

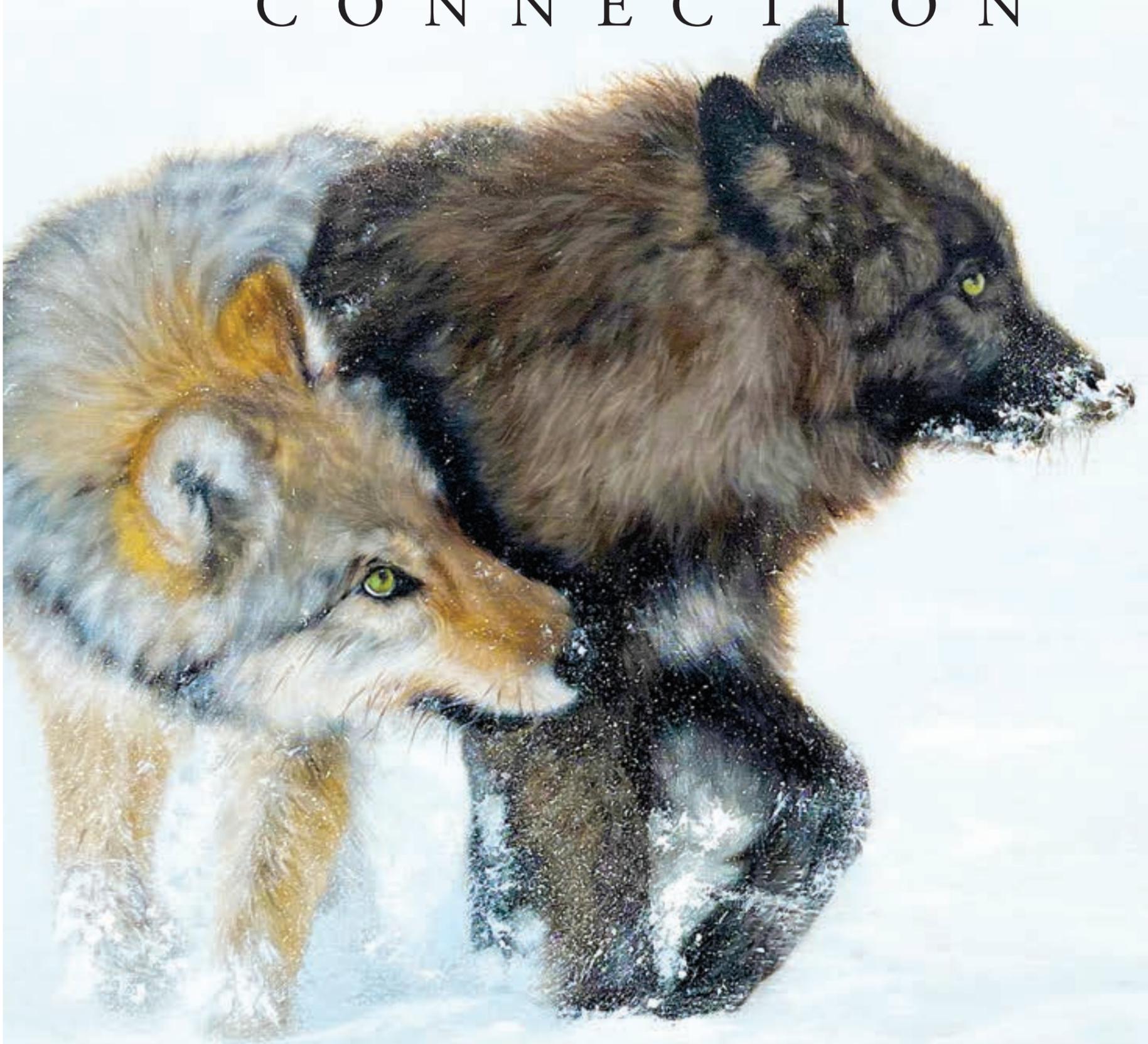
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— EXPLORE THE HISTORY OF OUR COMMUNITY ON PAGE 4 —

**Connection to the Past**



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## Prescription for Love

“It’s our responsibility to give all the information, and all the options, and guide you to make the best decision for you.”

Hope you are looking forward to a happy Valentine’s Day filled with love, puppy kisses, and kitten purrs! This year is starting off with a bang for me in that I was just informed I have been invited to be a clinician and speaker at this year’s Horse Expo at the National Western Event Center February 23–26th. If you love horses, and have never been, you have to go! It’s similar to the Stock Show, but it really showcases horses. I will be presenting on positive reinforcement horse training and how it is the key to the most magical relationship with horses you ever thought possible. We will be bringing some of the animals from the ResqRanch: Emblaze, who was rescued from the horse racing industry, and Cesar, the wild mustang. It will be a wonderful time to learn more about and get close to hundreds of the most beautiful horses in the state. Hope to see you there!

Switching gears to dogs, I thought I would share with you the story of one of my favorite patients, a beautiful giant schnauzer. I had at one point in my life considered getting a dog of this breed, and I think that is why she is one of my favorites. I get to share the love for her every time I see her. We have been doing acupuncture and laser on her for years to help with her arthritis, which at times when she is too active will make her sore and limp around some. Years of an active lifestyle can do that for any of us!

Over a year ago we noticed a swollen lymph node in one of her hind legs. The client and I discussed what, if anything, we should do about this. Most veterinary practices, when faced with something like this, will do either needle aspirates, or biopsies, of the lymph node, to determine if we are dealing with lymphoma or some other condition such as a draining infection. Since the beautiful girl was doing so great, happy, eating, playful, not vomiting or losing weight, and had good bloodwork, we decided to take a wait-and-see approach. I checked the area often, and sometimes it was



“That is why we say we believe in miracles, because we really do see them every day.”

smaller in size; yet again, she was doing just great otherwise, and we discussed it at every visit, and continued to make the decision to just monitor the situation.

Then a couple of months ago, the dog suddenly developed severely swollen lymph nodes in her neck. The client rushed her to another vet, closer to her home, who advised her the dog had lymphoma, and without going to see a veterinary oncologist, would certainly not survive longer than another 3 weeks. They placed her on prednisone and wished them well.

They then came in to see me. Now I never like to make predictions about how long an animal will live, because I firmly believe, if you put that out there, it can be a self-fulfilling prophecy. So I advised to place her on probiotics, cancer-fighting mushrooms, a Chinese herb specific for treating swollen lymph nodes, and a high-fiber intestinal support, since 70% of the immune system is lining the intestinal tract,

and see how it goes. Now, we have been weaning down her prednisone, her lymph nodes have shrunk and remain small, and the dog is doing just great. The dog has already outlived the prognosis she was originally given by more than double, and maybe even many more than that, if she really did have lymphoma brewing for the past year which was kept under control just with love, a healthy lifestyle, and acupuncture treatments.

The client and I discussed how frustrating it can be to make these kinds of decisions. No one wants to make the wrong choice and jeopardize the health and longevity of their pet. However, sometimes because you can do something, doesn’t mean you should. The pro’s and con’s, and possible consequences of each, need to be carefully discussed. I shared with this client that even I learned so much from Dr. Gurney, even though when I met him I had already been in practice for 17 years. He was the

one who taught me that dogs with lymphoma can live for many months and even years, without chemotherapy. After 50 years of veterinary practice, he definitely learned a thing or two, many of which are still not in textbooks today. There is no replacement for years of experience. I am so grateful every day for the years I got to work with and learn from him.

It is, of course, also best to keep up with all the latest advancements, but not all treatment plans work for all families, and it’s our responsibility to give clients all the information, and all the options, and guide you to make the best decision for you, so that at the end of the day there are no regrets. That is what we are here for. That is our job, to be your guide on this journey of pet ownership, in whatever way is the best for YOU. I just wanted to share this special message of hope with you. It never hurts to hope for the best (while preparing for other outcomes). That is why we say we believe in miracles, because we really do see them every day—miracles like our special schnauzer who has outlived her diagnosis, defied the odds and is doing great. She doesn’t know she is sick. As Doc Gurney would say, “Doing pretty good for a dead dog.” Yes, he was rough around the edges, but he still achieved astounding results with his combination of holistic treatments and giving people the ability to hope.

Wishing you or your loved ones never have to make tough decisions like these about your animals. But if you do, we are here to hug and cry with you through it all.

Thanks for your support, and for reading. Hope to see you at the Horse Expo! DrQ and the crew of Aspen Park Vet Hospital and the ResqRanch

Aspen Park Veterinary Hospital is located at 25871 Duran Ave. Conifer, CO 80433. You can call the hospital at (303) 838-3771 (838-DrQ1) or visit them at www.DrQandU.org.

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connection to **the past**

# VALENTINE'S DAY

Saints, Cards, and Candy

BY ELAINE HAYDEN | EMAHS

The tradition of showing affection on February 14th has grown from a humbling exchange of sentiments to a multi-billion-dollar industry. Memories from elementary school of creating a Valentine bag or box as a receptacle for Valentine cards from classmates is familiar to many. Choosing the appropriate card for the classroom sweetheart involved a thoughtful process!



Theories of the origins of Valentine's Day vary with references to pagan observances that coincidentally happened to occur during the month of February. Some have tied ancient customs of Lupercalia, as celebrated by the early Romans on February 15th, to current Valentine observances on February 14th. While Lupercalia does not evoke signs of affection, the festival honored shepherds, featuring priests of Lupercus roaming the streets while symbolically and randomly striking those who gathered with a strap. Women in attendance believed that their fertility was enhanced if they were struck by the priests on this festival day.

According to the *Lincoln Library of Essential Information*, as customary in medieval England and France, young people would gather on February 13th, when "Names were drawn by chance from a receptacle, the person whose name was on a slip [of paper] becoming the sweetheart for the holder for the ensuing year." Other scholars accept the theory that dating back to the 3rd Century (270 A.D.), St. Valentine, a Roman priest as identified in the book, *Lives of the Saints*, defied Emperor Claudius II by performing nuptials in clandestine settings. Claudius forbade marriage, as he believed that caring for a wife would distract his soldiers from their military duties. St. Valentine was arrested, sentenced to death, beaten and beheaded on February 14, 270 A.D. So much for a fanciful and loving day of acknowledgment! Over two hundred years later, in 496 A.D., according to Elle Andra-Warner, the Feast Day of Saint Valentine was established on February 14th by Pope Gelasius I in honor of the beheaded Saint Valentine and his pursuits. Many years later, in the 19th century, February 14th had become an accepted date to commemorate love.

Over time, the significance of the Valentine's Day observance has taken on a different quality. Poems became the accepted recognition of affection. Whether originally penned or borrowed from noted poets, the recipient of a poem felt adored and appreciated. So popular were written sentiments that by 1800 cards were being mass produced, with Esther Howland of Boston, Massachusetts, holding the honor of producing the first commercial Valentine cards. The daughter of an established bookshop owner, Esther established the New England Valentine Company in 1850 and is considered by Valentine aficionados as being the "Mother of American Valentines," as reported by Andra-Warner. Others caught the love bug and began producing greeting cards for a willing public market. According to the website [corporate.hallmark.com](http://corporate.hallmark.com), the Hallmark Card Company, established by Joyce

Clyde Hall and his brother, Rollie, experienced humble beginnings in Nebraska in the early 1900s. By 1928, the Hall brothers named their greeting card company Hallmark. Descendants of the original Hall family continue to serve on the Board of Directors and have elevated the company onto a tier of marketing that generates an estimated multi-billion-dollar revenue on Valentine cards alone.

According to Kae Lani Palmisano, the tradition of boxed chocolates was introduced by Richard and George Cadbury in 1861 when they brainstormed a marketing concept that led to the production of heart-shaped boxes, filled with chocolate morsels as a symbol of affection. Cadbury chocolate, reportedly Queen Victoria's chocolate of choice, continues to enjoy global popularity, not only with Valentine chocolates but with the iconic chocolate Easter eggs and bunnies as well. The tradition of gifting candy at Valentine's Day is not limited to chocolates. As reported by Erin Blakemore, the tiny, heart-shaped candies, now known as "conversation hearts," were the creative invention of the New England Confectionery Company (NECCO) in 1902. The company fabricated a process of printing simple sentiments on candies that conveyed loving words. Over time, the candies became smaller and the sentiments became shorter, as recognized today with words such as "Kiss Me" or "Be Mine." Since the original NECCO candies began production, this type of candy has been copied many times over with more modern sentiments than the original versions offered; however, these candies remain a tradition and mainstay as an iconic Valentine gift, especially among children.

The Valentine's Day offering of personally composed poems and simple handcrafted cards has taken a back seat to chocolate, red roses, diamond bracelets, and lingerie as tokens of love. It is estimated that revenues from all forms of traditional Valentine gifts have reached the 20B dollar mark, a far cry from the days of an exchange of hand-written poems and simple cards.

The examples of vintage Valentine cards found in the EMAHS archives and dated c. 1916-19 reveal an overwhelming number of cards represented in the collection that were exchanged between girl friends and between girls and their mothers. This may be owing to the fact that women were more apt to save cards as mementos than were male recipients of Valentine cards. Regardless, images of hearts, cupids, and lace were, and continue to be, symbols associated with love and affection on the Valentine's Day observances to which we have become accustomed in modern time.

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Examples of vintage Valentine cards found in the Evergreen Mountain Area Historical Society's archives and dated c. 1916-19



Evergreen Mountain Area Historical Society (EMAHS) is a non-profit organization whose purpose is to protect, preserve and promote the history of Jefferson County. EMAHS members contribute their time and financial support to collect, preserve and interpret local history, ensuring a legacy that enriches the lives of present and future generations. **Contact EMAHS at 303 670- 0784 or visit their website at EMAHS.org.**

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## I'm Just Sayin'...

Valentine's Day

Jeff Smith owner/publisher

**V**alentine's Day! Or as I like to call it, Hallmark Day. Just kidding. It's a nice day to show your loved ones that you care—you should do that every day, of course. Read the article on page 4 that gives some history of the day and how it came to be a big celebration.

I found the Chicago Hot Dog Truck. She is laying low for the winter and looking for a new location to reopen in the spring, possibly on Highway 74. I'll keep you posted if you're a fan.

Once again my neighbors came to the rescue when we needed them. When one neighbor tried to clear my drive after the 13" snow, he got stuck and another neighbor brought his John Deere tractor over and got the truck out and then proceeded to clear my drive. It's good to know there are still many good people out there!

**It's not too late!** To put together a marketing plan and budget for 2023. I would guess that about 80% of the advertisers I work with have no idea month to month what they will do to promote their business. I hear a lot of, "The winter months are slow, so I think I will wait to advertise." Promoting your business when the season is slower is one way of increasing

business during those times. You should have a calendar showing the trends in your business and when to spend the most on advertising. This doesn't mean spend it all on print; there are other forms of promoting. But you will never get the benefits without a plan and a budget. Let me know if you need some assistance. I've been doing this for a long time and maybe can help.

Nuggets—Finally, they are playing up to their potential. If they can maintain, they should be real contenders. Look out for the Grizzlies, who are right on the Nuggets' tail.

Avalanche – Not doing so well right now. I hope they haven't slipped too far behind. Mackinnon may be back this week and Landeskog probably after the break. Hope it's not too late. Their last games could help them get to the playoffs, and then I think they will be back to the Avalanche we know.

Quackadilly says:  
 "Where there is love there is life."  
 —Mahatma Gandhi



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next issue - MARCH 2023

## March theme: Pets

deadline for ads and articles is February 16

Stories are contributed by local residents to inspire healthy living, happy families, and community giving. Deadline is the 16th of each month. 600 words. Email your story to [jeff@mtncconnection.com](mailto:jeff@mtncconnection.com). Stories accepted on a space-available basis only. Advertisements are paid advertising. Business Profiles cost \$329, limited one per year. From the Experts educational columns cost \$299/month, minimum three-month commitment. Call 515-326-2672.

— KELLER WILLIAMS FOOTHILLS REALTY —

# LET THE LOVE FLOW

BY LISA PLUMMER SMITH



Love is in the air! What a wonderful emotion love is. Please take a moment to show your love. Be present, listen, touch, smile and share. Write a kind note, do a favor or simply hug someone unexpectedly. Relationships are an opportunity to expand, let go of that which no longer serves us and allow ourselves to be vulnerable.

We each can experience love every single day. Let us train our minds to seek love and return love. There are so many types of love—each no less powerful than the others. Love has the power to heal, the power to strengthen, the power to save, the power to nurture and the power to forgive. The effect of love on our bodies and our minds is limitless if we only allow ourselves to experience it.

Romantic love steals the spotlight in February, but let's not forget all the other forms of love that surround us.

Love of self is so important and many times the least-practiced form. Loving ourselves and putting our own self first is perhaps the highest form of love. Setting goals and rewarding ourselves, learning something new, making good decisions and planning for the future are all forms of self-love. Practicing a hobby, savoring a moment we find enjoyable or detailing a treasured vehicle can all be forms of self-love too; mindset is everything! Engaging in positive self-talk and setting personal boundaries protect our mental and physical health and result in more happiness.

The love of a child or family is different than any other form of love. It is akin to having a piece of your own heart live on in another human being. When worry or anxiety for their well-being enter your mind, try to reset and think of happy moments spent with them. The innocent joy of a toddler, the rare hug from a teenager or making a relative smile has the power to brighten the day. Intentionally pause and try to show love in the

moment. Listen to your loved ones and ensure they know their voice is heard in your life. Empower them with love and empathy, and you will reap many benefits.

The love of a friend: The brutally honest connection you share with your closest peers and the way you lean on each other is like no other relationship. Take the time to ask about your friends' dreams and their sorrows. Remind them of their strengths and unique talents or describe how they inspire you. Be supportive. Actively listen (not just wait for your chance to talk) and give them your undivided attention. You just never know when a friend might need a pick-me-up. Reach out and make a phone call, or send a text just to let them know they're in your thoughts.

The love for community: The way you carry and communicate yourself in your daily life and the way you treat others around you truly matter. The ripple effect of giving smiles, sharing positivity or initiating small talk is so powerful. In moments of conflict or misunderstanding, try to give grace instead of reacting with harsh words. We are all human and doing the best we can in any given moment. Tip generously, be kind and drive courteously. How you act towards strangers can bring you joy as you sprinkle kindness and make a difference in the lives of others.

Love for animals: The way you cherish your fur baby and the way they reciprocate love each day can be a huge source of joy. That wag, swish or flick of a tail, a nuzzle or bump or a soft muzzle. The excitement at feeding time. These are all ways our animals show affection. The therapeutic steps we take to care for a pet, and the way our mind focuses on the moment and releases stress is a gift. Be fully present when you greet and exercise your pet. These are gifts of love we can receive daily if we choose. Practice shifting focus to enjoy the benefits of spending time with animals.

The power of love can effect change in the world. When facing challenges in life we can dwell on the negative, or instead choose to live with positivity and gratitude. A friend recently told me they visualize sending love out on the wings of owls to people facing challenges in their life. The recipient may receive an unknown feeling of goodwill, and their spirits can unexpectedly lift—many times with good results. When in doubt, lean on love. If nothing else, it will help shift your perspective by focusing on the positive. Be the light and spread the joy—you will be surprised at how good it feels.



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from the experts

— LOAN ZONE MORTGAGE —

## Love These Mortgage Options!

BY WANDA NORGE, MORTGAGE CONSULTANT

There are many mortgage options available, even with the higher rates. One of these could help you, a family member, friend or co-worker, or even a parent! We work with many lenders to offer multiple loan products. It's like having a personal shopper who works on your behalf.

### Is your mortgage payment becoming too much to handle?

An excellent option for borrowers over the age of 62 could be a reverse mortgage. It can eliminate the current mortgage payment totally and provide cash disbursements depending on borrower age and equity available. You continue to own the home with full title and control of the property. No repayment is required until the last borrower no longer lives in the home. We can work with your financial planner to incorporate into your overall estate plan.

If you are going through a "gray divorce," this could be used to complete an equity buy-out for one spouse to use for down payment funds toward a new purchase. Both parties could potentially have no on-going payment obligation.

**Doctor, Nurse, or Pharmacy Loan**  
Professionals in the medical field usually have student loan debt making it difficult to qualify for a new home. The "Doctor Loan" has low-down-payment options and flexible guidelines. Ask me if your medical, dental or veterinary profession is of the valid license type for this loan.

**Self-Employed**  
Self-employed business owners, plumbers, electricians, painters, therapists, stylists,

servers, etc. can have their own challenges when trying to qualify for a mortgage. Typically, at least a two-year job history is needed, but some lenders will allow one year, depending on previous time in related jobs. We may be able to use a specialty loan that fits your situation.

**Asset-Based Loans**  
Borrowers who have a lot of liquid assets, retirement accounts, and stocks but are not able to prove regular income streams could potentially use this. A formula is used to calculate a monthly income stream from the amount of assets based on asset type. This loan can also be useful with a divorce or equity buyout situation.

**Bank Statement Loans**  
Income deposits from business and/or personal bank statements could be used for qualifying instead of tax returns.

**Delayed Financing**  
Buy with cash for fast closings and replenish your funds within 30-45 days of purchasing.

**Renting?**  
Don't waste money on high rent when you can afford to buy. Low-credit-score and low-down-payment options are available.

**Investment Properties**  
Traditional income and employment qualifying can be avoided if using a Debt-Service Coverage Ratio (DSCR) loan, making it more streamlined.

Let's discuss your story and see what may be available to finance a new home, second home or rental, or help with a current high debt or divorce situation. Call or email today!

Wanda Norge, Certified Mortgage Advisor (CMA), Certified Divorce Lending Professional (CDLP), National Association of Divorce Professionals (NADP), Loan Zone Mortgage, LLC (NMLS: 1870102), 20 yrs exp, 25 yr Evergreen Resident, Phone: 303-419-6568, loans@wandanorge.com, www.wandanorge.com (NMLS: 280102).

Did you miss something in a past issue of *Your Mountain Connection*? Want to revisit an article or featured artist? Not a problem! You can now download full versions of our past issues on our web site at: [yourmtnconnection.com](http://yourmtnconnection.com). We will have the current issue and four back issues available. Enjoy...again!

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— EVERGREEN ANIMAL HOSPITAL —

## The Month of Hearts

BY DR. JULIANNE SUAREZ, DVM

It's that time of year when we are surrounded by hearts, flowers, and chocolate. Ever get tired of the Hallmark cards and romance? Well, here is a heart-related topic that you may prefer—cardiac disease in pets!

Certain dog breeds are genetically predisposed to heart disease. These breeds include King Charles Cavalier spaniels, Chihuahuas, boxers, miniature and toy poodles, dachshunds, and great Danes. The large breeds are more likely to develop a specific type of disease called dilated cardiomyopathy. The small breeds typically will develop mitral valve disease.

Based on academic research, the FDA has established that grain-free food can cause dilated cardiomyopathy in dogs. Grain-free food lacks amino acids essential for heart health. Most veterinary-formulated, high-quality dog food now contains healthy grains such as oats, barley, or brown rice. A common misconception is that dogs can have allergies to grains. The majority of allergies in dogs are related to the protein type in food, not grains. If there is a grain allergy, it is typically



“For [pets] that are at higher risk of heart disease, be sure to visit your veterinarian for annual checkups.”

in response to one specific type, not all grains. The risk of grain-free related heart disease has not been confirmed in cats.

Dental disease in dogs and cats increases the risk of heart disease. The bacteria hidden in dental plaque and calculus can penetrate the gums and enter the bloodstream. If it travels in the blood to the heart, this bacteria can cause heart disease.

Luckily, we have ways to minimize the risk of heart disease. For cats, or dog breeds that are at higher risk of heart disease, be sure to visit your veterinarian for annual checkups. Keep your dog on a grain-INCLUSIVE diet. Be sure to follow your veterinarian's recommendations to maintain dental health.

Contact your veterinarian at Evergreen Animal Hospital for more information about canine and feline heart disease!

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Evergreen Animal Hospital is open Monday–Friday, 7am–6pm, Saturday, 8am–2pm, Sunday, closed. Feel free to contact us any time, visit our website, [EvergreenVet.com](http://EvergreenVet.com), or stop in for a tour of our hospital and to meet our highly trained and dedicated staff.

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from the experts

— THE SASQUATCH OUTPOST —  
The Sasquatch Chronicles

BY JIM MYERS

We just finished hosting our largest local event ever down in Golden. The event was called "Sasquatch, the Native Truth," and the goal was to bring in some speakers who can speak to the Native American beliefs and traditions regarding Sasquatch.

Our speakers were David Paulides, Harvey Pratt, and Tim Anderson. For many people, Dave needs no introduction. He is the author of the Missing 411 series of books, and he is probably the country's leading authority on missing people. Harvey Pratt is a Cheyenne Arapaho chief, Marine Corps veteran, and a 40-year veteran of the Oklahoma Bureau of Investigation. Tim Anderson is Navajo, but he lives on the Jicarilla Apache reservation in Dulce, NM. He's a retired tribal policeman, and he's been researching Sasquatch for 16 years.



"Each tribe has their own name for them, such as 'Chiye Tanka' for the Lakota Sioux, and 'Ye Itso' with the Navajo."

We held the event at the American Mountaineering Center in Golden (formerly Golden High School), and we packed the house with 350 people. Our attendees came from all across the U.S., and many of them are big fans of David and follow all of his YouTube shows. I felt really good about the event overall, and I hope our crowd learned a lot from our speakers.

Here are a few take-aways that I gleaned from the conference: There are well over 500 recognized First Nations tribes in the U.S. I asked Harvey if he knows of ANY tribe that does not believe in the Forest People, and he said "No." That fact alone, in my opinion, is one of the strongest pieces of evidence that Sasquatch exists. I cannot imagine how tribes from across the U.S. that speak different languages, and have very different customs and traditions, ALL share the same belief in the beings that we call Bigfoot. Of course, each tribe has their own name for them, such as "Chiye Tanka" for the Lakota Sioux, and "Ye Itso" with the Navajo. Another interesting fact is that some tribes will not speak about Sasquatch, believing that it will bring bad luck or somehow provoke the Sasquatch people. Other tribes do not have this belief at all, and are very willing to talk about their encounters with them.

Harvey Pratt worked with David on two books, *The Hoopa Project* and *Tribal Bigfoot*. Harvey is perhaps the most recognized forensic artist in the country, and for these two books he sat with dozens of eye-witnesses in the Hoopa Tribe of Washington and sketched what they described from their encounters. One thing stands out above all others when you look at Harvey's sketches: they look like humans—not apes, and not descendants of Gigantopithecus. Not only do they look like humans, but I know from my own research and that of dozens of other researchers that they have their own language, their own culture, and they are far more intelligent than we tend to believe.

Many Native Americans believe that Sasquatch also possesses supernatural abilities, and that they, in many ways, are like their own medicine men. They can speak to you without using audible words, they can heal illnesses, and they can appear and disappear seemingly at will. I personally know of three cases where individuals believe they were healed of very serious conditions by a Sasquatch.

I'm sure many of you who read this article are thinking, "Give me a break." I'm not here to convince anyone of anything. All I know is that I have experienced many things that I just cannot explain. Take it for what it's worth, but I would say to the skeptics out there: there's more than enough evidence to prove their existence, if you will only open your mind.

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Rinse and Repeat

BY DUANE REDFORD

"Knowing and identifying the insects that are prevalent and the insects that are present is just the start of the game."

"Hey, the minute you changed my fly out, I started catching fish!" I hear that quite regularly during the season, and most folks think there's some magic involved. No magic is needed if one has a solid grasp on insects and their cycles (hatch) coupled with how fish feed on them during a hatch. Switching from a midge larva to a midge pupa at the proper time is not that difficult once you grasp the concepts.



View the river as a system

I try to view the river as a system. In this way, I can attack it systematically according to what the system affords me on a particular day. Knowing and identifying the insects that are prevalent and the insects that are present is just the start of the game. That's like throwing out the first pitch. Many factors follow. Couple the insect info with how the fish feed on each stage of a particular bug and where within the system they will feed on the bug completes the puzzle.

For instance, let's say I have been enjoying a fine day on the freestone catching fish on mayfly dries. As time goes on, as you all know, the fish feeding actively in the faster glides and seams slowly cease to feed. This particular hatch is not over! Now is the time to fish the last stage with spent patterns in the softer seams and eddies. Grub through your fly selection and find the proper mayfly spent pattern and head to the nearest eddy or slack water. You should find a handful of fish slowly working in the foam sucking in all the dead

mayflies. You'll often find bigger dominant fish feeding in this location and manner. But wait, there's more! So, you have the insect figured out, the location of the feeding fish, and how they are feeding, but there's another component (or a dozen) that comes into play. Let's say you are convinced the fish are feeding on the midge pupa because you're seeing many adult midges with only a few fish actually breaking the surface. You're running a midge larva and a midge pupa in your rig, that you're sure is dialed in to size and color. Typically, in this situation, you have the majority of the system figured out, but the one missing link is that you are not presenting the flies at the proper speed or depths. You may have the proper depth but wrong speed (usually too fast) or the proper speed but wrong depth.

Experience tells me that in this scenario I am usually fishing under the fish and not presenting the pupa at the proper depth. Easy fix. If you're running the pupa at the bottom of your nymph rig, move it up to the space above. You can also change the depth of your entire rig by moving the indicator. As always, rinse and repeat for best results....  
Fear No Water!

Duane Redford is a Colorado fly fishing guide, author, national speaker, and signature fly tyer for Montana Fly Company. duaneredford.com @ flyfishersplaybook

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— EVERGREEN HEALTH INSURANCE —  
Health Insurance Trends in 2023

BY ED REGALADO



"Have a conversation with your pharmacist to see if they can recommend a more affordable way to buy your prescriptions."

Last year's omnibus spending bill included \$14.1 billion for SSA (Social Security Administration) to help solve their customer service crisis. If you have tried to call your Social Security office, you know what I mean. It is reported that one out of five calls are never answered, and waiting periods have more than doubled.

Staffing shortages are at a 25-year low, and this is compounded by the fact that the number of new beneficiaries has increased by 22%, go Boomers! Those making online applications for Medicare Part B have experienced increased delays in getting their applications approved. Processing time has increased from a few weeks to up to 90 days. I can attest that many of my clients have experienced this long delay. A recent client said it took 6 weeks to get his Medicare card. I would recommend that if you are not collecting Social Security, you apply as early as possible at www.ssa.gov/Medicare. You can do so 3-4 months before your birth month or desired effective date.

Other Medicare news for 2023 includes additional benefits on most Advantage plans. Dental/vision and hearing benefits have increased on most plans. On the negative side, PDP, or prescription drug plans, have increased in price.

There is also a trend for more folks to sign up for a Medicare Supplement Plan N over a Plan G. The premium for a Plan G is generally \$25-\$40 more per month compared to a Plan N. The biggest difference is that you pay a \$20 copay for doctor visits and \$50 for an emergency room visit. You are also subject to a 15% excess charge for doctors and hospitals

that don't accept the Medicare reimbursement rates. There are other considerations which I would be happy to explain, but in general, Plan N rates should be more stable and not increase as much as Plan G rates.

What has happened on the under-65-year-old side regarding individual insurance? Well, those who had a Bright Health Plan have had to switch to another carrier, and the feedback I received from many clients is that the benefits on Bright Health were better than those offered by their new carrier, plus the premiums are higher. In addition, individual deductibles and out-of-pocket maximums have increased and drug coverage has been reduced. It is fortunate that other pharmacy options are available without using your insurance. I would suggest having a conversation with your pharmacist to see if they can recommend a more affordable way to buy your prescriptions.

Open enrollment is now closed for both Medicare and Individual plans for 2023. There are Special Enrollment Periods such as a major life change or move outside of your service area. But for the most part, what you have now will be in effect until the end of the year.

Should you have any questions, please give us a call. Our services are free, and we are happy to answer any question you may have.

Ed and Dana Regalado are certified brokers. Their office is located at 27945 Meadow Drive, Evergreen, CO 80439. They can be reached at 303-674-1945 or send an email to: edregalado46@gmail.com.

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# FIGHT INFLATION AND SAVE BIG

Benefits of Investing in a Solar Panel System for Your Home

BY OZGE LAWRENCE, VALORROOFANDSOLAR.COM



Going solar is one of the best investments homeowners can make to combat rising energy costs and inflation. Solar energy is a clean, renewable resource that can provide significant savings on electricity bills and reduce our dependence on fossil fuels.

As energy costs continue to rise, solar power is becoming an increasingly attractive option for homeowners who are looking for ways to take control of their energy bills. Xcel has requested another \$312 million hike in rates for 2023 after several recently approved hikes. This is on top of a \$188 million rate request to upgrade national gas infrastructure. The Public Utilities Commission approved a \$500 million rate hike in June to cover the cost of gas in Colorado during the prior winter cold snap. You may remember some electric bills in Texas rose 200-500% in a single month because of the very cold weather. Our Colorado prices are going to continue to rise because costs for gas, windmills and monster utility-owned solar farms will continue to rise.

### SOLAR VS INFLATION

One of the main benefits of going solar is the cost savings on electricity bills. Solar panels generate electricity from the sun, which is a free and abundant resource. Once a solar panel system is installed, homeowners can expect to see a reduction in their electricity bills, as they will be using less electricity from the grid. As energy costs continue to rise, the savings from solar power will only become more significant.

Inflation, the general increase in prices and fall in the purchasing value of money over time, is a constant concern for homeowners. As energy costs rise due to inflation, solar power can help to mitigate this impact. By generating their own electricity, homeowners can reduce their dependence on the grid and the energy

costs associated with it. This means that even as energy costs continue to rise, homeowners with solar power will be able to keep their energy bills under control. As we have seen in Colorado, electric rates have been rising by double digits every year.

### INCREASE YOUR HOME'S VALUE

Another benefit of going solar is that it can increase the value of your home. Homes with solar panel systems are becoming increasingly desirable to buyers, as they offer the potential for significant cost savings on electricity bills. This can make a home more valuable and easier to sell, as buyers will see the value in the solar panel system. Given roughly equal homes on the market, wouldn't you rather buy the one with no, or an extremely low, electric bill? Homes with solar are worth \$5,000-\$7,000 more per KW of installed solar.

### GOING GREEN

Going solar also helps to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels. Solar energy is a clean and renewable resource, which means it does not produce harmful emissions or contribute to climate change. By using solar power, homeowners can reduce their carbon footprint and do their part to help combat climate change.

### TAX INCENTIVES

Many states and local governments offer financial incentives for homeowners who install solar panels, such as tax credits and rebates. These incentives can help to offset the cost of the solar panel system, making it more affordable for homeowners. Additionally, with the advancements in technology, solar panel systems have become more efficient and more affordable, making it a more viable option for homeowners to consider. Currently the Federal Government is offering a 30% tax rebate on every solar system. They are essentially paying for 30% of your system and therefore saving you even more on electricity.

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## The Dance

BY GARTH BROOKS  
WRITTEN BY TONY ARATA

Looking back  
On the memory of  
The dance we shared  
'Neath the stars above

For a moment  
All the world was right  
But how could I have known  
That you'd ever say goodbye

And now I'm glad I didn't know  
The way it all would end  
The way it all would go  
Our lives are better left to chance  
I could have missed the pain  
But I'd have had to miss the dance

Holding you  
I held everything  
For a moment  
Wasn't I the king?

If I'd only known  
How the king would fall  
Hey, who's to say  
You know I might have changed it all

And now I'm glad I didn't know  
The way it all would end  
The way it all would go  
Our lives are better left to chance  
I could have missed the pain  
But I'd have had to miss the dance

It's my life, it's better left to chance  
I could have missed the pain  
But I'd have had to miss the (dance)

Written by: Tony Arata  
Album: Double Live 25th Anniversary Edition • Released: 1998  
Lyrics provided by Musixmatch

## Harvest Moon

BY NEIL YOUNG

Come a little bit closer  
Hear what I have to say

Just like children sleepin'  
We could dream this night away

But there's a full moon risin'  
Let's go dancin' in the light

We know where the music's playin'  
Let's go out and feel the night

Because I'm still in love with you  
I wanna see you dance again  
Because I'm still in love with you  
On this harvest moon

When we were strangers  
I watched you from afar

When we were lovers  
I loved you with all my heart

But now it's gettin' late  
And the moon is climbin' high

I want to celebrate  
See it shinin' in your eye

Because I'm still in love with you  
I wanna see you dance again  
Because I'm still in love with you  
On this harvest moon

Because I'm still in love with you  
I wanna see you dance again  
Because I'm still in love with you  
On this harvest moon

Written by: Neil Young  
Album: Harvest Moon  
Released: 1992  
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— ON THE MOVE FITNESS —

## Basic Strength Training Principles

BY DEB BROWN, NSCA CPT, CWC, CNS

One of my favorite parts of the job is to educate people regarding the proper way to train AS they are working out. Invariably, most people are surprised to learn that there is more to it than just "lifting weights." If you are looking to start strength training, or even if you have been doing it awhile, here are some important things you need to know:



*"There is much more to strength training than one might think."*

**Principles of overload, progression, rest, and proper program design.** There is a definite way to do strength training correctly. At its simplest, the premise of strength training is that you consistently lift more weight than normal. This breaks down your muscle fibers. As they repair themselves, the muscle fibers become stronger, so as to be able to lift the heavier weight. You must do it just right: use too light of a weight and there will be no adaptation; use too heavy of a weight and you set yourself up for injury. Proper progression means that you methodically increase the weight and/or intensity. Rest and proper fueling are of paramount importance. If you are not providing your body with the correct amount of either, your training will suffer and progress will be slow. Having a proper program design that works your entire body in a balanced way is key.

**Correct form and technique are exceedingly important!** There are hundreds of strength training exercises. That means there are hundreds of ways for you to injure yourself if you are not performing them correctly. Fitness classes and yoga studios that throw in "strength training" with light weights are often not taught by people who have a proper depth of knowledge and/or certification to do this. The result can be at the least ineffectual, and at the worst downright dangerous. If you think you

are going to build lean muscle and get stronger by using a pair of three-pound weights for months on end, think again!

**No substitutes.** There is no substitute for strength training. Consistency is a major requirement for success. Hiking, biking, skiing, and snowshoeing are excellent physical activities, but none can replace the benefits you will get with a properly designed strength training program. Conversely, all of these outdoor activities can be greatly enhanced by a regular training program.

**Ladies, you should lift as well.** Yes, muscle weighs more than fat, but unless you are a professional weight lifter, you will not put on enough muscle to increase your body weight. You will however, burn serious calories and boost your basal metabolic rate. Your body will become leaner and you will feel stronger, more energetic, and less stressed, and you will sleep better. You will help ward off chronic diseases, including osteoporosis. And through torching extra calories, you may lose weight as well!

In summary, there is much more to strength training than one might think. Get even one part of it wrong and you will not see results. Get it all dialed in and the results will be both rewarding and addictive! Contact us at 303-816-1426 or [www.onthemovefitness.com](http://www.onthemovefitness.com) for more info.

Deb Brown is an NSCA Certified Personal Trainer and the owner of the On The Move Fitness Personal Training Studio located in Conifer.

For more information about how we can help you get in shape for winter fun, please visit [www.onthemovefitness.com](http://www.onthemovefitness.com) or call us at 303-816-1426.

## A Skeptic's View

Green Tea

BY GARY LOFFLER

*"Magic silver bullet miracle green tea weight loss pill that burns fat while you sleep and prevents cancer."*

In the interest of full disclosure, I drink green tea every day. Actually, I drink a homemade tea every day. Actually, I drink a homemade regular bulk green tea and roasted rice. However, this is not for the perceived health benefits but rather because I enjoy it more than plain water. Parts of this article may make green tea look dangerous to drink. However, providing you do not consume gallons a day and you do not have a history of liver problems, you probably are okay to drink green tea. Also, this article leans towards what might be considered medical advice; it is not. As always, discuss with your doctor before taking any supplement or dietary aid.

Let's break green tea down into three general types. The first is the simple green tea that you make with hot water and green tea leaves at home. Typically there will be no embellishment on the package. The second is a green tea drink that purports to have health benefits. This is likely to have other ingredients besides the tea itself, but not too many. Many will have ginseng, possibly more caffeine or taurine, and often some sweetener. Lastly there is green tea extract. This may be a concentrated powder containing the "good stuff" in plain green tea.

As we are now more than a month into the new year, and many people's New Year's Resolutions include weight loss, and many holistic websites promote green tea supplements, let's take a look at its benefits. Green tea has been around for a long time. Written records in China go back a couple thousand years and generally attribute its introduction to Shennong, a mythical ruler and healer. During this two-millennia history there have been many changes to the way the plants (*Camellia sinensis*) are grown, harvested, prepared for use, and brewed. There are also many varieties of *Camellia sinensis*, both in China and other parts of the world. Quality of



*"The general consensus among health care professionals and scientists seems to be that while they don't rule out some small benefits, they don't definitively say there are health benefits."*

the tea depends on which of the three to four yearly harvests (called blusches) the leaves are from. These different blusches have different tastes, with the first blush considered the best and therefore most expensive. The leaves may be processed in a number of different ways, including sun drying, charcoal firing, or even pan drying. The price of the tea varies dramatically based on the quality of the tea and type of processing.

In terms of green tea helping with your diet and weight loss, there are no studies showing conclusively that it has any real health or weight loss benefits or detriments. There are dozens of studies that show small benefits, but these lack consistency. Granted, part of this inconsistency could be the fact that both green tea and especially "green tea extract" are not clearly defined substances. There is no governing body that oversees the production

and verification of green tea, or any other supplement for that matter. However, the general consensus among healthcare professionals and scientists seems to be that while they don't rule out some small benefits, they don't definitively say there are health benefits. They do warn of the possibility of liver damage from too much of one component of tea, EGCG (epigallocatechin gallate). A 2020 review by the Cochrane Collaboration warned that green tea extract could cause GI upset, higher liver enzymes, and occasionally insomnia. Note that the last warning is specifically green tea extract and not green tea on its own.

The FDA does not regulate what is in supplements, though they can monitor the ingredients after the fact. At any given time there are dozens of investigations of different manufacturers and websites that are marketing and selling items like green tea extract as

medicines. Unfortunately there are hundreds of sites offering unregulated products backed by dubious claims. Of course, there is a very real possibility that there is no EGCG in the extract you are buying because, again, supplements are not regulated and the ingredients listed on the package are not verified by the FDA.

The FDA is not the only organization concerned about this. From the Consumer Reports website:

"Most of the supplements contained multiple ingredients, so the researchers weren't always able to pinpoint the harmful substance. In addition, dietary supplements are sometimes illegally spiked with prescription drugs or other ingredients that aren't included on the label, making it even harder to identify the culprit," says Marvin M. Lipman, M.D., Consumer Reports' chief medical adviser.

Despite these dire warnings, green tea itself is not the culprit here. There are health benefits to drinking a nice cup of tea over most other beverages. True, most of that advantage comes from not drinking something with added sugar, chemicals, or alcohol, but still it is helpful. Once you move into the sweetened green tea drinks, any advantage largely disappears, and venturing into the realm of green tea extracts tends to make health experts nervous. This kind of sliding safety scale is not unusual. Salt, for example, is needed to maintain good health; but once you get past the Recommended Daily Value, the health benefits go away and health risks increase.

So, if you are looking at green tea to lose weight, substituting a cup of plain green tea for a soda would be a good consideration. Most commercial green tea drinks contain some form of sweetener, so it is best to just heat up some water and pour it over some tea leaves and enjoy.

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## Penny for your thoughts



“Chances are great that this secretive animal will never be seen. They dwell deep in the forest, far from roads or fields.”

## Juba and the Pine Marten

BY PENNY RANDELL



Those who ignore the colder weather and hike our beloved mountain area could be rewarded by spotting the rare pine marten that dwells in the forests. Juba at the helm, researching this critter that is as rare as it is interesting.

a significant snowfall. In short, a pine marten maintains a terrain that is difficult to access. They are readily attracted to wildlife hides and guesthouse gardens where food can be found. This is a favored species and has been assigned legal protection since 1988. It is illegal to injure, kill, or capture this animal. It is also illegal to damage, destroy, or obstruct access to their den sites. This critter was once widespread throughout Britain, but persecution and deforestation during the 19th century forced them into serious decline. They were re-introduced into Scotland and are protected by the Scots to this very day.

Chances are good that discovery of this animal means confusion between it and the least weasel. Pine martens and least weasels are similar in body structure. Nevertheless, they do have differences that enable one to tell the difference. This weasel is much smaller than a pine marten and can only measure up to 10 inches compared to 20.5 inches for the marten. The pine marten can weigh up to 3 pounds, and the least weasel weighs in at 8.8 ounces. In addition, the diet of each species differs. They are both considered carnivores, but the pine marten prefers fruits, nuts and honey due to their treetop location.

The pine marten maintains an arboreal existence and is active only at dusk and night. They are shy and solitary and highly territorial, whereas the least weasel is active during the day. These rare boys are excellent climbers and can easily gain access to poultry and game pens. They can squeeze through a hole not much bigger than about 45mm in diameter. They are experts at finding rotten wood and enlarging entrance ways. These attempts can be prevented through the use of electric fencing. This may deter the animal, but most likely he will return to check for status of the power current.

Looking at sexual maturity, our study states that it is complete by one year, but effective breeding occurs around two years of age. Although this weasel remains pretty much solitary, he will socialize to breed. Polygamous

behavior is well accepted, for females experience multiple periods of heat. Estrus begins in July or August with intense courtship lasting up to 15 days. Embryonic implantation occurs in late winter; active gestation lasts about eight months, including the delayed implantation. In late March or April the young are born, with the litter ranging from one to five kits. Reproduction is strongly influenced by diet, and it often fails if the male becomes too thin.

As mentioned, denning in treetops and various wooded materials affords safety for birthing as well as raising the offspring. In fact, dens have two classifications: natal dens for parturition (delivery), and maternal dens, where females relocate their kits after birth. These dens are appropriately lined with grass, moss and leaves inserted by the female. Most females spend 50% of their time attending these cavities during pre-weaning and complete weaning. Often kits are moved to another den around seven weeks. Interaction from the male has not been documented. Babies are born with thick, short fur and are blind, deaf and without teeth. Eyes open from 34-38 days, and the kits begin eating solid food at 36-45 days. Six weeks after birth they are weaned.

The pine marten is scientifically considered to be an opportunistic predator. If at rest they only require 80 calories a day, or about three voles. In fact, voles dominate the carnivorous side of their diet. An exception would be the snowshoe hare in winter. Meadow voles are sometimes taken in excess, seriously depleting their population. Oddly, deer mice and shrews are often ignored, but will be eaten should the pine marten find himself in a pinch for food. Diet is shifted seasonally and annually. For example, consumption can be more diverse in summer, with a dependency on fruit, vegetation and insects.

In captivity a pine marten has lived to age 15 and has been documented as living to 14.5 years in the wild. Survival rates vary by region, exposure to trapping, quality of habitat and, of course, age. This critter remains vulnerable

to predation from raptors and other carnivores. The threat of predation is believed to play a huge role when choosing a territory or home. Open range is definitely avoided, particularly due to the presence of the coyote, a fierce predator of the pine marten. It is in the deciduous forests in northeastern British Columbia that most predation is attributed to raptors. Here in Colorado this dear one must watch for attacks from the great horned owl, bald eagle, golden eagle, lynx, mountain lion, wolverine, and the American black bear.

Trapping martens for their fur was prevalent throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, so that, by the turn of the 20th century, the original population had been decimated for their shiny and luxuriant coat. Unfortunately for them, their fur resembles that of their close relative, the sable. Businesses such as the Hudson's Bay Company trapped the pine marten to near extinction. Thankfully, many protective measures and reintroduction efforts have been rewarded by a successful gain in a variety of populations. Still this animal suffers. Deforestation remains the culprit. This valuable species is allowed to be trapped for its fur in all but a few states. Besides this, other causes of death include drowning, starvation, exposure to high and low temperatures, choking and death from infection associated with injury.

This American marten hosts several internal and external parasites. They have even been known to contract encephalitis. They, as many, have plenty to deal with to avoid death. It is my hope that this information will encourage folks to make an impact on saving this critter. The least we can do is make an effort to help stop the trapping. In the meantime, I must say that learning about the pine marten has been pure pleasure for me, and I hope it has been for you, as well.



“Wildlife art has the potential to inspire viewers to conversation and education.”



Agnieszka with her good friend, "Keyni", at the Colorado Wolf and Wildlife Center

## February Cover Artist Agnieszka (Aga) Elliott

Agnieszka (Aga) Elliott is a nationally and internationally recognized wildlife artist, drawing inspiration from artists like Robert Bateman and Carl Brenders, who not only are naturalists, but who successfully capture wildlife and their natural environments through realism.

Aga believes that wildlife art has the potential to inspire viewers to conversation and education, inevitably leading to increased awareness of our

planet's natural heritage. Working exclusively in oils, she aims to portray animals in their moments of beauty.

Aga works closely with organizations such as The David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation, Artists for Conservation, and INVICTA Wildlife Fund.

Aga's hope is to promote appreciation of the creatures that share our world, in the hope that they will not be lost to us forever.

[www.papillonfineart.com](http://www.papillonfineart.com)





Dogs adopted from EAPL

## Dogs, Dogs, Dogs

BY CATHY KOWALSKI

As everyone knows, February is the month of love, with February 14th being Valentine's Day. Sharing your love with your best four-legged buddy is a great way to celebrate the month.

Not everyone has a dog, and there are some people who would like to do something related to dogs after they have enjoyed their own pooch.

Volunteering is a great way to give back, get some doggy time in, and experience the joy of sharing yourself with a furry pup. Volunteering at a local shelter can make a big difference in the lives of the animals. Volunteers must be 15 years of age or older.

There are two rescues in our area, Evergreen Animal Protective League (EAPL) and Intermountain Humane Society (IMHS), and both eagerly accept volunteers. Rescue organizations rely on volunteers to be able to successfully help animals in need.

Evergreen Animal Protection League has been aiding lost, abandoned and suffering animals since April 1981. They save animals in danger of being euthanized and find them temporary places to live until adopted. They do not have a staffed physical shelter; dogs are in foster homes. They are a totally volunteer organization. They operate a thrift store, at 27888 Meadow Dr. near downtown Evergreen, to offset the costs of the rescue. There is no tax support; as a nonprofit, their funding comes from donations, fundraising activities, and sales from the Thrift Store. Adoption fees are not enough to cover the cost of advertising, pet food, and veterinary care. At times they assist

financially with neutering of pets. They share information about neutering and the proper care of pets through educational programs at elementary schools and information shared with pet owners.

Chow Down Pet Supply Store in Bergen Park Shopping Center donates a one-room adult-cat-only Cat Adoption Center. EAPL needs foster homes, cat room volunteers, phone volunteers, and Thrift Shop help. There are also many other opportunities to help animals. You can contact them at 303-674-6442 or eapleevergreen@eapl.com.

As the Intermountain Humane Society website states: "Everyday Heroes Needed." They welcome volunteers, beginning with an in-depth orientation and ending with on-the-job training. In addition to volunteering to help with the animals, they would also welcome a veterinarian/CVT, trainer, or groomer.

Volunteers must be willing to make a 3-month commitment to a weekly shift totaling a minimum of 10 hours per month, be able to accept communications through email, fill out an application, and sign a liability waiver. Volunteers willing to drive the IMHS van must be 18+, have a clean driving record, valid driver's license and the skills necessary to drive the van.

IMHS is also in need of foster homes to accept homeless or unwanted animals for

limited periods of time. Foster homes might provide manners guidance, house-training, and other skills, or provide a safe, quiet place for nursing moms and growing puppies and kittens. PACFA (regulates animal welfare agencies in Colorado) requires foster homes to have routine inspections. Annually they will be inspected by shelter representatives.

There are opportunities for dog and cat interactions. Doggercize offers walks and teaches leash manners. Enrichment involves exercising, socializing, and providing basic training for adoptable shelter dogs. Bedtime Buddies are needed to provide the last walk of the day as they train the dogs to do their business outside and not in their kennels.

Volunteers also assist with administrative duties, facility care, fundraising events, and working at the Thrift Store.

So many ways to share your love of animals, meet new people, and make the lives of animals that haven't found their forever home yet just a little bit better!



Cathy is the Executive Director and trainer at Faithfully K9 Service Dogs and Dog Training. Call 970-591-3205 or visit the website [www.fairthfullyk9.com](http://www.fairthfullyk9.com).



## CELEBRATE LOVE

BY ANNE VICKSTROM

"Here in our mountain community, I see there are Valentines everywhere, all the time."

It's one of my favorite times of year! Valentine's Day!

The best part of this one-day celebration of love is that it can be celebrated by everyone. And despite it being only on February 14, those bright red hearts began showing up in stores even before Christmas. It didn't bother me to see those boxes of chocolate on the top shelf back in mid-December, it just reminded me of the people I love.

Like Mother's Day and Father's Day, having Valentine's Day on the calendar is a nudge to stop and think about those who are special in your life, and to remind them that they are loved. And there are so many varieties of love.

I love my husband, my children, my parents, my siblings, and my family, and everyone who knows me knows I love my dog. But I also love friends, and I let them know, by telling them. Years ago, a new friend included me in a Valentine's luncheon of girlfriends. I arrived at her house, finding the path to her front door covered in rose petals. She had made a spread of delicious sandwiches and small desserts, then topped it off with a choice of champagne or fruit punch. I remember like it was yesterday—feeling so spoiled, so special; I could feel our friendship.

The movie "Valentine's Day" features a party of people who hate Valentine's Day, lamenting that they don't have a partner in their lives. To that I would say—yes, you and everyone else do have a Valentine. It's the friend you call



"Having Valentine's Day on the calendar is a nudge to stop and think about those who are special in your life, and to remind them that they are loved."

when you've had a lousy day, or a spectacular day. It's the friend who texts to ask after you. It's the friend who makes time to have a coffee with you every few weeks just to check in.

One of my friends used the expression, "My Anne tank is low; let's get together." I've adopted that expression and shared it with others, as it sums up being someone's Valentine perfectly. When you haven't had

the interaction of people who care about you, who ask after you, who share their innermost secrets and thoughts, you just have to "fill that tank" of their friendship.

There are a lot of ways to share being someone's Valentine. I once heard the inspirational idea of carrying chocolate kisses in your pocket and distributing them to those who made you feel loved—a checkout person at the store who

noted your eggs were broken and took time to get a new dozen for you—the young person who arrived at the door the same time you did and stopped to let you go first—the guy who put on the brake to allow you to get into the merge lane (you'd have to find him at the next light to deliver the kiss)—the neighbor who shoveled out the mailbox so you didn't have to climb over a snowbank to get your mail. You get the idea.

There are so many Valentines in our mountain community. On a local social site I frequently see people requesting help and finding a dozen enthusiastic replies expressing willingness to step up. When a pet runs astray, our community goes into panic mode until everyone is reunited.

When service agencies post that they need help for an especially cold night, or that a food pantry is running low, our community steps up to fill shelves and provide warm clothing. We're each other's Valentines.

Sometimes, we can read or hear about the other side of life, but here in our mountain community, I see there are Valentines everywhere, all the time. Thanks for your Valentine that you gave to someone in our community—we owe you a kiss.

Anne Vickstrom's first writing gig was right here at *Your Mountain Connection*. She has written for national and regional publications and has published books. She loves living in Evergreen where she and her husband raised three children and six dogs.

# CELEBRATING 100 YEARS!



The schoolhouse in 1984 was in pretty bad shape. Parent volunteers here are scraping, painting, and replacing the railing on the porch.



PHOTO BY BILL GOUGH

The Little White Schoolhouse has served, and will continue to serve the community in many ways.

## THE LITTLE WHITE SCHOOLHOUSE

BY CARLA MINK | CONIFER HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND MUSEUM

During this month, in 1923, the Little White Schoolhouse opened its doors to excited Conifer children and their parents. The community had needed a new school for a long time; and since J.J. Mullen had donated one acre of land on the northern section of his property known as Bradford Junction, their dream of a new school could become a reality. Nine school children of various ages patiently waited for their school to be completed, as the parents of those children helped with the construction of the schoolhouse.

As the population grew, so did the need for services and resources for the settlers. The new residents were clamoring for an education for their children. This community had a need for a larger, updated building.

There had been previous schools, but the run-down, one-room buildings no longer met the needs of these progressive settlers who placed a high value and priority on quality education.

According to Phebe Granzella, an early teacher in Conifer, the Little White Schoolhouse wasn't the first in the area. The original school was located at Bradford Junction, in a building owned by the Kemp family. The Kemp family, who moved there in 1879, had 11–13 children, so along with other children at the Junction, they quickly filled the small school building. A new school was built near the current Conifer Center. It was called the Hutchison School and it served the community until about 1911.

The school district then purchased a Mormon church near Kitty Drive that became the next Conifer school, the Junction School.

John Joseph Mullen and his wife Jeanette E. Dulmage Mullen purchased the Bradford Junction property (Yellow Barn corner). Mr. Mullen then donated one acre of his land for the purpose of building a new school. Serious talks began in the community about what their new education center would look like. As happens in modern times, not everyone agreed on the location of the new school.

Here is an article that appeared in a local Colorado newspaper over 100 years ago, before the schoolhouse was built:

*The taxpayers of Conifer school district held a special meeting June first, to issue bonds to build a new school house. On account of some misunderstanding they have to hold another meeting soon. This district is in dire need of a new school and it should be more centrally located. (Colorado Transcript—Golden, Jefferson County, June 6, 1922)*

After a few more meetings, it was decided to build the new school on the Mullen land. Construction began during the late summer of 1922. The parents of the students who would attend the school helped build the school.

The day came when the bright, white building was finally ready, and it opened its doors to nine students on February 12, 1923. The following article reflects the excitement and anticipation of having a modern school and community center.

*On the night of February 24, at the new Junction Schoolhouse, there will be a Washington program from 7:30 – 8:30, dancing from 8:30 – 11:00, followed by a box supper. We are hoping that the weather will be fine so that everyone can come and have a good time. The cold weather, together with sickness, kept some away from the dedication of the new schoolhouse. School opened in the new building the morning of February 12. Teacher and people are delighted with their new quarters. (Colorado Transcript—Golden, Jefferson County, February 22, 1923)*

Even though the school officially opened on February 12, there was more work to be done to put the finishing touches on the building.

*The new Junction Schoolhouse has just been finished within by oil and varnish coats on floor, wainscoting, and window and door trim; and by broader milled strips on the ceiling, which gives a fine beam effect, and better support to the ceiling board. Fifteen neat comfortable seats—enough to seat 150 people—have been built and will be finished like the wainscoting. This seat-building and repair of ceiling, as well as painting, is the work of J.B. Mather.*

*The Junction school teacher, Mrs. Charles Kuntz and her husband went shopping and visiting in Denver Saturday and were commissioned as usual, with a large number of errands for people of the balliwick, who are always pleased to place tasks of filling their numerous small wants in the hands of such willing helpers. (Colorado Transcript—Golden, Jefferson County, March 8, 1923.)*

Here's one of my favorites, which also appeared in the March 8, 1923 *Transcript*.

*On Friday night, March 16th, the Junction school and community will give an appropriate entertainment to celebrate St. Patrick's Day, and you may naturally expect such a program to embrace many Irish features; not only on the faces of attendants, but in the songs, recitations, bulls and blunders presented. "Wearing of the Green" will not be forbidden; jigs, flings, breakdowns, strange and ancient musical instruments and bywords will be in evidence; but hooch will be strictly debarred. Good dance music will be provided, and supper will be served in the basement a-la-cafeteria.*

On Thursday, April 5, the Jefferson County Public Schools Superintendent visited the Junction Schoolhouse. She spoke of "better things" for the future of the area.

*Mrs. Evangeline Cummings, county superintendent of schools, and Miss. Ridley, county nurse for schools, visited Junction School, District NO. 9, last Thursday and their words of good counsel and encouragement to the large group of patrons, and the teacher who received them at the new school house, were truly inspiring and inciting toward better things for the future of this district, which is awake, and alert for progress.*

*Section 3, 4, and 5 of Township 6 S were re-transferred to School District No. 9 on April 5th, and the residents of that school territory are rejoicing in the restoration of their school relations with the school and the neighborhood in which they have had their interests and associations for many years. (Colorado Transcript—Golden, Jefferson County, April 12, 1923.)*



4th, 5th, and 6th grade class at Conifer School 1953–54 From Phebe Granzella's book

The area continued to grow, and eventually the Conifer School was overflowing. The Pleasant Park School, which had been previously closed, was reopened to house grades 4–6 with grades 1–3 remaining at the Conifer School. In 1955 the new West Jefferson Elementary School was opened. Within a year or two, the Conifer School was re-opened as an overflow classroom. With the addition of temporary buildings and the dedication of the new West Jefferson Junior High in 1974, West Jeff Elementary was finally able to provide classrooms for ALL of its students, grades K–6.

In the late 1960s, the school district offered the Jefferson County Parent and Preschool Program. It was a tuition-based program for 3- to 5-year-old children, and with modifications to the building to accommodate the youngest students, the program found a perfect home at Conifer School, which was then renamed the Little White Schoolhouse.

The Preschool program remained open at the LWSH for 44 years, with its last students

leaving in June of 2012. The Preschool Program was moved and remains open at the new West Jeff Elementary. The Jefferson County School District donated the LWSH buildings and the one acre of land back to the community through the Conifer Historical Society and Museum in October of 2012.

In 2014 the Little White Schoolhouse in Conifer was placed on the National Register of Historic Places by the United States Department of the Interior. In a letter to the Record Keeper for the National Register, Susan Mullen, the granddaughter of John J. Mullen, who donated the one acre of land to the community for a new school wrote, "My father, aunt and uncle, were educated in this Little White Schoolhouse. I often heard them speak of the merit of their education, the excellence of their teacher, of the character of the other students, of richness beyond the three Rs, of music, plays, and festivals. The Little White Schoolhouse is a simple yet elegant structure, a place my brother, sister, cousins, and now extended family of great grandchildren, often have visited, and visit still. It has become a kind of pilgrimage for us to a unique and remarkable school of our ancestor's childhood."

The Little White Schoolhouse had served the Conifer area for 100 years. In addition to being a school, the building served the community in other ways. It was used as a Sunday school classroom, a meeting place for Boy Scouts, caucus meeting place and it was a Jeffco Library. It was used for picnics, box lunches, dances, parties, band practice, and fundraising.

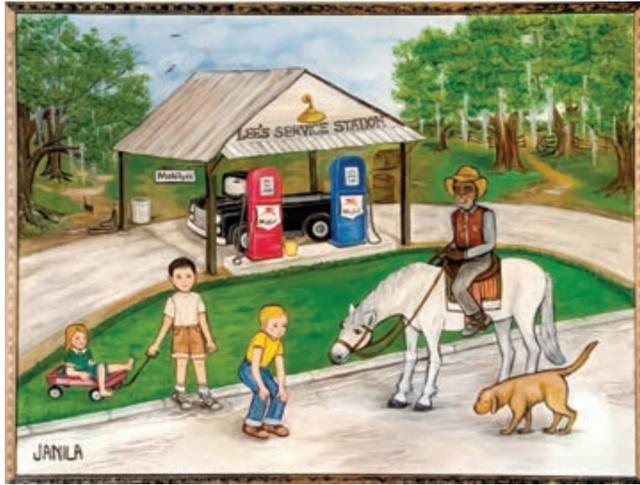
How fortunate that, upon closure of the schoolhouse to public education, the Jefferson County School District donated the schoolhouse back to the community through the Conifer Historical Society and Museum. CHSM is a not-for-profit, whose mission is to share the region's legacy by collecting, preserving, and exhibiting historical and cultural materials. What better place to be the home base for the exploration of Conifer history than at the Little White Schoolhouse?

**The Conifer Historical Society and Museum Board is currently planning 100th-year celebrations of the schoolhouse.** If you have any ideas of how to celebrate Conifer history and the Little White Schoolhouse's 100th, please contact us at [coniferhistoricalsociety.org](http://coniferhistoricalsociety.org) or call 303-396-5975. Maybe a redo of the 1923 St. Patrick's Day Party would be fun...with hooch? Also, watch social media, our road sign, and *Your Mountain Connection* for a listing of upcoming events.

The Preschool program remained open at the LWSH for 44 years, with its last students

"One of the really important things about preservation is it connects people to history in a very tangible way."  
— Myrick Howard

The mission of the **Conifer Historical Society** is to share the region's legacy by collecting, preserving, and exhibiting historical and cultural materials. Learn more at [www.coniferhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.coniferhistoricalsociety.org)



# MR. CHARLIE

EXCERPTS FROM THE NEWLY-PUBLISHED *BECOMING CHARLIE: A MEMOIR*  
WRITTEN BY CHARLES MONLEZUN FOR HIS GRANDDAUGHTER CHARLIE BLEU

I can remember the times still,  
My small, sleepy, southern town  
In the 50s.  
Most folks known by name,  
Every folk known by face,  
Faces white and faces black.  
But painful labels like  
the "Black Entrance"  
and the "Black Serving Window"  
and "The Balcony"  
In the only movie house,  
And "Their" school in "Coontown,"  
And "No Blacks in The Park."  
And accepted poverty  
And expected ignorance,  
But demanded respect by whites.

All the while, even as a child,  
I knew that when white folks said,  
"They like it like this,"  
The angels must have cried  
At the sound of such a deceiving lie.  
But I can see him still,  
My sleepy, southern town here  
In the 50s.

His name was Mr. Charlie.  
A black man he was, greyed but straight.  
He lived in the first house  
In "Coontown,"  
Five doors down from my grandparents' home,  
The birthplace and playing street  
Of my father.

He was always called "Mr. Charlie"  
By my father.  
And when spoken to or about by me,  
Well expected by my father  
That I too should preface  
His name with "Mister."  
To this day though,  
I remember him still,  
And this is why,  
Simply but profound.

For Mr. Charlie had a horse,  
A strikingly beautiful, white horse,  
Eighteen hands, if an inch.  
And Mr. Charlie was a very short man,  
Five feet at most.

Yet, when he sat astride his horse,  
I stood in awe.  
What was this inconsistency,  
This paradox of man and beast?  
No man in our town had such  
A magnificent animal.

No man.  
And no man rode with such ease  
And pride as Mr. Charlie.  
Yet, he was a black man.

I had never seen a black man  
Hold his head so high  
Or look into your eye so straight.

I thought he was the finest man in town.

We knew each other by name,  
Sharing the same first one.  
He always stopped and spoke to me,  
Holding the reins so deftly,  
And smiling as he talked to me  
So—proudly, in his soft-spoken humility.

I thought he was the finest man in town.  
No white farmer looked so proud  
Atop his tractor.

No white fisherman looked so proud  
At the wheel of his boat.  
No white merchant opened the morning  
Door with more pride.  
No white homemaker welcomed guests  
With a wider, prideful smile.

To my mind, no little man  
Handled a more beautiful horse  
With humble pride and ease  
Than Mr. Charlie did  
When he pulled up and spoke to me  
In the sunshine of a warm day  
In a small, sleepy, southern town  
In the '50s.



CHARLES J. MONLEZUN holds a trio of master's degrees as well as a doctorate in the fields of social work and public health from Tulane and Harvard Universities. Following a forty-year practice, shared with his wife, Sharon, in Southwest Louisiana, they moved to Golden, CO. They enjoy meals, sleepovers, and park frolicking as often as possible with their daughter and granddaughter and continue to cherish time well-spent with family and friends, old and new.

Your Mountain Connection recognizes the talent and creativity of our mountain neighbors. Each month we invite local artists, photographers, poets, and writers to submit their work for consideration in *Your Mountain Connection*. We will choose submissions that best fit our monthly theme to be featured on our cover with a small recognition article inside the paper. We also might include a small feature article inside the paper, space providing. We look forward to each and every submission...thank you!

## Poet's corner

### Love

BY NICOLA CACCAVALE-MCCRAY

Love  
Love is a fickle creature  
taking many forms with  
no defining feature.

Unbridled, unconditional,  
passionate, untraditional,  
unnamed, undefined,  
unplanned, untimed.

Red hot,  
fever pitch,  
slow burn,  
secret wish.

### Lock and Key

BY NICOLA CACCAVALE-MCCRAY

In my heart under lock and key lay a thousand years of memories. Love so tender like a newborn fawn, standing on shaky legs with nothing but newness to gaze upon, innocence white like the fallen snow before the shadow of nightfall haunts the glimmer of lightness. Crimson fire burns, pulsating heat that brings you to your knees, lightning storms of heaven and hell, secrets you would never tell. It is but one raging storm that lies within, leaving me to question rigid thoughts about the very definition of love. For every sweet word lingering on my lips there is a thorn.

Nicola Caccavale is originally from Chicago. She attended college in Heidelberg, Germany and loves to travel. When Nicola is not writing songs or poems she is dancing or spending time in nature. We are pleased to feature her poetry here in *Your Mountain Connection*.



## Card Artist Amy Love

Are you looking for  
a unique one-of-a-kind Valentine card?

Amy Love has been designing art for over twenty-five years. Originally from Boulder, Amy is a native Coloradan who has lived in Evergreen for the past 30 years.

Her love of working with fabrics and hand-made papers led her to create small art cards. This eventually evolved into mixed media collage landscape art, in a much bigger format. One can find items ranging from her larger framed works to smaller, more affordable, matted versions in sizes 8x10 or 11x14. Each piece is an original work, which is never recreated in print.

Amy's inspiration comes from a combination of living in the Colorado mountains most of her life, and her passion for bold, vivid colors. You can purchase her hand-made cards at The Evergreen Gallery and The Majestic Gallery in Idaho Springs, to name a few.

Contact Ms. Love at  
amylovedesigns@gmail.com



Man by Shohini Ghosh  
Located at: Buchanan Park



Ghost of the Oaks by Pati Stajcar  
Located at: Buchanan Park



The Two of Us by Yenny Cocq, Santa Fe, NM  
Located at: Evergreen National Bank



Russ Colburn and Dog by Tom Ware  
Located at: Buchanan Park



Kit Fox by Pokey Park  
Located at: Beau Jo's



Snow Queen by Stephen Landis  
Located at: Sisters/Holly Berry



Check It Out by Jerry Boyle  
Located at: Evergreen Library



Wulf Winds by Tim Upham  
Located at: Wulf Recreation Center



Meeting of Like Minds by Ed Haddaway  
Located at: Wilmot Elementary School



Trellis by Barbara Baer  
Located at: Evergreen Mountain Village

# Evergreen Sculpture Walk

BY GARY LOFFLER AND MARTY HALLBERG

A self-guided Sculpture Walk is available through [sculptureevergreen.org](http://sculptureevergreen.org), and is a great introduction both to the public art available for view in Evergreen and to Evergreen itself.

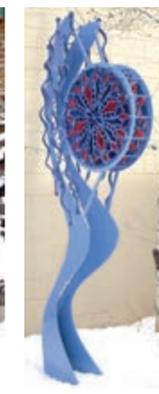
Take a stroll in Evergreen and you're likely to come across a kissable frog, a cunning kit fox, or any of the many sculptures that make up the Sculpture Walk, thanks to Sculpture Evergreen. Some of the sculptures are whimsical, like "Bob the Dinosaur" that graces Stagecoach Park, "Blanche the Rhino" at Buchanan Pond, and, of course, "Morning Spirits" near Java Groove. It is not uncommon to see a tourist or even a local getting their picture taken with this smiling gentleman.

This all got its start in 1977, when the Art in Public Places program required new capital constructions funds for state buildings to set aside 1% of their budget for art. AIPP has expanded over the years, and now Colorado Creative Industries is responsible for overseeing these funds. Among the recipients of the 1% for Art monies is Sculpture Evergreen, though this is only a portion of their funding; the majority of funding comes from individuals and the annual fundraiser, followed by SCFD and CCL. Sculptures are displayed on properties provided by local businesses at no charge to them.

For 27 years now, Sculpture Evergreen has been providing artists a chance to show their work to the public. Originally just a few pieces were commissioned and placed, but in 1995 they funded the first Sculpture Walk. Art work



Imagine (on the left) by Charlotte and Ben Zink  
and Light Hearted Drummer by Jodie Bliss  
Both located near Java Groove and Baskin Robbins



was exhibited on public land for one year, with the option for individuals or groups to purchase the pieces. Evergreen now has more than 40 permanent installations, thanks to the group. Spirits of the Land, located near the Evergreen

Lakehouse, was the first piece purchased by Sculpture Evergreen, and was installed in June of 1996. A few recent acquisitions are "Bugling Elk" by Jeff Best, located at the Stone House; "Modern Man" by Ken Stock, located at Antique Gallery; and "Russ Colburn and Dog" by Tom Ware, located at Buchanan Park.

The Sculpture Walk (self-guided via cell phone) is available through their website, [sculptureevergreen.org](http://sculptureevergreen.org), and is a great introduction both to the public art available for view in Evergreen and to Evergreen itself. Check out the map so you don't miss any!

Taking a moment to view Public Art can be an enjoyable break. Finding a work of art is like walking around the bend on a hike and getting a clear view of the mountains. The trek itself is pleasant, but the unexpected vistas are what make it remarkable.

Visit [sculptureevergreen.org](http://sculptureevergreen.org) for more information about their 25-year history of promoting art and for maps of the current and permanent sculptures. You can also vote for your favorite. [sculptureevergreen.org](http://sculptureevergreen.org)

ALL PHOTOS BY  
GARY LOFFLER AND MARTY HALLBERG

CASTLES & KITCHENS

# Seasonings 101

BY TOM BECKER

*“Today when I go out for dinner, I have expectations. What does my plate look like? Are there colors and an arrangement? What are the aromas? And most importantly, what are the flavors, both the dominant flavors along with the underlying flavors?”*



*“Tanginess, sweetness, a savory addition, and perhaps a little acid are all important enhancements to my food. For me, the idea is to dress the main ingredient up.”*



Francesca and I cook differently from each other. Being one generation removed from southern Italy, Fran remains true to her heritage. The simplicity of flavor, the respect shown to the products she uses and the preparation of her foods are marvels to behold. Watching her work and savoring what she presents on a plate is a true pleasure. When in Chianti at our house, Fran shares technique and secrets of preparation with our guests, but it's her passion for the local foods that shows up on the table, each and every night. What a splendor!

Having grown up in the upper Midwest where most everyone's grandmother was from various regions of northern Europe, food was anything but authentic to a country or region. Farmland menus tended to be "farm to table" before it became fashionable and contained whatever was grown out back or from the neighbors' plot down the road. Styles were a German version of Scandinavian or perhaps a Polish style of southern BBQ. True American fusion! Meanwhile, city folk were taking in the early offerings of convenience and fast foods. What better than frozen TV dinners, eh? Having grown up both outside of Chicago and in the farming communities of central Wisconsin, I gravitated toward the farmland style of foods, and as I grew, my cooking led me to a more inventive style of fare. Today when I go out for dinner, I have expectations. What does my plate look like? Are there colors and an arrangement? What are the aromas? And most importantly, what are the

flavors, both the dominant flavors along with the underlying flavors? I don't want to lose the natural flavors of the chicken or beef, but I'm after enhancement and elevation. Tanginess, sweetness, a savory addition, and perhaps a little acid are all important enhancements to my food. For me, the idea is to dress the main ingredient up.

I take the time to read a lot about cooking. Not just for recipes, but specifically for flavors, styles, and techniques. This allows me to further play with my food. I've often said that I've learned much more trying different things with my food and making mistakes. Working to solve those mistakes and creating something special is what it's all about. My chief instructor in school, Chef Anthony Polakowski, taught me that lesson. When practicing technique and flavors, never quit, he insisted. There is generally a solution to most problems, and Chef is correct, solutions are there to be found and lessons are learned.

With my culinary past, I have a pre-cook seasoning system for my proteins. Be it beef, pork, chicken, or lamb, the system is basically the same and it changes only with the volume of the meat. For smaller portions ranging from a pork tenderloin to a spatchcock chicken, a steak or small (2-3 lb.) roast, I do what I call a dry marinade. The herbs and spices will change based on what I want the flavors to be, but I always start with salt and black pepper. Start at least 3-4 hours before cooking, overnight for larger pieces of meat. Use unfrozen product, so if you vacuum pack or tightly wrap your meats after shopping and then freeze them, give it plenty of time to thaw in the refrigerator. Unwrap and dry the meat with paper towels and place it in an appropriate holding container. Sprinkle on a good layer of salt, a layer of pepper, and whatever herb/spice combination you want to use to create the flavor profile you're looking for. Lastly, rub it with a bit of olive oil. The oil acts as a binder to hold the rub in place. Repeat this on all sides. If cooking is going to be done in a matter of a few hours, lightly cover with a lid or plastic wrap and refrigerate. If you're seasoning overnight, wrap it tightly with the wrap to eliminate air flow. Regardless, always allow the meat to come to room temp before cooking to ensure an even cook. I generally plan on at least one hour for it to come to temp.

There are many opinions on pre-salting and flavoring meats before the cook and the timing involved. I learned my approach in school and found it confirmed by several of my chefs in

my kitchen at Tanglewoods. I might add that my chefs came from schools such as Johnson and Wales, CIA, Escoffier, and Metro Denver, so I feel pretty good about this practice. And, according to Cook's Illustrated/America's Test Kitchen: "Salting helps proteins retain their own natural juices" and "When applied to raw meat, juices inside the meat are drawn to the surface. The salt then dissolves in the extended liquid, forming a brine that is eventually reabsorbed by the meat." BTW, the preferred salt is a coarse kosher.

If you find yourself looking for some technical culinary answers, check out Cook's Illustrated. They are a valuable resource.

What I find with this procedure is that, as quoted, the salt extracts the moisture and protein from the meat. Early cooking will give you a dry product. However, with proper time, the salt returns the moisture to the meat along with the extracted protein and the flavor of the herbs and spices. The longer you let this process play out, the better the finish will be.

Cooking Classes with CASTLES & KITCHENS

Join us! We offer hands-on cooking classes in our Conifer kitchen. Browse classes on our website [www.castlesandkitchens.com](http://www.castlesandkitchens.com) or contact Francesca or Tom at [castlesandkitchens@gmail.com](mailto:castlesandkitchens@gmail.com).

# Conifer Chamber News

## Measure Your Business for Success!

BY TAMM DEAUN MASONER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



*The Conifer Chamber moved to a new location on January 1, 2023: 12424 Big Timber Drive, Unit 5, Conifer, CO 80433*

Stop and visit!

With the new year upon us, small business owners will want to look at what will help them reassess their business visions and set new goals, all to increase revenue and bring in new customers. Business resolutions will vary, just as they do in personal life, but there are top goals to consider that make good business sense.

Here are eight measurements that will help refresh your business operations. Are the measurements you choose achievable and quantifiable, and do they have deadlines with assessments in place?

- 1. Update your business plan.** Establish goals for you as a business owner and brand to help you achieve a clear sense of direction. Revisit those goals monthly, noting what worked and didn't for you and your staff.
- 2. Refresh your marketing plan.** The marketing plan, a component of the business plan, needs an update every year to see what marketing strategies were successful.
- 3. Advance your digital presence.** Most businesses already have a website, but keep yours updated with your latest business news.
- 4. Promote all year long.** Don't wait to promote and market your business; make it a regular push all year. Come up with a monthly promotion, using daily calendars to prompt ideas.
- 5. Personalize customer service.** Be sure to personalize the entire buyer journey by offering products and services based on your customers' purchasing behaviors.
- 6. Foster a positive workplace.** Establish a positive work culture by being more open to, and encouraging feedback from, your staff.
- 7. Give back.** Employees often like to be part of a workplace culture that gives back to and shows gratitude to the broader community. Be sure to appreciate the community for supporting your business.
- 8. Be trustworthy and transparent.** Engage in authentic interactions with your customers and clients to build trust and operate your business with transparency. Invite customers to interact with you online or through social media.

The Conifer Area Chamber of Commerce was founded on December 11, 1975, by local business people and has been bringing the community together ever since. Our goal is to create opportunities for our members to succeed. We actively promote our members through monthly membership meetings, after-hours mixers, educational workshops,

quarterly non-profit meetings, and community events, including Annual Chamber Awards, Elevation Celebration, and our ever-popular Conifer Christmas Parade.

*Our mission is to encourage, develop, promote, and protect the general business interests of the area in accordance with the principles of the free enterprise system.*

*Our vision is to create a thriving business community through meaningful connections, igniting growth opportunities, and advocating for a healthy economic environment.*

Membership with the Conifer Chamber connects you to our community, its resources, and many opportunities to grow your business. Chamber members can access exclusive programs and venues that help build their business and personal relationships, increase visibility, and generate leads.

You can contact the Conifer Area Chamber of Commerce and ask how we can help you grow your business and move you into 2023 with success and growth. **We moved to a new location on January 1, 2023; stop and make a visit.** Call the Executive Director, Tamm DeAun Masoner, at 303-838-5711 or stop by our new office at 12424 Big Timber Drive, Unit 5, Conifer, CO 80433.

Hope to see you soon!

Tamm DeAun Masoner  
Executive Director  
Conifer Area Chamber of Commerce

**If you have any membership questions, please contact the chamber office: [director@GoConifer.com](mailto:director@GoConifer.com), 303-838-5711. Thank you for your continued support and thank you for shopping local!**



**The Colorado Connection**  
Jess Musterman, Broker/Owner  
Musterman family, and board members.  
30403 Kings Valley Drive 1-108,  
Conifer  
303-257-2284  
[www.thecoloradoconnection.com](http://www.thecoloradoconnection.com)



**Mongillo Family Chiropractic**  
Dr. Joshua Mongillo, wife Josie; family, friends, board members, and ambassadors  
11873 Springs Rd, Unit 125, Conifer  
720-773-2500  
[mongillofamilychiropractic.com](http://mongillofamilychiropractic.com)



**Green Home Solutions**  
John Weir  
We improve indoor air quality.  
Conifer  
720-738-7573  
[greenhomesolutions.com](http://greenhomesolutions.com)



**Wild Wisdom Coaching**  
Maria Rosa Galtier  
Nature-inspired coaching  
Pine  
720-810-2837  
[wildwisdomcoaching.com](http://wildwisdomcoaching.com)

## Experience Conifer!

Best Things to do for Your Business

The Conifer area is a charming mountain destination with an elevation of 8,277 feet, located along U.S. Route 285 and nestled in the Foothills southwest of Denver. Here you'll find great restaurants, festivals, and outdoor activities. Our residents and visitors enjoy mountain biking, hiking, rock climbing, four-wheeling, camping, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, sledding and so much more! Stop in and see us to learn why Conifer truly is a great choice for living, raising a family, working and enjoying the great outdoors.

Take a look at our "Top Things to Do in Conifer, CO" lists, and we'll show you the best Conifer has to offer for that experience. Whether you're looking for a great place to eat, the next big concert or festival, community-minded tips, the best businesses to work with, or where to be in Conifer, CO, when something's going on, we'll bring you front row to the action!

[www.goconifer.com](http://www.goconifer.com)

The Conifer Area Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to making our community the best it can be. We are here to support our local businesses and create opportunities for them to grow and get connected to our community.  
[www.goconifer.com](http://www.goconifer.com)



## Open House and Ribbon Cutting

Thursday Feb 2, 2023 • 3-7pm  
12424 Big Timber Drive, Unit 5, Conifer

The Conifer Area Chamber of Commerce, Optive Commercial Capital, and Mountain Realty & Development invite you to join us as we celebrate our new office location! This event is a "Come and Go" as we mix and mingle with business and personal friends, enjoying provided drinks and appetizers together. There will be a ribbon cutting ceremony at 5pm with Chamber Board and Ambassadors as well as K.C. Gofinopoulos and team from Mountain Realty & Development. RSVP is appreciated.

[www.GoConifer.com](http://www.GoConifer.com)

## WE SUPPORT LIVING LOCALLY



Happy Valentine's Day! FROM  
your MOUNTAIN CONNECTION

Photo by Mira Paul • miraclestar05@hotmail.com • mirapaul.weebly.com

To advertise with  
your MOUNTAIN CONNECTION

**CALL**  
515-326-2672

## Evergreen Chamber Ribbon Cuttings and News



**Metta Massage and Healing Arts LLC**  
At Metta Massage and Healing Arts you are able to receive body work, massage, various therapies, meditation, and yoga.

**Kristen Ciplewski - Owner**  
3951 Evergreen Parkway Access Rd Suite 205  
Evergreen, CO 80439  
313-338-5763  
mettamassageandhealingarts.com  
mettamassageandhealingarts@gmail.com



### Ice Sculpture Hunt

Explore Your Way Around Evergreen

The Ice Sculpture Hunt around Evergreen has become a favorite winter tradition for locals and visitors alike. The Sculptures will be carved around town on February 4, as part of Chill Out, Evergreen. The theme this year will be "Love is in the Air." Check out the Evergreen chamber's website at evergreenchamber.org and follow us on social media for more info.

For over 50 years the Evergreen Area Chamber of Commerce has proudly been serving the mountain community. Our mission is to grow the local economy by building business relationships, promoting the community and representing local concerns with our county government.



The Stone House  
1524 Belford Ct. ~ Evergreen, CO 80439  
EvergreenChamber.org



### Chill Out, Evergreen!

BY NANCY JUDGE



Join your neighbors at **Chill Out Winterfest** on February 4, 2023, for a day of fun. What could possibly be fun in the dead of winter, you ask?

How about "Mushies Cup" at 10 am at Evergreen Lake? Use large inflatables (we provide) and your team of two or four participants to race the members of your team around an obstacle course on the lake. Dogs stay home, people do the "mushing."

**Evergreen Amazing Race** at 1 pm. Grab three of your friends, one of whom is the designated driver, and meet at the Stone House (1524 Belford Court) for the start of the crawl which will include different challenges at each participating restaurant, consume a beer (no one will be required to consume) and receive your clue to the next location. Each of the challenges will rack up points, and the team with the highest number of points at the end will be the winner. Keep in mind that your designated driver can compete in the challenges, but not in the consuming.

**Ice Sculptures** will be carved around town on this day. The theme this year will be "Love is in the Air."

**Glow-Skate** at Evergreen Lake from 5-8 pm. Yes, it will be cold, but bundle up and come out to enjoy the full moon and glow items to light the way. There will be music, s'mores, and lots of laughter to shake us out of our winter doldrums!

PRE registration for each of these events at evergreenchamber.org

Chill Out is fortunate to have title sponsor Caldwell Insurance Agency—American Family Insurance. Owner Bryan Caldwell often partners with the Evergreen Chamber, as well as other area nonprofits, to help cover the costs of events. I've asked him to write a bit about why he does this. Here are Bryan Caldwell's words...

#### THE IMPORTANCE OF GIVING BACK!

When the ideas and dreams of an individual and the benevolence of a company come together, great things can happen. I opened my agency a little over four years ago, the Caldwell Insurance Agency, Inc with American Family Insurance because our philosophies, values, and visions aligned in every way. I knew this could only mean great things. American Family's giving-back philosophy was one of the many reasons American Family Insurance was my first choice and I hung the flag above my office. As I developed my own mission and vision, one of my four pillars of importance is community. Six months after opening my office, I joined the Evergreen Chamber. It was clear to me that our business values also aligned with the chamber's mission to help grow the local business community. We quickly got involved with events like Skate the Lake, Sparkle and Shine Evergreen Business awards, Holiday Ice Sculptures, Santa Breakfast, and many more great events. These events not only benefit the community as an activity, but fund scholarships, charitable giving, and help bring visitors and tourists to the area to explore everything our great town has.

Anyone can do this. At our organization, we put it high on the priority list for our business to give back. Businesses are a part of the communities they reside in. As a business owner, I feel it is important to engage in philanthropic pursuits that can reap new and long-term benefits for our great community of Evergreen. A perfect example of this is the inaugural event, "Chill Out Festival." We see value in this event growing for our community. It is already highlighting a number of great assets like our local restaurants and our beautiful lake and lake house, and will grow beyond that in the years to come. Events like this can help everyone in business. It's a simple "growing to give, giving to grow" philosophy for us. As Winston Churchill said, "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give." I have gained so much personally and professionally from our involvement. This is just one of many ways we can say THANK YOU to our great community and customers for welcoming us into Evergreen four years ago and hopefully for many more years to come! —Bryan Caldwell

Follow us on Facebook. Visit our website EvergreenChamber.org. Call us anytime 303-674-3412.

## Evergreen Memorial Park

Funeral Home. Cemetery. Crematory.

303-674-7750

Be Green In Evergreen

You're trying to live a "green" life. What about your death?

### "NATURAL BURIAL"

Green burial, or natural burial, ensure the burial site remains as natural as possible in all respects. Interment of the body is done in a bio-degradable casket, shroud or a favorite blanket. No embalming fluid, no concrete vaults. Now offered as an option at Evergreen Memorial Park.

303-674-7750 • 26624 N. Turkey Creek Rd, Evergreen, CO 80439  
www.EvergreenMemorialPark.com • www.PetsatEMP.com

## WE SUPPORT LIVING LOCALLY

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

February 1 – March 4



“Spirit of Love.” Hearts abound! Love is in the air at Shadow Mountain Gallery! One-of-a-kind gifts for your special Valentine—all created by local artists! Prices for every budget. Main Street, Evergreen, next to Beau Jo’s Pizza. Open daily 10–5.

February 1–12



I’m Here: Center for the Arts Evergreen’s Traveling Teen Exhibition honors works of art that reflect upon the resilience and growth that today’s teenagers were forced to dig deep for in the midst of a pandemic. I’m Here is an opportunity to acknowledge the journeys of today’s teens and celebrate their strengths through their chosen artistic mediums. Curated by peers from CAE’s Teen Arts Council, the traveling teen exhibition consists of approximately 40 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional pieces of original artwork from student artists representing 16 Colorado high schools. The artwork is a powerful representation of the theme of reuniting, rebuilding, and looking forward with a renewed sense of hope. [evergreenarts.org](http://evergreenarts.org)

February 1–19



**Clue**, directed by Jill Manser, is a hilarious farce-meets-murder mystery. The tale begins at a remote mansion, where six mysterious guests assemble for an unusual dinner party where murder and blackmail are on the menu. When their host turns up dead, they all become suspects. “Clue” is the comedy whodunit that will leave both cult-fans and newcomers in stitches as they try to figure out... WHO did it, WHERE, and with WHAT! For info and tickets visit [StageDoorTheatre.org](http://StageDoorTheatre.org).

February 3 and 4

**EpicImprovWinter—Evergreen Players Improv Comedy** is a community-favorite performance of hilarious improvisational comedy performed by our Master Company. Improvisation, or improv, is a form of live theatre in which the plot, characters and dialogue of a game, scene or story are made up in the moment. Due to potential adult content, EPiC is recommended for audiences ages 12 +. Center Stage Theater, 27608 Fireweed Drive, Evergreen. [evergreenplayers.org](http://evergreenplayers.org)

February 4



Your Evergreen Chamber is rolling out a day of fun called **Chill Out Winterfest**. How about a “Mushies Cup”? Your team of two or four participants will pull an inflatable on an Evergreen Lake course. (Please leave dogs at home.) Or how about the inaugural **Evergreen Amazing**

**Race meets Pub Crawl?** Grab three of your friends and meet at the Lake House for the start of the crawl, which will include different challenges at each of the restaurants/bars that will be participating. The day will end with a **Glow-Skate at the Evergreen Lake**. Bundle up and come out to enjoy the full moon and glow necklaces to light the way. There will be music, s’mores, and lots of laughter to shake us out of our winter doldrums! And assuming Mother Nature works with us, the **ice sculptures** will be hidden around town for all to discover and enjoy. For info on these and MORE events go to [evergreenchamber.org](http://evergreenchamber.org)

February 6, 13, 20, 27



**Songbirds: Women song circle** at the Sojourn Book Store in Aspen Park every Monday from 4–6pm. Come add your beautiful voices, ladies! **Contact Shannon at Sojourn Book Store at 720-296-6997 or visit [sojournbookstore.com](http://sojournbookstore.com)**

February 24

**The Mount Evans Home Health Care & Hospice’s 36th Annual Benefit Gala** will be held at Mount Vernon Canyon Club (24933 Clubhouse Circle, Golden) from 5:30–10pm. Our theme this year is **LAND OF OZ**. The evening will include dinner, drinks, auctions, and dancing to the music of Tunisia. Funds raised at this event will help Mount Evans provide home health care, palliative care, hospice, bereavement assistance, Camp Comfort for children who have lost a loved one, as well as emotional and spiritual needs assistance to our mountain communities. For more info: <https://mtevans.org/gala>

February 25 – March 26



**Saturation** features the work of artists Helen Rudy and Danny Williams. Helen’s use of bright colors and graceful patterns is the hallmark of her unique style in the art of creating fused glass. Danny is a master of mark-making and brush strokes to create sculptural-like paintings. He uses oil paint to achieve a unique multi-dimensional effect. [evergreenarts.org](http://evergreenarts.org)

February 24 – March 12



**I Love You, You’re Perfect, Now Change** is the hilarious comedy that celebrates dating, love, marriage, and loss in all its stages in modern life. Directed by Dana Hart Wright, with Patrick Lee serving as Musical Director and choreography by Kevin Gael Thomas, **I Love You, You’re Perfect, Now Change** stars Colleen Lee, Carter Smith, Colin Roybal, and Emily Macomber. Opening February 24, and running weekends through March 12, at Evergreen’s Center Stage, tickets are now on sale. (Rated 13+) [ovationwest.org](http://ovationwest.org)

If your group is no longer meeting, please let *Your Mountain Connection* know via **Marty Hallberg** ([news@yourmtnconnection.com](mailto:news@yourmtnconnection.com)).

February 2023



**PeaceWorks, Inc.** offers a complimentary Community Wellness Program as part of our advocacy for personal wellbeing, healthy relationships, and safe homes. Attend in person at Taspén’s Dragonfly Studio or online (Zoom details on website), registration is not required. <https://peaceworksinc.co/communitywellness/>

February 1

**Women’s Circle** 5:30–6:30pm. Connect to your creative power within to activate your feminine presence that attracts the situations and relationships that you desire. Sabrina will share powerful practices to embolden you to show up in life to be seen and heard.

February 2023



**Resilience1220** provides free counseling services to youth ages 12–20 in the mountain communities west of Denver. Through counseling, support groups, and community outreach, we work to raise awareness of the social, emotional, and mental health issues young adults face, and to provide the necessary life skills to create wellness and resiliency in their lives.

February 1

**Conversations and Connections, Understanding and Managing Anxiety.** Via Zoom, 7–8:30pm, with speaker Kelly Andrews, MA, LPCC. This presentation will help you understand why anxiety happens, why it is so distressing, and what to do about it. **Register at [r1220.org](http://r1220.org)**

February 14

**Beyond the Rainbow** groups are open to LGBTQ+ people and allies and chaperoned by

February 8

**Block Therapy Trauma Release** 5:30–6:30pm. Trauma becomes trapped in your body and leads to pain, aging, and disease. This powerful self-healing practice unlocks the restrictions and adhesions that block blood and oxygen flow and releases trauma at a cellular level. All levels. Wear comfortable clothes. Bring a yoga mat if you have one and a water bottle.

February 15

**Restorative Yoga** 5:30–6:30pm. Join Carrie for Restorative Yoga, a slow and restful practice. It is a limited number of relaxing asanas (poses) held longer than those in a yoga exercise class. The use of folded blankets and bolsters support relaxation and reduce stress in poses that are done without stretching and muscle contracting work. The rejuvenation of Restorative Yoga gives one the chance to turn inward and release the day-to-day tension.

a Resilience1220 therapist and/or volunteer. RSVP to Heather by 10am the day of the event: 720-480-6672 or [heather@resilience1220.org](mailto:heather@resilience1220.org). For more details visit [Resilience1220.org](http://Resilience1220.org).

February 15

**Sensitive Collective** strives to inform and support HSPs (highly sensitive persons) to live healthy and empowered lives. 3:30–4:30pm, via Zoom. Visit [resilience1220.org](http://resilience1220.org) for more information.

February 23

**Support After Suicide Loss** 5:30–7pm. A safe place to share and learn after losing loved ones to suicide. Join in-person or online. **For time and location email [heather@resilience1220.org](mailto:heather@resilience1220.org) or call 720-480-6672.**

February 27

**LGBTQ+ Teen Book Club** 4–6pm at the Resilience1220 office. Come join us for a group-led book club! We will discuss our favorite parts, analyze the book, maybe even do an arts and crafts project related to the book. **To register go to [R1220.org](http://R1220.org)**

**5 DAY WORKSHOP**

**NEW YEAR, NEW YOU**

Register via QR code or [tinyurl.com/kt654wh8](https://tinyurl.com/kt654wh8)

EACH EVENT YOU ATTEND, your name will be added to a raffle to win a prize at the end of the week.

**3 DAY WORKSHOP**  
**FEBRUARY 13-16**  
**4 PM - 5 PM**  
AND  
**FEBRUARY 17**  
**10 AM - 2 PM**

LOCATION  
**Clear Creek High School**

<b>Mon</b>	Learn how the foods you eat can totally change your day	<b>Thur</b>	Show self love through healthy boundaries
<b>Tue</b>	Happy Valentine’s Day	<b>Fri</b>	Create vision boards to embrace your own identity
<b>Wed</b>	Find your word for the year through movement		

Check out more groups and events at [R1220.org](http://R1220.org)

GOOD PEOPLE PRODUCTIONS PROUDLY PRESENTS

**CONIFER OPEN MIC**

Beaver Ranch Event Center

**EVERY WEDNESDAY NIGHT**

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**Evergreen Players Improv Comedy (EPiC)**  
February 3 and 4  
Fri and Sat at 7:30pm  
Tickets: \$25 Adult, \$20 Senior, \$15 Student  
720-515-1528 or online at [www.evergreenplayers.org](http://www.evergreenplayers.org)  
Center Stage Theater, 27608 Fireweed Drive, Evergreen  
Group discounts and 2023 Flex Passes are also available.

## EPiC

Directed by Scott Ogle

Evergreen Players present EPiC, a community favorite performance of spontaneous, unscripted comedy performed by our Master Company, for one weekend only, February 3 and 4 at Center Stage Theatre in Evergreen. Performances are Friday and Saturday at 7:30pm. The Evergreen Players Improv Comedy troupe, known as EPiC, typically performs twice each year, but this is the first EPiC Winter Show since February of 2020, and we are thrilled to be back! Improv is a form of live theatre in which the plot, characters and dialogue of a game, scene or troupe are made up in the moment. The EPiC troupe will take a suggestion from the audience as a

source of inspiration. Improv is spontaneous, entertaining, fun and engages the audience for a truly unique experience.

Scott Ogle is a founding member of EPiC and is directing the show. Scott is also the current Evergreen High School theater teacher.

The Evergreen Players is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization producing 10 shows per year in the foothills. Established in 1950, the Players’ mission is to create professional quality theater to inspire, engage and entertain. The Players’ mailing address is P.O. Box 1271, Evergreen, CO 80437.

## John Davis

Champion of the arts

John Davis, a prominent and loved member of the Colorado theater community, passed away on Sunday, January 15, 2023. John was a champion of the arts, and his name was synonymous with Evergreen Players, having been a part of the Players for 56 years. During those 56 years, John continuously served in nearly every capacity, including President and Vice President of the Board of Directors, Lighting Designer, Technical Director, Actor, and at the time of his death, Treasurer, which was a position that he had held for many years. John and his wife, Kathleen, were and remain instrumental in making the Evergreen Players what it is today. Because of their passion and resilience, the Evergreen Players is the longest continually running theater company in Colorado and is entering their 73rd year in operation. The Evergreen Players can’t count the amount of love, work, time and talent the entire Davis family has put into making our community what it is today. John’s passion and commitment went beyond the Evergreen community. He volunteered on many boards and committees over the years, including the Board of Directors for the Colorado Community Theater Coalition, the Evergreen Arts Council, and several committees with the American Association of Community Theaters. In 2001, John was deservedly awarded “Arts Person of the Year” by the Evergreen Area Council for the Arts, now known as Center for the Arts Evergreen, and was also Chairman of the Buchanan Park Building Committee. As we come together and celebrate John, his legacy, and all he did for the arts and our community, it is apparent that his kindness and generosity are what we will miss the most. He will be missed but never forgotten, as we honor him every time we turn on the lights at the theater.



YES! Our March issue will focus on one of our favorite subjects...Our Pets! We’d love to include our readers’ fur babies, as well as our own. Email pics to Marty Hallberg at [news@yourmtnconnection.com](mailto:news@yourmtnconnection.com). We’ll print as many as space permits in order received.

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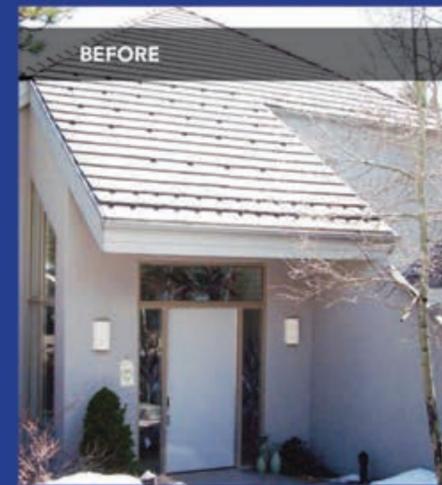
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