes I really dislike a piece while I am painting it, but I find that this is a good sign because I usually end up liking those pieces the most.

## Who inspires you?

My mother is an inspiration to me. She has been involved with art and artists since I can remember. She eventually held a position with the Santa Fe Museum of Fine Art. Her husband was a steel sculptor. She painted with oils and had a studio which is one of my earliest memories.

My husband inspires me because he is the most resilient person I know, and he has been my rock for so long. He supported me through numerous surgeries and recoveries and his devotion to me and our family has never wavered.

My art is inspired by cultural influences that can be unintentional and only recognized when completed. I have always loved the art of the Middle East, especially Morocco. I am fascinated by the Tibetan Monks and their Mandala creation. I grew up in the Desert Southwestern U.S., so I have also been influenced by the indigenous people's art in that area.

## What medium do you use?

It's all Acrylic paints, including and especially, metallic paints. My canvas could be anything, however. For a few years I painted giant steel butterflies for

the Colorado Springs Rotary Club's fundraiser. The acrylic paint would be sealed with an automotive clear coat to be able to withstand our harsh high desert weather conditions. Everything I paint is sealed with Mod Podge Acrylic Paint sealer for durability and shine. I usually paint on cradled boards or wooden rounds, but I have also painted resin skulls and even a chair. I also paint on stone, ceramics, fabrics and more.

## What is your favorite creation?

My favorite creation is ME! When I turned toward elderhood, I was afraid I would not be able to earn income to supplement our retirement. I have physical challenges that make traditional work tough and there is no way I can stand for 8 hours a day. I decided that I would re-make myself and become a successful Artist. Then I manifested it. I worked tirelessly toward that goal and when I look back now, I amaze myself. I may not be able to work a "traditional" job, but I can teach until I am 90!

My favorite Mandala would be a piece called "Cosmic Transmission" (check out the video here: <https://www.facebook.com/HmCreativeEndeavors/videos/961103035367453>) it was featured on CBS Sunday Morning's Sun Segment a few months ago. It is an outstanding design, and the detail and precision are stunning.

## Do you lay out your designs or do you create them organically?

Originally, I created them entirely freehand, and I kept them symmetrical by making them very dense. Last year I discovered grids, and it opened up a new world where negative space is no longer distressing. The symmetry and appearance of the Mandala are much improved using grids. Now I love my protractor, stencils and my compass. I only choose colors at the start from there, it is entirely intuitive. I have no idea what it will look like when finished. Each element of the mandala, each row, is inspired by a "spark" of inspiration when I ask myself, "I wonder what it would look like if I did this..." and then I do it. I am never disap-



pointed in those choices. Sometimes I really dislike a piece while I am painting it, but I find that this is often a good sign as I always like those pieces the most when completed.

## What is the future for you?

I have been teaching classes for the past year, teaching people this peaceful art form and about its history. I will continue to expand my class offerings, and I expect to continue to paint and show my art as long as I can. I am hoping to find a studio space large enough to teach classes, as well as having a space for creating. I have also explored offering classes to elders who live in facilities that offer art classes. Ultimately, I would like to offer to teach classes in exotic resorts around the world. That is my dream of a dream retirement!

## What else would you like readers to know about you?

I have been married to my husband for almost 30 years! I am a 20-year Breast Cancer survivor. I have the world's most beautiful Grandson, he's almost 2. My blood touches every continent on the planet except Australia. I consider my painting to be love letters to humanity.

I love the idea of Wabi-Sabi, of finding beauty in imperfection, of revering authenticity above all. I paint entirely free hand with no forethought of pattern or design. My paintings tend to be surprising even when I paint them. I like to think of them as a download of sacred geometry from the universe!

You can find Heather at [www.hmcreativeendeavors.com](http://www.hmcreativeendeavors.com).

If you would like to a featured artist, please contact Mary Shell at [creatingfromthesoul@yahoo.com](mailto:creatingfromthesoul@yahoo.com)

# COSWAP Grant Challenged by sheriff and commissioners

by Toni Moore

After winning the 2022/2023 COSWAP Grant, administrating it, and submitting all the paperwork and follow up forms, Toni Moore did not apply in 2023/2024 for a grant as the workload was fairly intense. She did think a lot about what she wanted to do to make the grant even more productive for Florissant in 2024/2025, however.

Moore made a plan and laid the groundwork to ensure she could pull off a really impressive use for the grant funds in the 2024/2025 cycle. According to C. Young and A. Lerch from Dept of Natural Resources at COSWAP, the grant was created to educate more Colorado citizens on the fundamentals of forest health, fire behavior, fire science, forestry principles and fire mitigation. It is intended to create more well-trained citizens who can participate in educating others, leading fire mitigation, and steering policy.

To further these goals set by DNR and the State of Colorado, Moore wrote the grant to supply training to 20 neighborhoods across Teller and Park Counties, with a heavy focus on Florissant Fire Protection District. The grant in question would provide the following:

(25 trainees) S-130/S-190/L-180 Basic Firefighting and Wildland Fire Behavior, with a focus on training young adults from Woodland Park High School and Lake George Charter School. Young adults need this \$1000 training to be qualified to work for the Colorado State Forest Service and the US Forest Service as wildland fire mitigators in the part time jobs that open up and often go unfilled each summer. Not only is this training the first step to a career in wildland firefighting, it pays about \$30 per hour for part time summer work. This training would allow these young people to work their high school and college summers, and hopefully would introduce them to the careers of forestry, fire mitigation, firefighting, ecology and more. This would provide a source of young adults to all the fire districts of our area.

(12 trainees) S-212 Power saws, this would be training for volunteers throughout the county to ensure that dangerous trees infected with mountain mistletoe, mountain pine beetle, and spruce budworm can be removed from Florissant private property at no charge by volunteers from our neighborhoods. These trees cost between \$500 and \$1500 per tree to remove. A supply of well-trained sawyers ensures that there are many options for private property owners assistance for tree removal.

(20 trainees) NFPA Certified Wildfire Mitigation Specialist, and (20 trainees) Building Your FACO Neighborhood Ambassador Approach (FACO and Wildfire Adapted Partnership) These two classes would put a two-member team in each of 20 neighborhoods across Divide, Four Mile, Lake George, and Florissant Fire Districts. The training would allow 20 neighborhoods like Indian Creek, Florissant Heights, High Chateau, Highland Lakes, Cripple Creek Mountain Estates, Colorado Mountain Estates, and others to have at least two experts for neighbors to turn to for questions, assessments, support, and action related to fire mitigation. The Ambassador class offered by Fire Adapted Colorado is a national program that trains leaders to support volunteers who are active in fire mitigation. The NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) Certified Mitigation Specialist would be experts in the most effective ways to protect private

property from wildland fire. Putting these teams into each neighborhood will allow individuals to engage inside their own neighborhood to get top quality information about fire mitigation. (10 trainees) Advanced tree felling would be provided to community members who already have S212 Certified Sawyer training, to ensure that complicated or difficult trees near homes, sheds, powerlines and roads can be safely removed at no cost to community members or at low cost. Currently these types of trees cost over \$1K to remove.

Sheriff Mikesell opposes this grant, has made phone calls to DNR/COSWAP and the Attorney General to stop its forward progress. The grant was awarded and accepted on Jan 2, 2025, but rescinded by Sheriff Mikesell on Jan 16, 2025. Currently, it is in limbo awaiting letters of support from both the Sheriff and the Teller County Board of

Commissioners, as DNR/COSWAP has been put in the middle by the Sheriff's and Commissioner's interference.

Reach out to your sheriff and commissioners urging them to submit the letter of support (that is required by FFPD, but not required by any other organization, and was triggered by Mikesell, Williams and Stone's interference) to get this grant reinstated. This grant will make all of Teller safer and more "fire ready." Their refusal to submit the letter of support after many weeks of requests is unconscionable and removed over \$60K in funding for fire mitigation training from our area.

## County Commissioners:

[Williamsd@tellercounty.gov](mailto:Williamsd@tellercounty.gov) Dan Williams  
[Campbellr@tellercounty.gov](mailto:Campbellr@tellercounty.gov) Bob Campbell  
[Stoneree@tellercounty.gov](mailto:Stoneree@tellercounty.gov) Erik Stone

## Sheriff:

[Mikesellj@tellercounty.gov](mailto:Mikesellj@tellercounty.gov) Jason Mikesell

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## Performing Artists - April 28 deadline!

Call for performing artists for the Armed Forces Art Exhibit and Sale, which will be held on May 10. There will be a luncheon at the Bell Tower for all participating artists and their families at noon. Performances will begin at 1 p.m. until about 3 p.m.

We invite you to perform readings of books, stories or dramatic presentations or poems, music (instrumental or vocal) or dance.

The Florence Merchants would like to thank and honor military personnel during May in observance of Armed Forces month and Memorial Day.

The committee requests that interested artists please call 719-621-3301 or email Virginia at [mvh876@gmail.com](mailto:mvh876@gmail.com) by April 28 to register for the performances or for more information.

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# Blackwater Rose

by Gilrund the Historian

It was late on a Saturday evening and John Anderson was having his last beer before going home alone. When who should walk in the door of the Southern Cross bar and grill, but Sandy Wilkins an old school mate and good friend from long ago.

John's face lit up when he saw her, and he called out to her as she looked around the room. "Johnny!" she called back to him as she rushed to his table, "I was hoping to find you here. It's been too long. How are you doing?"

John was quickly on his feet and wrapped his arms around Sandy as she wrapped hers around him and they laughed together.

"Good Heaven's, Sandy," said John, "It must be 10 years since last we were together at the reunion. You look great! What brings you here?"

"Well, you know that I write for a newspaper on the coast. Well, I have been sent here to find out about someone called Blackwater Rose. Do you think that you can help me with it? You've been here most of your life, so I thought that you would know something about her."

John looked at Sandy and smiled, "How did you hear of her?"

"Believe it or not," replied Sandy, "It's a very popular song at home and Frank, he's my editor, wanted to find out of there really was a person called that name. So, here I am. I knew that if anyone knew about her you would. So, I've come to you for help."

John drank the last of his beer and motioned toward the door of the bar as he stood.

"It's late," he murmured as he took Sandy's hand and started for the door, "Let's talk about this at my place."

Sandy looked around at the few people that were still in the bar wondering why her old friend wanted to talk somewhere else as she followed him out the door.

Sandy followed John's car in her rental car and soon they were at his home on a side street of town. They went into his small home and sat down on the couch in the living room. John offered Sandy a cold beer, which she declined as she took a tablet out of her large purse and got ready to write down what she was about to hear.

John sat down in a chair at the table. He opened his beer and took a quick drink and then looked at Sandy. "It's a kind of sad story, Sandy. It might be better if we talked about it tomorrow, for its long too."

Sandy looked at John trying to figure out why he seemed to be so sensitive about the story and then said, "Well, if it's not too late for you, I'd like to hear some of it now, and then we can continue in the morning. Unless you have other plans."

John smiled and said, "Tomorrow is Sunday, and I have no plans. So, why don't you come over after breakfast and we can spend as much time as necessary talking about her."

"What can you tell me now?" asked Sandy, "You know, to get me started."

John looked down at his hands for a moment and then at the ceiling as he started to talk.

"It has been nearly 25 years since it first started, the legend, I mean. Her name really was Rose, and she was a beautiful young woman. She had a figure that would attract any man and a face to match. Her hair was red and long, wavy and down below her shoulders.

I never knew who her parents were. No one ever referred to them, that I can recall.

She lived with her grandmother in the back country near the old Blackwater Swamp. It's about 30 miles from here, down route 17 going south to Morrison.

I first met her when I was on patrol as a sheriff deputy, and I gave her a warning about walking in the swamp. I'm guessing that she was 18 at the time. She was dressed in a long black dress that fit her just right and she was barefoot.

She laughed at me and said that she was quite at home in the swamp. I warned her about the various animals that could harm her. She just smiled at me and walked away into the trees on an old trail.

Later when I was telling my supervisor about her, he told me that she was more at home in the swamp than out of it.

It was about three years later that I found out that she and Willy Michel were attached. Willy was the owner and head mechanic at the only auto shop in the area. They were going to be married in July and everyone was invited.

Well, three days before the wedding, Willy was killed when a car lift failed while he was under it and the whole thing, car and all, fell down on him. Rose was devastated and went back into her grandmother's home and didn't come out for the longest time.

We started getting strange calls after a while about a woman in a black dress that walked around in the trees and across the swamp. We were told that she could change shape and fly and sink into the swamp water when she wanted.

Of course, we didn't believe any of it for a long time because we never saw this woman. We had no idea who this woman might be until there was a report of a child missing in the area of the Blackwater Swamp. It was a little girl about six years old and she had been missing for about seven hours.

Well, the whole community wanted to help look for her and the sheriff was in the

process of setting up search parties on the edge of the swamp.

I was about to lead one of the groups into a heavily forested part of the swamp area, when out of the trees walks Rose. She was wearing a long black dress and a cloak with a hood on it that was black also. She was leading the little girl.

I walked up to her and asked her where she had found the girl. She told me that the girl had been swimming in the swamp water and to watch her parents more closely. Then she turned and walked away back into the trees.

I was going to go after her and ask more questions, but after handing the little girl to another of the search party, I turned back, and Rose was gone.

I walked quickly into the trees to find her, but she was gone. This is the strange part, I could see into the trees for quite a distance, but I couldn't see Rose at all.

I forgot all about it in the turmoil of returning the little girl to her parents, but I didn't forget what Rose had told me; to watch the girl's parents.

Later, I found that they had taken the girl into the swamp and left her there alone. It turned out that they had a lot of life insurance on her and wanted to collect on it. They tried again but were caught and spent time in prison and the girl was given to her aunt and uncle to raise.

How did Rose know about the girl's parents? That's what I wanted to know?

Had she been watching them in the swamp? I still don't know, but I found out over time that Rose knew things. She became more and more strange as she lived in Blackwater Swamp.

I think that her grandmother had some knowledge that most people don't. Now, I'm not saying that she was a witch or anything like that. But Rose could do things that most folk can't. She knew things that most folk didn't. In fact, it got to the point that I would go to her on some of the cases that the sheriff department couldn't solve, and she would tell me things that would help me in the investigation.

Where did she get her information? I never found out. But she was never wrong.

Her reputation grew more and more strange as time went on. People said that she could change shape, that she lived in the trees, ate living things for her food and to stay away from her if the moon was full.

Over time, I got closer to Rose as I would go to her for information on certain cases. But I actually had what is called a "crush" on her. I would ask her out for dinner under the pretense of gaining information on a certain case. But I really just wanted to be with her.



I think that she knew that I liked her and wanted to get closer to her and I got the impression that she kind of liked me too. I finally gave her a friendship ring and she accepted it. I was pretty excited, and we dated more often.

I wanted to meet and to speak to her grandmother about our relationship and asked Rose if I could meet her. Rose was hesitant but finally agreed and I met them both at a meadow in the woods near the swamp.

I think that the grandmother didn't want me to see the home they lived in. Anyway, we met, and I found the grandmother to be a strange sort of person.

She too, was dressed in a black dress, but hers was an old faded one that had seen much use. She wore a rope belt that had a small badly worn leather pouch hanging from it and she had a thin walking stick that she never let go of. She wore old leather sandals on her feet and her long straggly hair was as grey as grey could be.

She looked me over like I was for sale. There was nothing that I could say that made her smile. The only thing that I can remember that she said to me was that Rose had much to learn.

Rose was very uncomfortable, I could tell,

and the meeting didn't last very long before we left the meadow. I returned to town.

A month after that, Rose told me that her grandmother had died and that she would be gone for a while.

It wasn't long before I found a note written on an old, wrinkled piece of paper on my house door, telling me that our relationship was over and not to try to see her again.

I had never been to her home, so I didn't know how to get to speak with her again. I wanted an explanation. We had always met at the old bus stop at the edge of town on Friday nights.

I went there the next Friday, and she never came. So, I knew it was over, I just didn't know why."

John took a drink from his bottle and paused as he looked at Sandy and then said, "Perhaps we should continue tomorrow. My head's fuzzy with the beer and I'm sure that you could use some sleep from your traveling. How about I meet you in Sally's Restaurant, say, at 11:30 and I'll buy you lunch? Then we can continue with the story."

Sandy looked a little disappointed that John wanted to stop telling the story, but it was late, and she was tired, so she agreed.

The drive back to the small hotel was

short and Sandy was soon asleep in the bed in her room.

Eleven-thirty came too late for Sandy, but she was there waiting in a booth at the back of the restaurant when John came in and found her.

John laughed and waved when he saw her waving from the booth as he walked back to sit down on the other side of the table. "Well, no one will bother us here," he grinned, "I didn't even know there was a booth back this far."

"I wanted us to be left alone, so that you could continue your story without interruption or having to be careful with what you have to say."

"Good thinking, Sandy," John smiled, "Some of what you'll hear might attract unwanted attention."

John waved his hand, and the waitress came and took their order and left again.

~ To be continued ~

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

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Finding balance

by Peggy Badgett

Voices droned around me while I daydreamed about my morning hike through aspen groves and tall firs on the way to the top of Midland Hill. Townsend solitaires sang from treetops, and ravens swooped along the thermals as I clamored over boulder sections and forced my legs up steep inclines. During frequent stops for sips of water (really an excuse to catch my breath), I was grateful for the visionaries who build these trails and protected our wild lands from human encroachment. My friend nudged my elbow before I started snoring and drooling. Snapping to attention, I grinned at him and pretended to scribble what was being said on the blank paper before me. Secretarial prowess was not something I claimed as a skill set, but I'm trying.

When I moved to the Buena Vista area a few years back, I mentioned to my friend how much I enjoyed the area's abundant recreation opportunities. He encouraged me to apply for an open position on the local trails board. During the interview, my voice wavered and cracked as I faced eight intense gazes and answered their questions. I'd served on my local school board for four years, and volunteered at homeless soup kitchens, but this was different. I'd never served as secretary before; meetings usually kick-started my wool-gathering gene into high gear. But now I'm learning a new skill to consolidate discussions into meeting minutes that are concise and complete. My notes certainly aren't perfect. But I don't think they will fire me yet.

When members of organizations discover that you're retired, they court you as hopelessly as stray dogs hovering outside a butcher's shop. After entering a painting in a county art show last year, a gallery owner recruited me to become a member of the local art council. I had no clue what they did. Now I'm their president and floundering in a sea of unknowns. I'm unearthing my ancient skills of project management from my pharmacy research career, dusting them off, and putting them to use. I wrote my first grant for community funding with the help of several mentors. I'm setting agendas and

running meetings. I'm tracking down past members and gleaned nuggets from their experiences and wisdom. I'm shaking hands and meeting new people, doing my best to match faces with names.

Both of my volunteer positions are eager to gobble every waking hour if I let them. I'm learning to balance my personal goals with the organizations' objectives, so I don't feel overwhelmed, burned out, or resentful. Between helping with trail building projects, coordinating donations for events, and wading through old documents on google drives and in paper folders, I'm learning a lot. I'm re-discovering that volunteering is very rewarding. Being busy helps me become more productive with my own creative efforts because for some odd reason, when I juggle multiple projects my procrastination tendencies are easier to manage, most of the time.

There are uncertain winds blowing through our society. Fretting doesn't accomplish much. One thing we should have learned during the pandemic is respect and empathy for our fellow human beings and creatures that inhabit this earth. Experiencing nature instead of watching never-ending news feeds cuts down on the noise around us. Volunteering can give a sense of purpose and builds new bridges and friendships. We need that now. It is up to each of us to make the world a better place. So, I've begun a new tradition every evening. Before closing my eyes and sinking into what I hope is peaceful slumber, I contemplate two ideas: What brought me joy on this day? How can I be of service to others tomorrow? Everyone can make a difference, even if it is picking up forgotten dog poop bags on a trail or smiling at people in the grocery store.

Peggy Badgett is an artist and writer. She has several year's worth of adventures you can read for free on her website [pharmgirl.org](http://pharmgirl.org), and can be reached at [coloradopharmgirl@gmail.com](mailto:coloradopharmgirl@gmail.com) Her book Rooster in the Drive-Through is available for sale at Shipping Plus.

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



Life-Enhancing Journeys

Grudges vs. granting forgiveness - part I

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

Do you remember when someone wronged you, leaving you unable to stop thinking about them? Even as you try to move on, that situation replays in your mind, making it hard to escape those thoughts. Months, years, or decades later, ruminating can still ignite your anger. You recall their hurtful behavior, reliving it each time you think of them or interact with them, maybe even wishing misfortune upon them. It feels current, consuming your thoughts and potentially triggering unwanted behaviors out of fear of a recurrence. Even with repeated apologies, you remain hesitant to forgive. This is known as holding a grudge, harboring anger and bitterness long after being hurt.

Have you considered how this has shaped your life? Do you feel the need to share your pain with others? It seems like you are saying to yourself, "Let me tell you; let me tell you again and again." True suffering arises from letting grudges become a part of your identity and how you view the world. Grudges can harm you more than the wrongdoer hurt you. It affects you emotionally, physically, and socially while trapping you in the past. Holding onto grudges, anger, resentment, or revenge fantasies only harms you, not the person who is living rent-free in your brain.

"To be wronged is nothing unless you continue to remember it."

— Confucius

A 47-year-old man came into my office years after his mother's death. He claimed that her cold-hearted personality caused his troubled relationship with her. He remembered feeling unloved and unimportant to her which he believed was because he was a bad boy and undeserving. "I never got the affection I wanted... I felt unwanted...worthless... I believed I wasn't good enough... I'm still angry, even though she died six years ago." His sorrow was clear, with memories of his mother dominating his thoughts. I asked if his mother even understood what it meant to be a loving person. Choking up while reflecting on this, he acknowledged that his mom came from an uncaring and abusive home, "I thought she hated me, but now I realize she was incapable of love... she never learned how to love." This realization helped him stop taking her behavior personally, allowing him to forgive her and let go of his resentment.

Letting go of resentment can transform your identity. Who would you be with-

out it? While it is easy to feel justified in holding a grudge after being wronged, it is important to recognize that this mindset often affects you more than those who caused the pain. Studies show that fixating on negative emotions can take a toll on your well-being, leading to a more cynical outlook on life. This also demonstrates how your brain is naturally wired to pay attention to potential dangers.

Blaming others; it is all their fault.

Holding onto grudges can seem protective. You might tell yourself, "I'm not responsible for how I feel... You did this to me..." This self-talk reinforces the blame. Understandably, when distressed, you instinctively protect yourself. Blaming someone else may provide temporary relief. When upset, acknowledge, "I understand what caused my pain... This person treated me poorly, which explains why I feel bad."

When something happens, it is normal to create a story about it. The way you discuss these experiences shapes your life. You can view them as ordinary, a challenge to overcome, a valuable lesson, or a reminder of life's unfairness. However, dwelling on grievances can take away your sense of control and choice.

For example, sharing the story about how a cruel friend disrupted your life can be a valuable narrative to share with others, as it can assist the brain in rebalancing and reorganizing after a distressing experience. You might tell yourself, "I made a foolish choice with this friend; they exhibited numerous signs, and I overlooked these red flags. Next time, I will be more watchful." Discussing the reasons behind your grudge with a trusted friend can offer clarity, helping you determine a more appropriate response.

Why do some wrongdoings turn into grudges while others do not?

Thinking that someone has violated your (unenforceable) rules can transform your wish for an interaction to be handled in a particular way into an expectation or obligation (see the article in UCN, "Expectations," May/June 2024). You do not have the ability to dictate another person's actions. Remember that an independent adult is not obligated to meet your expectations when someone behaves in a way you disapprove of. Creating unenforceable rules may mislead you into thinking they should meet your expectations, such as defending you, or even keeping in touch. Hard-to-enforce rules can reinforce rigid thinking, leading to disappointment when

reality does not match your expectations.

Who is more likely to hold grudges?

Research suggests some people struggle more to let go of grudges. Certain personality traits increase the likelihood of responding to anger with resentment. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines resentment as "A feeling of indignant displeasure or ... ill will at something regarded as a wrong, insult, or injury." Individuals often experience feelings of jealousy, sensitivity, or negativity. Those with poor impulse control are generally more likely to hold grudges. People who are easily frustrated and emotionally reactive may blame others instead of reflecting on their role in conflicts. Various factors shape how humans retain feelings, including cultural background, lifestyle, parenting, environmental influences, and genetics.

Individuals who are empathetic, resilient, and who possess self-regulation skills find it easier to forgive and move on. Research indicates that habits like regular exercise and sufficient sleep significantly improve the ability to adapt, which leads to the capacity for greater forgiveness.

Consequences of holding grudges

Holding a grudge can harm your emotional and physical health, causing you to feel more pessimistic.

- **Grudges can feel like a physical burden:** Research shows that those who hold grudges find fitness tests more difficult. For example, they recognize hills as being steeper than those who let go of their grievances.
- **Isolating yourself from others:** Research shows social isolation can hinder forgiveness, leading to holding grudges. Avoiding people may feel protective, but it can also cause you to miss the closeness and warmth of relationships.
- **Increasing our risk of cognitive decline:** A 2018 study indicates that individuals with higher hostility levels, marked by skepticism and mistrust, experienced greater cognitive decline over 10 years than those who practiced self-forgiveness.
- **Negatively affects your mental health:** Holding a grudge can increase your risk of experiencing anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues.
- **Adds to your overall stress:** Holding onto grudges can increase your stress, resulting in high blood pressure, heart problems, weakened immunity, and inflammation. However, research has

demonstrated that using forgiveness as a coping strategy can reduce the negative health effects of chronic stress.

Numerous studies have explored the connection between resentment and mental health. Research indicates that letting go of grudges can enhance self-esteem. Furthermore, evidence shows that resentment, blame, and hostile thoughts can adversely affect physical health. One study examined the relationship between blame and physical well-being, revealing that angry individuals face a higher risk of heart disease. Holding onto resentment, even a little, only brings you more pain.


Sleep disturbances are another consequence of resentment and grievance. There were times when I would wake up at 3 a.m., troubled by something someone said or did. I would toss and turn in bed, unable to silence the looping thoughts in my mind in hopes of falling back asleep. This took a toll on me. To regain my peace of mind, I realized I needed to find a way to break this cycle.

Next month, we'll continue with the impact on your body, recognizing the need for change, tips for letting go, the meaning and value of forgiveness and moving on.

Barbara Pickholz-Weiner, RN, BSN, CACIII, MAC, EMDRII is the program director of Journeys Counseling Center, Inc. At Journeys, we teach you tools, skills and help you discover resources to live the most effective life possible. We guide, support and coach you along the path you desire, to become the best version of yourself. To contact Barbara, call 719-510-1268 (cell) or email [Journeyscounselingctr@gmail.com](mailto:Journeyscounselingctr@gmail.com).

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## 14th Pie Palooza

by Flip Boettcher

Once again pie madness overtook Guffey for the Guffey Community Charter School’s (GCCS) 14th Pie Palooza on March 13. The Grand Champion-Best in Show was Chris Peterson with his Tiramisu pie. The top selling pie sold for a record breaking \$665. The Pie Palooza is the school’s biggest fundraiser of the year.

About 90 people plus students packed into the school’s multi-purpose room. The pies started arriving at 3 p.m. with each pie baker submitting two of the same kind of pie, one for the contest and one for the auction.

The event started with a rousing bluegrass tune played by second grade violinist Gavino Taormina accompanied by Anna Clare on spoons and Flip Boettcher on guitar and the Dancing Cowgirls.

Next was the melodrama “All’s Fair in Love and Pie,” and the students did a great acting job including the narrators, sign holders, pie sisters, villains, sheriff and pie angels.

While the melodrama was going on, the four pie judges: head judge Frank Schiola, Eric Kellogg, Louise Peterson and Harrison Elam, were sampling and judging the pies.

After the melodrama, the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners in the four categories — fruit, cream, savory and other — and the student category were announced, as well as the Grand Champion-Best in Show. Schiola, who has been a pie judge for nine years, said that this year it was very hard to determine the winners because all the pies were so very good.

### The winners were:

#### ■ Fruit

- 1 Carolyn Barker** — Cranberry Pear Latte Pie
- 2 Marleen Clayton** — Raspberry Wine Craisin Pie
- 3 Peg Larson** — George Washington Cherry Pie

#### ■ Cream

- 1 Laura Batts** — Citrus Cherry Pistachio Cheesecake
- 2 Di Williams** — Peanut Butter Cream Pie
- 3 Carol Todd** — Hershey Sundae Pie

#### ■ Savory

- 1 Hattie Clayton** — chicken Cordon Blue Pot Pie
- 2 Louise Peterson** — BBQ Goat Cheese Pizza Pie
- 3 Erin Reid** — Western Style Quiche

#### ■ Other

- 1 Chris Peterson** — Tiramisu Pie
- 2 Ashley F** — White Chocolate Chip Lemon Cookie Pie
- 3 Pam Moore** — Lemon Lavender Cheese Pie

#### ■ Student

- 1 Lacie and Hunter Henley** — Chocolate Oreo Peanut Pie



*Grand Champion - Best in Show - left to right: Eric Kellogg, pie judge, Louise Peterson, pie judge, Grand Champ Chris Peterson, Harrison Elam, pie judge, and head judge Frank Schiola.*

*Cover: Student First Place Winners - front left to right: Lacie and Hunter Henley. In the back judges left to right Eric Kellogg, Louise Peterson, Harrison Elam and Frank Schiola, head judge.*

**2 Marius Robinson** — Chicken Pot Pie  
**3 Lacie and Hunter Henley** — Dolly Parton Walnut Oreo Pie

After the winners were announced it was time for pie tasting with pie auction bidders going first and students last, with the pie auction starting after that.

This year Alan Wesley was again the auctioneer, with former school administrator Pam Moore the master of ceremonies and former teacher Jenny Peck the “Vanna White” pie presenter.

The first pie, a George Washington Cherry Pie, sold for \$55 and the spirited auction went on from there with friendly rivalries. There were 35 pies to auction off. Six pies sold for \$50 or less; 13 pies sold for \$50 - \$100; 8 sold for \$100 - \$200; 2 sold for \$200 - \$300; 4 sold for over \$300; and 2 sold for over \$600.

The highest selling pie was a Wild Natural Shepherd’s Pie made by Beth Hall and sold for \$665. A Tiramisu pie was a close second and sold for \$625.

Before the last pie, the Grand Champ pie, was auctioned off, there was an announcement that an anonymous donor would match the monies raised that evening. The Grand Champion Tiramisu pie sold for \$350.

Overall, the school raised \$7,551 in pie sales, t-shirt sales and donations and with the anonymous donor who was so generous to match what the school raised, they ended up with \$15,102.00. This surpassed last year’s total sales of \$5,600 raised.

“It was so overwhelming to see all of the support from the community for our little charter school. It just shows how passionate everyone is here in Guffey and our surrounding areas. We are all truly humbled by the experience,” school administrator Kelli Burke. A big THANK YOU to all who participated in this year’s event.

The GCCS is a big part of the community with the school supporting the community and the community supporting the school.

## Colorado’s Right-to-Farm and Ranch laws threatened?

by Flip Boettcher

Colorado is among many states in the US that are right-to-farm and ranch states. According to a National Agricultural Law Center publication, “It is the declared policy of the state of Colorado to conserve, protect and encourage the development and improvement of its agricultural land for the production of food and other agricultural products.”

Park County is proud to be a right-to-farm and ranch county and the board of county commissioners adopted resolution #30-2010 on May 13, 2010, establishing a right-to-farm and ranch policy in Park County to, among other things, “protect the business (agriculture) from unnecessary intrusive litigation.” and “Agriculture, as a way of life, benefits all residents of Park County.” Given their importance to Park County and the state of Colorado, agricultural lands and operations are worthy of recognition and protection.

According to the Colorado Cattleman’s Association (CCA), which is the nation’s oldest cattleman’s association, of Colorado’s 66.3 million acres, half is ranches and farms, CCA website. Cattle production is Colorado’s #1 agricultural commodity with 2.7 million head of cattle raised in every Colorado county.

Sixty percent of the state’s \$7.1 billion in agricultural cash receipts is attributed to livestock. Farmers and ranchers provide food and habitat for 75% of Colorado’s wildlife. “What makes Colorado..well Colorado...is agriculture.” “. . .beef producers are stewards of the environment, our communities and the economic engine of our country,” CCA website.

The Central Colorado Cattleman’s Association (CCCA), an affiliate of the CCA, was organized in 1950 to promote animal health, education, agricultural business, land and water resource stewardship, family and community in Park and Teller counties. Their major issues are the future of agriculture, brand laws, grazing, water use, noxious weeds and predators.

Colorado is an “open range” or “fence out” state. In the 1880s the Colorado legislature passed a fencing statute where

landowners were required to fence livestock out if they wanted to preserve their land. In order to collect damages caused by trespassing livestock, land owners have to have a lawful fence and prove the cattle broke down the fence to enter their property. Colorado’s fence law has served the state fairly well for more than 100 years.

Colorado Revised Statute (CRS) 35-46-101(1) defines a “lawful fence” as a “well-constructed three barbed wire fence with a substantial post set at a distance of approximately twenty feet apart, and sufficient to turn ordinary horses and cattle, with all gates equally as good as the fence...” If a cow can jump a fence, is it high enough?

CRS 35-46-102 is the central component of Colorado’s fence law and consists of three sections which state the duties of landowners and liabilities of livestock owners. The policy of the law is to favor stock owners and permit them to range their stock at large, while the duty of the landowner is to protect their land with a fence.

Landowners need to maintain their fences as well and keep all gates closed. Cows are opportunists and are more than happy to go through an open gate or over a damaged fence.

“Ranching, farming and all manner of agricultural activities and operations within and through Park County are integral elements of and necessary for the continued vitality of the county’s history, culture, economy and lifestyle,” resolution 30-2010.

“Historically, rural people have worked together to help their neighbors for the mutual benefit, however, many people are unfamiliar with this tradition and in spite of everyone’s efforts to be good neighbors, conflicts arise,” resolution 30-2010.

With more urban and new people coming into the Park County area, there are some actions and litigation that are currently in the works in southern Park County, where one landowner near Guffey is suing his ranching neighbor over cattle getting onto his land. The court date is set for August, the outcome of which might perhaps threaten the state’s and county’s right-to-farm and ranch laws, as well as the state’s fence-out laws.

### Fuels Reduction Project near Lake George

by Josh Cowden

The South Park Ranger District on the Pike-San Isabel National Forests & Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands is implementing the Arkansas Fuels Reduction Project, to last through the summer. The 544-acre project is located along County Road 90 in Park County near Lake George, CO.

This project supports the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service10-year Wildfire Crisis Strategy. The primary goal of the project is to improve forest health by reducing hazardous fuels that have built up in the forest. This work will aid in reducing the likelihood of high-severity wildfires within the wildland urban interface, the zone where human development meets wildlands.

“Fuels reduction projects are essential for reducing the likelihood of wildfires that threaten communities near national

forest lands,” said South Park District Ranger Josh Voorhis. “Mechanical treatment can be used on its own or together with prescribed fire to change how wildfire behaves, so that when a wildfire does burn through a treated area, it is less destructive, less costly, and easier to control.”

Both mechanized and hand thinning will be used on this project. Slash and debris will be piled for future prescribed fire projects. Slash piles consist of small trees, treetops and limbs that are cut and piled during hazardous fuel and vegetation management projects.

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

## Adopt Us

by TCRAS

### Korra

Hi! My name is Korra. I’m a little shy at first but come in and give me some pets so I can turn into a loud motor! I am going to need a little extra time to adjust to my new environment. I promise you, I am so ready to find my forever home. I’m only 1-year-old and I’m spayed. If you would like to meet me or want to know more about me, please call TCRAS 719-686-7707.

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



## Fitness ON the Mountain

I’ll drink to that!

by Lori Martin

Years ago, I came across an amazing testament to the importance of hydration to all aspects of health. That sounds silly now, of course. We all have some understanding of the importance of staying hydrated, don’t we? The amount of money people spend on fancy water containers that they can carry with them throughout the day is atrocious.

At this particular time in my career, I had begun to notice some not so healthy trends with my clients and other gym go-ers.

1. Excessive exercise
2. Over-estimating their water intake
3. Caffeine addiction

#### Excessive exercise:

Obsessions with burning calories were at a high. The sweatier you were, the more calories you must have burned.

#### Over-estimating water intake:

Many people were counting coffee, tea, soda, etc. as a source of water, cute but incorrect. “Well, I brew my coffee with water!” “The ingredients list says water!” the retorts thundered on.

#### Caffeine addiction:

Trying to meet their bodies demands for excessive exercise when you are under hydrated and probably under nourished while working yourself into exhaustion was impossible unless, you downed some form of caffeine prior to your workout.

It became a vicious cycle. Prior to having access to computers, let alone hand-held computers, I regularly scoured fitness magazines for interesting information for our bulletin boards in the gym. I would cut out articles and carefully craft some pretty, eye-catching displays. Each board had a different theme on which to share the latest information on anything fitness related. It was satisfying to see people standing in front of the boards reading the articles I’d posted. Whether they were in-between sets or classes or anxiously, awaiting their turn on a particular cardio machine the bulletin boards helped pass the time.

One day a *Science Magazine* arrived in the mail with an article about a doctor in Iran that had done some interesting research on water intake.

To write on this month’s topic, I felt I should refresh my memory about Fereydoon Batmanghelidj M.D. (Dr. Batman). A Google search led me to his “about” page on his website www.watercure.com. Here are the main talking points on Dr. Batman:

- He studied abroad at some very prestigious Universities.
- He studied under Nobel Peace Prize winner Sir Alexander Fleming, one of the discoverers of penicillin.

- After returning to Iran, he was involved in developing hospitals and medical centers.
- He helped establish sports projects for youth in Iran.

His imprisonment during the Iranian Revolution was a blessing for the other prisoners. With no medicine to treat sick prisoners, Dr. Batman could prescribe only one thing: water. He began observing the healing effects of water. Ailing prisoners were prescribed 2 glasses of water every 3 hours. He began documenting his results but was scheduled to be released from prison and chose to stay 4 more months to finish his research on the medicinal effects of water.

Ultimately, Dr. B treated 3000 fellow prisoners suffering from stress-induced peptic ulcers. His research also included preventing and relieving the painful effects of degenerative diseases. He was released in 1982 and escaped to America where he began research into the topic of Unintentional Dehydration. Dr. Batman coined terms such as: “You are not sick, you are thirsty. Don’t treat thirst with medication.”

Well, I put his theories to task. My clients all had pain and inflammation of some sort. I began recommending increasing water as the first line of defense to pain. The feedback was exciting.

Recently, I began experiencing eye pain in my right eye. My problem is that when I don’t feel well, I can’t think about what to do to fix it. It began as unusual and random pain here and there, eventually, culminated into one pretty intense day of eye pain, which clearly was related to a headache along with a constant influx of allergy symptoms. I stopped everything. I needed to slow down and pay attention to the signals my body was throwing at me, “You know this Lori. . .How much water had I been drinking? How much caffeine had I been drinking? Ugh... You’re not sleeping, your skin looks bad, your eyes are extra dry. Well, that could be allergies, it could be my thyroid meds are off! Well, let’s just say we try doubling the water intake and see what happens. After all, this would be your first recommendation to any client that presented with any type of inflammation.”

Sure enough, the pain and headaches lessened overnight. Excuse me while I get my water, it’s been awhile.

So, the pain lessened but, it wasn’t completely gone. Then, while reviewing Dr. Batman’s protocol I realized even after doubling my water intake, I was still not at 2 glasses every 3 hours. Reality check! Note: This is the amount to heal someone Dr. B prescribed and not the amount a healthy person should drink, so consult your physician.

Dr. Peter Attia, in his August 2023 article,

lists many consequences of dehydration that apply to all of us but more so to us older folks. It was eye opening to see where I could be headed if I didn’t take action now. That headache was my body’s way of alerting me just as that low back pain or those digestion issues might be for you.

As if sagging skin, loss of muscle mass, bone density loss and memory decline weren’t enough, Dr. Attia drives home his real message, “... one of the least familiar nevertheless has an enormous impact on health span and longevity: the decline on our ability to stay sufficiently hydrated.”

I was beginning to feel inadequate as a wellness professional for allowing myself to become under hydrated until I read about Dr. Attia’s sudden awareness and dove into the study of hydration. After an episode of “temporarily losing consciousness” and falling into a table it became clear that he had also allowed himself to become victim of dehydration.

- There can be long term consequences for becoming dehydrated at any age, but more so as we age.
- Hydration is a balance of inputs and outputs.

Fluid balance is regulated by a process that controls water coming in and water going out. Thirst is supposed to be a reminder that we need water/coming in. Perspiration, respiration, water loss through digestive system and urination/stool play the role of removing water. It’s common knowledge that the color of our urine is an indication of how hydrated or dehydrated we are.

In summary, Dr. Attia explains, “... our bodies regulate how much urine to remove and how much to retain”. Why would our bodies want to retain urine? He continues, “When we become dehydrated, the kidneys can reabsorb some of the water to avoid further loss.” Let’s talk about the effects of aging.

Why are urinary tract infections (UTIs) so common and devastating to our older loved ones? Dr. Attia references studies done in 1984 that explain the importance of the hormone Vasopressin in stimulating water reabsorption from urine. As we age, the kidneys lose the ability to respond to Vasopressin.

Body composition plays into the problem as we age. Maintaining muscle mass is important for many reasons but, for the aging population muscle mass reduction results in loss of those healthy, lean muscles that are loaded with water (water in). If we allow our muscle mass to be depleted, we are essentially allowing an increase in fat cells resulting in a decrease of precious water.

This loss of water magnifies the imbalance of input vs. output. That’s not all,

low muscle mass impairs our body’s ability to seek water in response to thirst.

Loss of muscle mass also decreases one’s ability to physically go get a glass of water or recognize the need to urinate or get to the bathroom without having an accident.

Take Action Now: Consciously drink more fluids, in particular, water. Set a water drinking goal and keeping a water journal while we are younger when our bodies are more in tune to water in/water out, which will help us merge into our later years healthier overall.

Think of your water intake as a check-book. We make a deposit of water when we drink. We are spending that hard earned water through everyday bodily functions and activities of life. Take into consideration the amount of physical activity you do or don’t do, the foods you eat, the beverages you consume and of course, the climate and elevation.

Those expenditures just need to be budgeted into the check book balance and accounted for. A great boost to your water checkbook is maintaining that muscle mass.

Thanks to technology we no longer measure body weight only. Newer scales can be accurate predictors of our body composition. Body composition can be broken down into fat, muscle, bone density, etc.

It may sound daunting to you but keeping a record of the results is easy with technology yet a notebook and pen will help you to track those numbers. If you have a smart phone take a screen shot when you get on that scale each day. Create an album titled Body Composition in your phone and put each screenshot in the album. Make a regular date with yourself or accountability partner to go through those results daily, weekly and/or monthly. You may even save yourself some of the physical and financial stress of catching trends before they become chronic and irreversible.

Dr. Peter Attia’s August 12, 2023 article can be found at www.perattiamd.com Search the title referenced above or “aging effects on hydration.” Enjoy!

#### UPDATE:

##### Eye pain and headaches reduction

- Muscle tightness in my neck and upper back were playing a part.
- I added a little extra DNA Vibe Red Light Therapy focus to my daily sessions for a few days.
- Reduce time on my devices.
- Increase movement.

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719-269-3015  
prisonmuseum.org

Map showing location near Hwy 50 and Greenwood Ave.

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The final moments of a T. rex during the start of the end of the Cretaceous extinction event. Image created by the author using AI.

## Extinction: Fossils of a Vanishing Future

by Steven Wade Veatch

They ruled the world once,  
lumbering giants beneath a fiery sun,  
that trampled ferns  
with their colossal strides.

No one mourned their passage:  
A death simply by a massive rock and chance.  
As the world burned, the sky turned to ash.  
Next the Earth froze.  
What remained was cold silence;  
the stillness of a kingdom gone.

Now we walk on this earth,  
masters of fire and thought,  
builders of cities that stretch to the sky –  
where we weave our dreams into metal and glass.  
But listen closely – the oceans rise  
like ancient prophets while nature  
whispers warnings.

We are the asteroid now,  
the architects of our own destruction.  
Not by fire from the sky,  
But by the slow smothering of our planet.

Will we fall as the dinosaurs did,  
victims of a fate we cannot outrun?  
Or will we rise, learning from the bones of beasts  
and the spotlight of our science?

The dinosaurs left no poets,  
no songs, no warnings carved on stone.  
When we vanish will there be silence once more?  
Or will the Earth find a new voice,  
one that hums with life that does not know us,  
does not need us, and does not contemplate  
what we could have been?

## ~OUT AND ABOUT~

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

### AVAILABLE ONLINE

- 22 & 29** The Empowered Caregiver: An educational program presented by the Alzheimer's Association (2-part series) 10:30-12 noon viz Zoom. Register by calling 800-272-3900 or visit [www.alz.org/CRF](http://www.alz.org/CRF)
- NAMI Colorado: <http://www.namicolorado.org/>
- Suicide prevention: <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/> or dial 988

### CAÑON CITY

- LIBRARY**
- 17 Open Mic 4-6 p.m.
- 17 Free Legal Clinic by appointment 2-3:40 p.m. 719-269-9020
- 19 Nancy Jensen, local author book signing and talk 2 p.m. *Girl who Cried Wolf*
- 25 Closed for staff development.
- 1st Friday Lego Club 3 p.m.
- 2nd Friday Breakout Box 3 p.m.
- 3rd Friday Creative Crafting 3 p.m.
- B.O.O.K. (Babies on our knees) story time Mondays 10:30 a.m.
- Chess Club Wednesdays 2 p.m.
- Cribbage Club Fridays 10-noon.
- Dulcimer Club for kids 2nd and 4th Wednesday 3:30-4:30 p.m.
- Mahjong Club Tuesdays 1-4 p.m.
- Metaphysical Group Saturdays 10:30 a.m.
- Rummikub Club meets 3rd Monday of each month 1 p.m.
- Story Swap Book Chat 1st and 3rd Tuesdays 3 p.m.
- Story time and craft Tuesday and Thursdays 10:30 a.m.
- All at 516 Macon Ave unless otherwise specified. FMI 719-269-9020 [www.ccpl.lib.co.us](http://www.ccpl.lib.co.us)

### COLORADO SPRINGS

- 7 Judy Collins at the Pikes Peak Center.
- 19 Pucks 4 Paws Charity Hockey Game. A family friendly, fast-paced hockey game between the Colorado Warriors and TCRAS pets. Doors open 4 p.m., game starts at 5 p.m. at Ed Robson Arena 849 N Tejon St. FMI and tickets [www.pucks4paws.org](http://www.pucks4paws.org).
- 24-27 CRYSTAL – Cirque Du Soleil's first ever acrobatic performance on ice at the Broadmoor. Shows on 24 and 25 are at 7 p.m., shows on 26 at 3:30 and 7:30 p.m., and shows on 27 at 1 p.m. and 5 p.m.
- 29-May1 The Addams Family musical at the Pikes Peak Center.

### CRIPPLE CREEK

- 3 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.
- 12 Special Train Cars presented by local historian Ken Valles at the Cripple Creek Heritage Center 9283 S Hwy 67, 10-noon. The presentation is FREE but donations will benefit the speaker or their chosen organization. Light refreshments will be served. FMI 719-689-3315.
- 17 Third Thursday of the month is the Two Mile High Club monthly meeting at 5:30 p.m. in the lower level of the Double Eagle Casino complex 442 East Bennett Ave.

### ASPEN MINE CENTER

- 25 Commodities distribution 9-1 p.m.
- Mondays AA meeting 3-4 p.m. upstairs conference room.
- Tuesdays BINGO 10:30 a.m. for seniors.
- Wednesdays Luncheon 11:30-1 p.m. upstairs dining room, every Wed. donations greatly appreciated, but not required.
- Mexican Train on Thursday 10:30a.m.
- All programs at 166 E Bennett Ave. FMI 719-689-3584 x112.

### COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

- GED Classes Mondays & Wednesdays 1-3 p.m. New students (min. age 16) may join GED classes after completing orientation and \$40 registration fee. FMI Katy@cpteller.org
- Playgroup Fridays 9-10 a.m. at Parks & Recreation. Learn grow, play and have fun! Join us to meet other children and caregivers, participate in fun and educational activities together, and nurture your child's development. Playgroup is for families with children 5 years and under and

### DIVIDE

- 11, 26 Teller Senior Coalition BINGO! 10-11:30 a.m. at Little Chapel Church 69 CR 5. RSVP 719-687-3330 ext. 6. Please call to set up a ride 719-687-0256 and join us for doughnuts, coffee and FUN!
- 14, 28 Little Chapel Food Pantry Distribution and Pet Food Pantry Distribution 2-5 p.m. For more info 719-322-7610 or email little-chapelfoodpantry@outlook.com

### FAIRPLAY

- 10 Free Legal Clinic 2-4 p.m. by appointment at the library. Call 719-836-4297
- WIZARDS OF THE PEAKS**
- Sundays Game groups 2 p.m.
- Monday Mondy Night Magic 7 p.m.
- Tuesday TTRPG 7 p.m.
- Thursdays Learn to Play 6 p.m. April game: Fluxx
- Fridays Friday Night Magic 7 p.m.
- Saturdays All ages Pokemon 3-5 p.m. and Adult RPGs 7 p.m.
- Boozy Board Games every other Monday 6 p.m. FREE
- Catan Group every other Sunday 2 p.m.
- Chess Group every other Sunday 2 p.m.

### FLORENCE

- 12 Florence Merchant's Association presents the 2nd Saturday Adult Easter Egg Hunt. Get your egg and win stuff. Adults only — must be 18 or older. Rules differ from store to store, so please ask at each business. FMI Finditflore.com
- 26 Chili & Beer is Here at the Florence Pioneer Museum and Research Center 100 E. Front St. Home-made chili in hand-made bowls 11 a.m.-? Purchase your chili and bowl for \$10 at the museum or \$20 will get you all-you-can-eat! The bowl you buy you get to keep. Beer can be purchased separately at the Florence Brewery across the street. Chili money goes to the museum as a fundraiser for continued remodel work on the research center upstairs. FMI [www.florencepioneermuseum.org](http://www.florencepioneermuseum.org).

### JOHN C FREMONT LIBRARY

- 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 Wool Gatherers meet 10-12 p.m.
- 4, 11, 18, 25 Story Time 10:30 a.m.
- 4 Cañon City Workforce here 11-1 p.m.
- 7 Fremont Conservation District presents Water Conservation and Composting 2 p.m.
- 10 Amber Pike from BLM presents The Importance of Mining 2 p.m.
- 14 Matinee Movie Monday 2 p.m. Popcorn is provided.
- 15 Fremont County Master Gardeners discuss gardening 10 a.m.
- 17 DIY Salt Scrub Craft 2 p.m. Registration is recommended as space is limited.
- 21 Friends of the Library Mother's Day Auction begins (the auction closes May 5).
- We are looking for people who can put puzzles together quickly! Up to 4 people can be on a team. People can register now in person or call Abby 719-784-4649 ext.3. The event is August 15. FMI 719-784-4649 ext.3.

### SWEET RADIANCE

- 6 Free presentation by Rise and Shine Handcrafted 4:30-6 p.m.
- 13 Easter Market 11-5 p.m. children's book reading and egg hunt 2 p.m.
- 16 Florence Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours 5-7 p.m. BAH showcases the business while giving a venue of socializing and networking! It is a chance for businesses to meet each other as well as open to the public.
- 27 Silent Book Club meeting 3-5 p.m.

### FLOISSANT

- GRANGE**
- 11 Paint with me 10-11 p.m. We will be learning how to paint pens \$10 fee for supplies and a donation to the Grange.
- 12 Pine Needle Basket Class 9-12 p.m. All levels welcome so join us to learn to make these beautiful baskets or learn a new stitch or design element. Cost is \$10

- and a donation to the Grange.
- 19 Easter Egg Hunt and see the Easter Bunny 1-2:30 p.m. Egg hunt begins 1:15 p.m. followed by visiting the Easter Bunny and getting the famous goodie bag. Cookies and punch also available.
- Quilts of Valor meets Tuesdays 9-noon. We make quilts for Veterans.
- Thursdays Music and Potluck 6-8 p.m. Dancing encouraged! FMI to reserve your spot in either class text 719-510-2325.

### LIBRARY

- 3 Book Coven Book Club from 5:30-7 p.m. Come sit a spell!
- 4 Family Craft Day from 11-3 p.m. Drop in after storytime for a family friendly craft!
- 5 Homesteading Series: Seed Starting from 10-11:30 a.m.
- 5 Homesteading Series: Container Gardening from 11:30-1 p.m.
- 9 Florissant Bookworms Book Club 10:30-12 p.m.
- 9 AARP Smart Drivers Course from 1-5 p.m. Please call 719-687-9281 to register for a spot!
- 11 Tarot Club 3 p.m. Teens and up are welcome to join this group and learn all things tarot. April's theme is Vitality!
- 11 Food Crafts at 11 a.m. Come as a family to learn cooking skills in a fun way!
- 12 Homesteading Series: High Altitude Veggies and Critter Control from 10-11:30 a.m.
- 12 Homesteading Series: Backyard Chickens from 11:30-1 p.m.
- 15 Read Amok Book Club themed "teachers" Bring up to 5 books within the theme to share! 11-12:30 p.m. April's theme is Religious/Spiritual.

- 18 Teen Night at 5 p.m. Join us for an escape room! Dinner is provided.
- 19 Homesteading Series: Long Term Food Storage from 10-11:30 a.m.
- 19 Homesteading Series: Sourdough Starters and High-Altitude Baking from 11:30-1 p.m.
- 22 Library Book Club at 3 p.m. Join this new book club where we read books that have libraries as a part of the title or a central role in the setting or story! Check our website for the titles we're reading each month.
- 25 Baby Art: Footprint Ladybugs from 11-12 p.m. Come make art with your baby!
- 26 Homesteading Series: Home Remedies from 10-11:30 a.m.
- 26 Homesteading Series: Worm Composting from 11:30-1 p.m.
- Romp and Roll the second and fourth Wednesday of each month from 10-11 a.m. Play group/open gym for kids 5 and under. Engage in active play!
- Sensory Sensitivity Browsing Hour from 8:30-9:30 a.m. every Tuesday. Need a quieter environment to visit the library? We'll have the lights low and keep things quiet. Please call us if you need additional accommodations.
- Thursdays from 10-11 a.m. Home-school Family Playgroup. Come make connections with other homeschool families!
- Tuesdays Tai Chi 10-11 a.m. Come relax with us!
- Thursdays Yarnia! 10-12 p.m. Craft and share your knitting and crocheting love with others!
- The second and fourth Tuesday of each month join us for Hooks and Needles, an additional club for crafting! 10-12 p.m.
- Storytime every Friday at 10 a.m. FMI 719-748-3939

### COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

- 11 Crossroads Co-Parenting Seminar 9:30-12:30 p.m. Teller County court approved parenting and divorce class seminar. \$35 fee. Pre-registration required. FMI Michelle@cpteller.org.
- 12 Summer Fest 10-1 p.m. Family-friendly event for youth of all ages! Discover the Discovery Zone. Explore summer camps, sports, clubs, and endless fun. Learn about local services and resources. Games, prizes, and fun activities! Drop-off location for the Annual First Responders Food Drive! Non-perishable food items are being collected to replenish CP's Food Pantry. FMI Michelle@cpteller.org.
- Addiction Support Wednesdays 9-4 p.m. Face IT TOGETHER provides free personalized, nonjudgmental peer coaching for those impacted by addiction. 18 yr and older. Walk-ins welcome. FMI [www.wefacetogether.org](http://www.wefacetogether.org)
- Career Center Tuesdays & Thursdays 10-3 p.m. Pikes Peak Workforce Center helps with job searching, resume assistance, and unemployment applications. Walk-ins welcome or schedule appointments with George@cpteller.org.
- Family Café Monday through

### LIBRARY

- 1 Walking, Talking Threads 1-3 p.m. Meets every first Tuesday of the month. Take a nice brisk walk around Guffey Twn and meet back at the library to crochets, knit and talk away.
- 5 The first Socrates Café will be held 11-12:30 p.m. Please come and join us as we exchange philosophical perspectives based on personal experiences. Everyone is welcome regardless of age or background. Socrates Cafes take place in many cities and towns around the world. The concept was started by Christopher

Phillips using his method that involves discussing a set of ideas and learning how to think rather than what to think, getting consensus by asking questions.

- 9 Friends of the Guffey Library meet 1 p.m. Come by and become a member. Support your local library!
- 10 Free Legal Clinic 2-4 p.m. by appointment. Call 719-689-9280
- 23 Rocky Mountain Rural Health Outreach 11-2 p.m. Weather permitting. RMRH representatives will be offering free health screenings, sound financial medical advice, free clothing and much more.
- 28 Guffey Literary Society 1-3 p.m. Book choice for April is *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle* by Barbara Kingsolver. All are welcome to join. FMI 719-689-9280 or Guffey-lib@parkco.us.

### HARTSEL

- 4 Hartsel Days Annual Festival Planning meeting 2:30 p.m. at the downtown Hartsel Fire Station. All are welcome!
- Country Church of Hartsel meets at the Hartsel Community Center 80 Valley View Drive 10 a.m. Sundays. Everyone is welcome! FMI call Jimmy Anderson 719-358-1100.

### LAKE GEORGE

- 10 Free Legal Clinic 2-4 p.m. by appointment. Call 719-748-3812
- 25 Friends of the Library Book Club 9:30 a.m. Book choice for April is *The Monkey Wrench Gang* by Edward Abbey. All are welcome to join. FMI 719-748-3812 or lakegeorge.library@parkcountycogov

### MANITOU SPRINGS

- 10 Annual Wine Walk 5-9 p.m. in downtown Manitou Springs. Tickets on sale now and space is limited. FMI <https://www.eventeny.com/events/wine-walk-17850/>

### WOODLAND PARK

- 12 The 12th Annual Chili Cook-off 11-1 p.m. at 321 N Pine St. Tasting and lunch open to all for \$5. Chili, cornbread, drinks and dessert. Everyone is welcome! All chili cooks are invite to enter your favorite chili, \$20 entry fee [www.woodlandparkseniors.com/](http://www.woodlandparkseniors.com/) or drop by the Senior Center for the entry form. Limit of 12 chili entries. Cash prizes will be given to the top 3 chili entries and the People's Choice. Tasting starts at 11 a.m. and awards at 12:45 p.m.
- 26 Senior Expo & Health Fair 10-2 p.m. presented by Teller County, Golden Bridge Network, and Community Partnership at Woodland Park Community Church 800 Valley View Dr. Lunch is provided, please RSVP 719-687-3877 or [wpkseniors@gmail.com](mailto:wpkseniors@gmail.com)

### COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

- 11 Crossroads Co-Parenting Seminar 9:30-12:30 p.m. Teller County court approved parenting and divorce class seminar. \$35 fee. Pre-registration required. FMI Michelle@cpteller.org.
- 12 Summer Fest 10-1 p.m. Family-friendly event for youth of all ages! Discover the Discovery Zone. Explore summer camps, sports, clubs, and endless fun. Learn about local services and resources. Games, prizes, and fun activities! Drop-off location for the Annual First Responders Food Drive! Non-perishable food items are being collected to replenish CP's Food Pantry. FMI Michelle@cpteller.org.
- Addiction Support Wednesdays 9-4 p.m. Face IT TOGETHER provides free personalized, nonjudgmental peer coaching for those impacted by addiction. 18 yr and older. Walk-ins welcome. FMI [www.wefacetogether.org](http://www.wefacetogether.org)
- Career Center Tuesdays & Thursdays 10-3 p.m. Pikes Peak Workforce Center helps with job searching, resume assistance, and unemployment applications. Walk-ins welcome or schedule appointments with George@cpteller.org.
- Family Café Monday through

### GUFFEY

- 12 Cholesterol Awareness and Management & Cardiovascular Disorders 10-noon held at SPCFPD.
- LIBRARY**
- 1 Walking, Talking Threads 1-3 p.m. Meets every first Tuesday of the month. Take a nice brisk walk around Guffey Twn and meet back at the library to crochets, knit and talk away.
- 5 The first Socrates Café will be held 11-12:30 p.m. Please come and join us as we exchange philosophical perspectives based on personal experiences. Everyone is welcome regardless of age or background. Socrates Cafes take place in many cities and towns around the world. The concept was started by Christopher

### continued from page 14

- Thursday 9-4 p.m. Enjoy coffee, Free Wi-Fi, Kid's Corner, and a space for parents and caregivers in our community to connect.
- Foundation Training Innovative Exercise Program Wednesdays 7-7:45 a.m. 45 minutes of activation, breathing and stretching. Feel stronger and more connected with your body after just one class. Bring your mat. FMI [beth-foundationtraining@gmail.com](mailto:beth-foundationtraining@gmail.com).
- Gardening and Landscaping Classes Mondays 5:30-7:30 p.m. Join the Teller County Master Gardeners for their annual series of six consecutive Monday evening classes for the community. Taught by local experts and tailored to local conditions! Sign up for one, or all six. Classes are \$10 each or \$50 for all 6 classes. FMI Marie Bartol 719-424-8061.
- 7 What Grows Up Here? 5:30-7:30 p.m.
- 14 Water Law and Rain Barrels, Small Fruit Production 5:30-7:30 p.m.
- 21 Season Extending Techniques and Greenhouses 5:30-7:30 p.m.
- 28 Fire Ignition Zones, Forest Insects and Diseases 5:30-7:30 p.m.
- GED Classes Mondays & Wednesdays 10-12 p.m. New students (min. age 16) may join GED classes after completing orientation and \$40 registration fee. FMI Katy@cpteller.org.
- Pearson VUE Testing Center Mondays 9:30-5:30 p.m. Schedule your certification or licensure exam at [www.pearsonvue.com](http://www.pearsonvue.com). Fees vary. FMI Katy@cpteller.org.
- Playgroup Tuesdays & Wednesdays 9:30-11 a.m. Learn, grow, play, and have fun! Join us to meet other children and caregivers, participate in fun and educational activities together, and nurture your child's development. Playgroup is for families with children 5 years and under and their caregivers, older siblings are welcome. Walk-ins welcome. FMI Aimee@cpteller.org.
- Telehealth Location Monday

- through Thursday 9-4 p.m. Comfortable private rooms and equipment available for any virtual appointment including health care, therapy visits, interviews, parent-teacher conferences, and more.
- Yoga with Leah Mondays 10-11 a.m. First come, first served, no late entry. Bring your own mat and props. All levels welcome. FMI Michelle@cpteller.org.
- Yoga with Leah Wednesdays 5-6 p.m. No Yoga April 30 First come, first served, no late entry. Bring your own mat and props. All levels welcome. FMI Michelle@cpteller.org. All programs at Community Partnership 701 Gold Hill Place unless otherwise noted. FMI 719-686-0705.

### LIBRARY

- 1 Woodland Park Book Club 10:30 a.m. Check our book clubs' page to see what we're reading next!
- 1 Make a Pet Rock! for Teens from 3-5 p.m. in the teen room.
- 2 Kids Craftmoon from 3-5 p.m. Join us for a craft and downtime to read, work on homework or projects!
- 2 Evening Adult Fiction Book Club 4:45 p.m.
- 2 Evening Tarot Club at 7 p.m. Join us for an afterhours edition of tarot club! April's theme is Vitality!
- 4 Coffee Chats 10 a.m. Join us for coffee and conversation. Meet new friends in Woodland Park!
- 5 Spill the Tea for Teens at 10 a.m. Join us for an hour of casual hanging out and donuts!
- 10 Reader's Circle Book Club 10:30 a.m. in the Large Meeting Room.
- 12 Student Art Show Awards Ceremony at 2 p.m. The gallery will have the art up for display until April 24th.
- 15 For the Love of Writing from 3-5 p.m. Come share in your love of writing with this club of those in love with the craft!
- 16 Reduce, Reuse, Recycle Art for Kids from 2-4 p.m. Celebrate the earth by recycling items into art!

## Mueller State Park

by Anna Miller

- All programs happen rain, snow or shine unless posted otherwise.
- 6 Pond Hike** 9-12 p.m. meet outside Visitor Center.
- 11 Hug A Tree – Basic survival** 2-3 p.m. at Visitor Center.
- 13 Junior Naturalist – Spring renewal**

- 1-2 p.m. Meet at Visitor Center. Register in advance.
- 18 Knots and Lashing** 2-3 p.m. at the Visitor Center.
- 26 Tracks on the Trails** 1-2 p.m. at the Visitor Center.
- FMI 719-687-2366.

## Fuel Reduction near Rampart Reservoir

by Joshua Cowden

The Pikes Peak Ranger District on the Pike-San Isabel National Forests & Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands will implement the Rampart Reservoir Fuels Reduction Project in support of the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service 10-year Wildfire Crisis Strategy. The project spans approximately 2,261 acres of National Forest System land near Rampart Reservoir in El Paso County, CO. Mechanical thinning is scheduled to begin in January 2024 and is expected to continue through the summer of 2026.

The goals of the project are to reduce the risk of high-severity wildfires, improve forest health, and protect watersheds and wildlife habitat by creating fuel breaks in strategic locations. Another important goal is to reduce mountain pine beetle and other insect infestations.

Mechanized thinning with heavy equipment will be used in this project. Thinning reduces the potential for fires to spread from the forest floor to treetops and then from tree to tree. Many of these areas will be treated with prescribed fire in the future to reduce surface fuels

and help prevent high-intensity wildfire. "This is a great opportunity to thin an extremely overcrowded area of our National Forest," said Pikes Peak District Ranger Carl Bauer. "Mechanical thinning, in conjunction with prescribed fire, are effective tools for protecting communities, infrastructure and vital natural resources from the threat of high-severity wildfire."

Larger logs will be hauled off site for lumber production while smaller logs will be masticated, a forest restoration technique that uses heavy machinery to chop, grind, and shred vegetation. The vegetation is then left on the forest floor to recycle nutrients as it composts. Expect additional truck traffic during log removal. For public safety, small areas of National Forest will not be accessible during operations.

FMI contact Contract Administrator Mason Knuthson, 719-636-1602, [mason.knuthson@usda.gov](mailto:mason.knuthson@usda.gov) or District Ranger Carl Bauer, 719-477-4202, [carl.bauer@usda.gov](mailto:carl.bauer@usda.gov). Follow the PSICC on Facebook and X for the latest information.

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# Teller County JOB FAIR

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# ATTENTION ALL FEDERAL EMPLOYEES: BEEN DOGE'D?! FIRED?! LAID OFF?! WE'RE HIRING!!!

• **GENEROUS COMMISSIONS!** • **SET YOUR OWN HOURS!**  
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