

# JUNE 2019

Press report



## CALENDAR

### TODAY

#### **Knit and Crochet Table Gang:**

1:30 to 3:30 p.m., Thurston Room of the Robert Hoag Rawlings Public Library, 100 E. Abriendo Ave., 251-1938 or jpf6476@hotmail.com.

#### **Pueblo Storytellers:**

1 to 2:30 p.m., Robert Hoag Rawlings Public Library, 100 E. Abriendo Ave., all adults welcome, 543-6234. 11th St., 542-4578 or 821-2756. Pueblo

#### **Cast Off Knitters:**

1 to 4 p.m., Pueblo West Library, 298 S. Joe Martinez Blvd., 330-465-0193.

## FICTION

- 2. "Where the Crawdads Sing"** by Delia Owens (G.P. Putnam's Sons)
- 3. "Diary of an Awesome Friendly Kid"** by Jeff Kinney (Amulet)
- 4. "The 18th Abduction"** by James Patterson and Maxine Paetro (Little Brown)
- 5. "The Night Window"** by Dean Koontz (Bantam)

## NONFICTION

- 1. "Howard Stern Comes Again"** by Howard Stern (Simon & Schuster)
- 2. "Becoming"** by Michelle Obama (Crown)
- 3. "Educated"** by Tara Westover (Random House)
- 4. "Everything is F\*cked"** by Mark Manson (Harper)
- 5. "The Pioneers"** by David McCullough (Simon & Schuster)

## DIVERSIONS

InfoZone Museum. The documentary, "Living With Wolves" will be screened during the night and a mural created by Valerie Rose will be on display.

Rose will work on the mural beginning 2-3:30 p.m. Friday and continue throughout the weekend. Visitors can stop by and observe Rose while painting throughout the weekend.

For more information, contact Maria Tucker at 553-0205.

### Wolf events at library

The Pueblo City-County Library District will host National Geographic's touring photo exhibit "Living with Wolves" Saturday through Aug. 31 in the InfoZone Museum of the Robert Hoag Rawlings Public Library, 100 E. Abriendo.

The exhibit cosponsors are Rocky Mountain Wolf Project and the Colorado Chapter of the Sierra Club.

To celebrate the exhibit's opening, a trainer and a wolf from the Colorado Wolf and Wildlife Center will host a meet-and-greet from noon to 2 p.m. Saturday in the Ryals Room of the Library.

There will be a reception from 5-8 p.m. in the

### Pecha Kucha night

Eight presenters are scheduled to appear at Pecha Kucha Night, Vol. 26 at 7 p.m. June 14 at the InfoZone Theater inside the Robert Hoag Rawlings Public Library, 100 E. Abriendo Ave.

The speakers set to appear are Chris Calkins, Lynn Clark, Gregory Howell, Justin Morenz, Michael Pach, Rob Redwine, Perry Perkins and Tyler Shown and Maria Elana Weaver.

Doors open at 6:30 p.m. and complimentary appetizers and refreshments will be provided and the event is free and open to the public.

For more information, call Sara Schwartz at 553-0220.

# The Pueblo Chieftain

Saturday, June 8, 2019

facebook.com/ThePuebloChieftain | @ChieftainNews | chieftain.com | \$1.25



Erika Porter sketches out a portion of the mural she designed at the Sangre de Cristo Apartments during the Kid Fair. (CHIEFTAIN PHOTOS/ZACHARY ALLEN)

## Young artist hopes to inspire

By Anthony A. Mestas  
The Pueblo Chieftain

When she was a little girl she had a dream to inspire people through art.

"I'm hoping this will give me a little jump," said Erika Porter, with a look of confidence in her eyes.

She was standing in front of a colorful mural she was helping to create over a red-brick wall on the side of one of the Pueblo Housing Authority's Sangre de Cristo Apartments. Her right hand was covered in blue chalk. In her left hand she was holding a piece of paper with her design sketched on it.

"I am so happy. This is something I designed," Porter, 14, said.

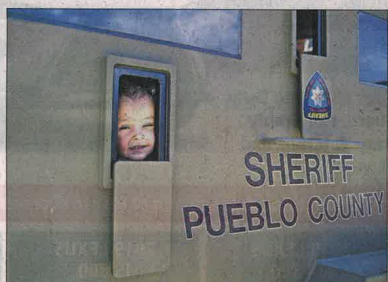
"Never give up. Even when people let you down or bring you down don't give up because what matters is how you feel about art."

Porter won an art contest put on by the housing authority. The theme was "What does home mean to me?"

Graffiti artists helped place her concept on the wall of a complex along Sitter Street.

"I thought of a few words that describe home like love, smiles, hugs, fun times. All these things on here," she said with a laugh.

"I went through several pages



Samuel Guerrero, 2, looks out of the side of a Pueblo County Sheriff's Office armored vehicle that was on display Friday during the Kids Fair at the Sangre de Cristo Apartments.



Quentin Varner, 7, smiles as he comes down an inflatable slide Friday at the Kids Fair sponsored by Angel Helpers and the Pueblo Housing Authority at the Sangre de Cristo Apartments.

### ARTIST

From Page A1

trying to get this design."

Her concept art was a heart in the middle with an embracing family in it. A giant word reading "Home" was overlaid by painted Polaroid pictures of what she said she felt described home.

"Usually in families there's pets even if they don't live as long, we still have them. Holidays. No matter what, you always have holidays," she said describing her concept.

"In families you celebrate your birthday and some families have chores and some don't. Game nights. My family and I have a lot of fun times at game nights."

The mural also had a picture of a security camera on it.

"You always want to be secure at your home. That's how I feel. I also think of



Amiyah Garcia, 5, grabs a candy reward Friday at the Pueblo City-County District booth at the Kids Fair. (CHIEFTAIN PHOTOS/ZACHARY ALLEN)

movie nights," she said pointing to a part of the mural that depicted movies.

"The hearts on here are for love and there's obviously music in the house."

The mural was the showcase of the housing authority's annual Kids Fair.

"It's a picnic and a good time for residents," said Ted Ortiz, director of the Pueblo Housing Authority, co-sponsored the event with

Angels Helpers.

Ortiz said the organization brings in outside vendors that residents can benefit from.

"This year the county has joined us and they are doing free air conditioning installs. We have a lot of services here," Ortiz said.

There also were vendors signing kids up for preschool.

"We are really

transforming this area,"

Ortiz said pointing to the 72 new homes the authority is building adjacent to the Sangre apartments.

"This is a day for us to celebrate with our kids."

Law enforcement officials also got a chance to visit with children and residents.

"They look forward to it every year. This also has a safety initiative. So a

lot of the vendors revolve around safety and getting different resources in the community," said Melissa Nereson, interim director of operations for the housing authority.

Kids were splashing in kiddie pools and squirting each other with Super Soakers while others were eating free hot dogs and drinking cold pop.

"I was in disbelief when they told me that I won the art contest. I was so surprised. I didn't think that it was really happening. I am so excited," Porter said.

"Something that I created will be here as long as these walls stand. That's awesome."

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See ARTIST, A2



# OPINIONS

## Keep high schools open to preserve past, ensure future



Ryan Belmont

I am currently a junior at South High School. I also attended Goodnight Elementary School from preschool to 6th grade. I am writing to present my concerns about the recent proposals that may close either one or two high schools. Upon much consideration, I do not believe that closing any high schools within Pueblo City Schools (D60) will be the best option for this district and it may even lead to more concerns in the near future. I love South. From the moment I attended this

school, I knew it was going to be one of the best decisions I have ever made. My instructors are educating me in ways I never thought possible and at South, I feel home. There are many special things about South like there are in every single one of these four high schools. Each high school has something truly amazing to offer Pueblo. On average, there are about 1,000 students per school, which creates a comfortably work space that students can learn in without being overwhelmed. Each student has an opportunity to get the deserved attention needed from their teachers.

One of my concerns with closing any of the high schools is that 2,000 students within a high school building is just way too crowded. Not only will students not receive the one on one attention they

need, but safety may be at risk as well. Disaster drills and fights will be way more difficult to control in a school that has reached maximum capacity. Combining high schools will also move sports and other activities up from a 3A/4A level to 5A. This being said, teams will be required to travel to extreme distances in order to compete, which will present safety issues and class work conflict. The opportunities for success in sports may also be eliminated. The combination of two high schools also risks the elimination of sports amenities such as school pools or even gyms. This would be sacrificing somebody's passion for a sport, simply to stuff 2,000 kids into one building.

Another issue that may present itself is that many students rely on their

neighborhood schools in order to even be able to attend. A vast majority of students walk to school either because their schools are within walking distance or they simply do not have a means of transportation in the morning. Requiring a student to attend a high school outside of their neighborhood could result in a child not being able to attend school because he or she has no way to get there. Closing a high school may mean denying a child the right to an education.

Upon reading about our previous meetings and the three students advocating for the two high school system, I felt disappointed. These three students are being given the right to talk for almost 4,000 kids.

Almost every person that I have discussed this issue with has stated the wish to see all four of the high schools continue to run. Some wish this

simply because they know that no child deserves to have his or her school close and others wish this because they can see that closing high schools means sacrificing too much.

I hope that I never look back and see that one or two of these schools has closed. This would mean that the district that I trusted my future to has done something I will never see as just. The memories made in each of these schools cannot be erased and the traditions that each school has created deserve to live on. Four high schools forever.

Ryan Belmont is a junior at South High School. She is involved in many clubs and activities including the Library Foundations Girl's Leadership Institute and is taking the role as student body president for the 2019-2020 school year.

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**Pueblo West Toastmasters:** meeting, 6:30 to 8 p.m., Pueblo West Library, 298 S. Joe Martinez Blvd., pueblowesttm.toastmastersclubs.org or 426-7805.

### AT THE LIBRARY

**New Books**  
From the Pueblo City-County Library District

#### Fiction

1. Magic for Liars - Sarah Gailey\*
2. City of Girls - Elizabeth Gilbert\*
3. The Friends We Keep - Jane Green\*
4. My Life as a Rat - Joyce Carol Oates\*
5. Orange World and Other Stories - Karen Russell\*
6. Mrs. Everything - Jennifer Weiner\*

#### Non-Fiction

1. Theodore Roosevelt for the Defense: The Courtroom Battle to Save His Legacy - Dan Abrams\*
2. The British Are Coming: The War for America, Lexington to Princeton, 1775-1777 - Rick Atkinson\*
3. The First Wave: The D-Day Warriors Who Led the Way to Victory in WWII - Alex Kershaw\*
4. Unfreedom of the Press - Mark R. Levin\*
5. Sea Stories: My Life in Special

Operations - William H. McRaven\*  
6. Play Hungry: The Making of a Baseball Player - Pete Rose\*

\*Titles are either available or can be recommended in the eBook format through PCLCD's Cloud Library Collection

# The Pueblo Chieftain

Thursday, June 13, 2019

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## Man sentenced in library kidnapping

**Man was convicted in '08 for sex crime, sentenced in May for abduction at library**

By Zach Hillstrom  
The Pueblo Chieftain

A Pueblo man who served four years in prison after pleading guilty to attempted sexual assault on a child in 2008 is behind bars again following a guilty plea on May 24 to charges of second-degree kidnapping in a case involving an 8-year-old boy.

Peter Monro, 49, was sentenced to 12 years in the Department of Corrections

stemming from an incident at the Robert Hoag Rawlings Public Library on Oct. 27, in which Monro attempted to lure a child by force to a secluded part of the library to tickle the child's feet for the purpose of Monro's sexual gratification.

The boy was playing a computer game in the children's section of the library when Monro approached and asked the child to accompany him to look at books, according to an arrest affidavit authored on

Oct. 29.

The boy said Monro then grabbed him by the arm and made him get up, and he later told police he complied because he was scared.

The child was taken to an area in the corner of the library, which prosecutors with the Tenth Judicial District Attorney's Office say was chosen by Monro because it was out of sight of security cameras.

The affidavit states the child told Monro he wanted to go back to the computer game, but Monro refused, telling the child: "Not until they read some of the book."

Monro later admitted to

police that he forced the boy to accompany him and then asked him to take off a shoe, so that he could tickle the child's foot.

Following the tickling, the child was finally allowed to return to the computer game, accompanied by Monro.

During the time spent at the computer, Monro — according to his own account, as well as that of a witness in the library — placed his arm around the boy.

At one point during the interaction, the boy's father returned to the children's section from looking at books at an upstairs level.

The father confronted Monro about touching his son,

sparking a physical altercation between the two men.

Library security intervened in the confrontation and separated the father from Monro. Security personnel then called police.

Upon being interviewed by police, Monro — who already was a registered sex offender after pleading guilty to charges of attempted sexual assault on a child in 2008 — eventually confessed to targeting children to tickle their feet because he has a fetish involving children under 12. Police also say he lied to them in the Oct. 27 incident, initially identifying himself as "Peter Malloy."

See KIDNAP, A9



Monro

The Pueblo Chieftain • Pueblo, Colorado Thursday, June 13, 2019 A9

## KIDNAP

From Page A1

Monro made a similar confession when contacted by police in the 2008 case, telling them "had a thing for children's feet" and saying he "liked them 14 years of age or younger" according to that case's affidavit.

In investigating the case, the DA found two other families whose children had allegedly been victimized by Monro. One claimed that Monro had targeted their 3-year-old in the bathroom of a local restaurant where he was working in 2016, and the other claimed their 13-year-old son had also been targeted and tickled at the Rawlings library.

Monro, who has lived in Colorado for more than four decades, was later fired from the restaurant and listed as unemployed at the time of the October kidnapping case.

According to the DA, in all four cases in which Monro was accused of preying on children, his sexual self-gratification came after the tickling and did not occur with his victims present.

In deciding how to handle the two additional cases brought to light through the police department and DA investigations, the prosecutors consulted with the victims' families and decided to offer Monro a plea

agreement in which the DA would not pursue charges on the other cases and would dismiss additional charges of criminal impersonation and criminal tampering with physical evidence in return for Monro pleading guilty to the second-degree kidnapping charges.

As part of the agreement, the other two cases were presented to Pueblo District Judge Thomas Flesher to be considered in his sentencing of Monro.

Weighing into the DA's decision not to prosecute the other cases, said Deputy District Attorney Patrick Jones, was the fact that the 3-year-old victim was considered too young to adequately describe what happened, and that in all cases, the DA could not charge sexual assault or unlawful sexual contact because Monro never made contact with the victims' "intimate parts."

"Intimate parts" are specifically defined by the statute in the Colorado Revised Statutes," Jones said. "And they're very specific parts: like reproductive organs, breasts... and the feet are not one of them. We didn't get evidence that he had contact at all with any of the victims' intimate parts."

"But the kidnapping ... for one, the children can't consent because they're underage. And two, because

he forcibly moved them from one place to another — and that did cause harm to the victims — we were able to charge a kidnapping charge, and we had a strong case with that."

Jones said he worked closely with the victims' families in deciding how to proceed with all three cases, and explained that by including the two additional cases in the plea agreement rather than try them in court individually, prosecutors were able to show extreme aggravated circumstances in the case.

"To be able to get the maximum sentence possible, we were combining them all to let Judge Flesher see them all, so he could consider his (Monro's) criminal history, the prior conviction, and all three victims," Jones said.

"Whereas, if we were to proceed with them separately, we'd win one trial, and another one would come up, and we'd have a hard road ahead on all

three cases. And they would be considered in a vacuum, or in isolation of each other.

"That's why we agreed to no action on two of them for a plea in this one: because then we could establish the pattern — and that's where we get the (aggravated circumstances.) ... So the judge was able to consider the harm to all the children, not just one."

In imposing a sentence, state guidelines dictated Monro could receive a maximum of 12 years in the Department of Corrections, or a minimum sentence of probation.

Flesher sentenced Monro to the maximum of 12 years. He received credit for 62 days of time served.

Jones said the DA's office is not aware of any outstanding criminal allegations against Monro.

"It is possible that no one has come forward or that the parents didn't know and the kids didn't tell, because that's how he (Monro) was trying to do this, was to keep the

kids silent," Jones said. "So if anyone else comes forward, we would obviously jump on that and look at that because this is a pattern. And it's very concerning and we don't

want this to happen to any other kids. "But as far as right now, I don't know of any other victims."

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# LOCAL NEWS

## Kids, and books, first



### BOOKS

From Page B1

"This will make a tangible difference as we work to spark a love of reading and enable the book access, which is essential is learning."

On Thursday, 6,000 books were delivered to the care center for packaging in the sacks, which will be distributed at the care center as well as at El Centro del Quinto Sol and the Patrick A. Lucero Library.

"This is the first time that we are able to include two books with the Kidz Sacks program," said Corry Higbee, the care center's executive director. "And that component is substantial in the sense that we

are partnering with organizations like EPIC and First Book.

"We have tremendous issues going on in our education system so anything that we can do to strengthen that on our end is a benefit to our community."

Paula Dunn's grandson Paxton spent part of his morning volunteering to help insert the books, and food items, into the sacks, which will be handed out en masse as part of the care center's June 21 Kidz Day.

"I like to help people who need help," Paxton said.

EPIC Pueblo provides books at no cost at 13 different sites throughout Pueblo County.

"We have community volunteers in Pueblo City Schools (D60) and (Pueblo County)

District 70 preschool classrooms each month, reading and allowing the child to keep the book that is read to them," Dunn said. "This year, we were in 70 classrooms, reaching nearly 900 children."

"Because parents are a child's first and most important teacher, we provide training for parents with what we call our 'Brown Bag Series,' which includes 21 specific topics. We also partner with El Pueblo (History) Museum to provide these training sessions for parents and caregivers during the museum's Beyond Story Time program."

For more information, visit [coloradoepic.org/pueblo](http://coloradoepic.org/pueblo).

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Paxton Dunn, 8, helps insert books into Kidz Sacks Thursday at the Pueblo Cooperative Care Center. (CHIEFTAIN PHOTOS/JON POMPIA)

### Grant funds 'EPIC' book drive

By Jon Pompia  
The Pueblo Chieftain

Thanks to a \$50,000 grant, Executives Partnering to Invest in Children Pueblo is going to place thousands of books into the hands of youngsters most in need of a literacy boost.

EPIC Pueblo, a group of business and community leaders dedicated to early childhood issues, received the grant from First Book, a non-profit social enterprise focused on equal access to quality education for underprivileged children.

Through the grant, the kid-friendly books will be distributed to both local school districts, the Pueblo City-County Library District and, for the first time, Pueblo Cooperative Care Center's Power-Up Kidz Sacks campaign.

"This award will allow us to continue to work towards our mission of every child being kindergarten-ready, and encourage parents to read to their children 15 minutes a day," said EPIC Pueblo spokeswoman Paula Dunn. "We will be able to bring new, high-quality contemporary books, in both Spanish and English, to the kids we serve."

See BOOKS, B2



Pueblo Cooperative Care Center's Sedro Martinez unloads boxes of books for distribution to area children in need.



## LIFE

LYONS



Luke Lyons

I've always been fascinated and captivated by wolves.

Though often depicted as "big" and "bad," I've always thought wolves were misunderstood. They aren't these evil creatures lurking in the night. Wolves aren't this ravenous species who hunt humans.

Wolves are smart, beautiful animals that have unique personalities and form strong bonds within their packs.

*Canis lupus*, the scientific name for the species, is vital to the ecosystem as typically they prey on smaller, sick or vulnerable animals. This keeps herds of their prey healthy.

Wolves often leave scraps which animals like coyotes, eagles, bears, ravens, magpies, raccoons and foxes all feed from.

By controlling herbivore populations, vegetation in areas are protected which could prove to be vital for farmers with valuable crops.

And while wolves have killed livestock, those incidents are greatly exaggerated.

Wolves aren't blowing down pigs' houses, or tricking Red Riding Hood or biting humans under a full moon and turning them into a beast (though, I'd be OK with becoming a were-wolf, I must admit).

Maybe it's because of the misconceptions that I've always related to the species.

Maybe it's because I often relate to lone wolves who are rejected, or reject, their packs and travel miles and miles to find other packs.

Not to sound too much like Zach Galifianakis' character Alan in "The Hangover," but I hope to find my own pack someday.

Regardless, I love wolves and believe that protecting the species and reintroducing wolves to areas in which they used to inhabit is vital.

The Robert Hoag Rawlings Public Library currently has on display National Geographic's "Living With Wolves."

The exhibit is a collection of photos taken by Jim and Jamie Dutcher while they filmed the documentary for the same name.

There are also other hands-on components to the exhibit for people to learn more about the animal.

Carbondale painter Valerie Rose created a mural, and the Pueblo City-County Library District will host a number of events and programs to coincide with the exhibit.

The exhibit is geared toward educating people about the species and why wolves are vital to nature.

Hopefully, children and adults alike who view the exhibit will garner a new appreciation for the often misunderstood creatures. Then, they can fall in love with these beautiful creatures like I did many (full) moons ago.

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# Running with wolves

**New exhibit at the library shows importance of wolves in the wild**

**By Luke Lyons**  
The Pueblo Chieftain

In literature, wolves have often been depicted as evil and deceptive creatures who are determined to eat feeble beings.

Wolves also have been thought of as dangerous to humans and livestock.

However, wolves are a vital part of many ecosystems. As such, the National Geographic exhibit "Living With Wolves" looks to educate people on the importance of wolves in nature while erasing the misconceptions of the species.

The exhibit is on display in the InfoZone theater of the Robert Hoag Rawlings Public Library, 100 E. Abriendo Ave., from now until Aug. 31 and is sponsored by the local chapter of the Sierra Club, Rocky Mountain Wolf Project and the Pueblo City-County Library District.

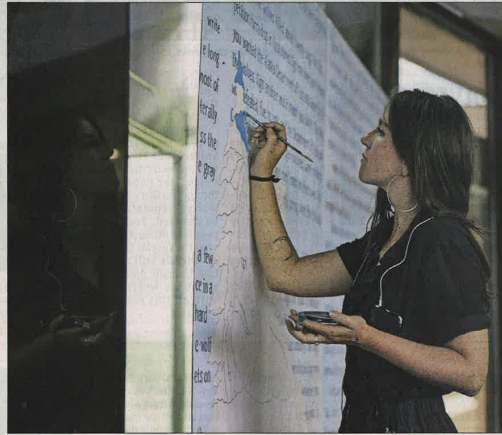
"It's an educational exhibit that gives an introduction to the importance of wolves, the ecology of wolves and their social units," said Maria Tucker, manager of special collections and museum services at the Rawlings Library. "The exhibit explores the science of wolves and depicts the family interactions and provides insights to wolf behavior."

The exhibit features photographs taken by documentarians Jim and Jamie Dutcher. While creating the film "Living With Wolves," the husband and wife team took stills to show how wolves live in packs.

These photos, as well as other materials regarding the science of wolves will be on display at the library to coincide with summer reading programs.

The library also will host other wolf-themed events. During the exhibit's opening day on June 8, a trainer and ambassador wolf from the Colorado Wolf and Wildlife Center in Divide held a presentation.

"The exhibit is a really beautiful photo representation," Tucker said. "There are also



Valerie Rose works on a mural for the National Geographic exhibit 'Living With Wolves' at the Robert Hoag Rawlings Public Library on June 7. (CHIEFTAIN PHOTO/ZACHARY ALLEN)

some hands-on interactive pieces to it so people can explore aspects with their family. We'll have different activities for children as well.

"It will be a great place for children and families to explore."

During the first weekend of the exhibit, Carbondale artist Valerie Rose created a large wolf-themed mural.

The mural is in two panels long and made to be moved from location to location.

Its theme is inspired by both the library and the species.

"The design will have images of these characters we've seen like the Big Bad Wolf, Little Red Riding Hood and there will be an excerpt from the book 'Of Wolves and Men' as well," Rose said. "I was inspired to use this specific design because we're at a library and because you can look at it and then walk over to



Photos taken by Jim and Jamie Dutcher while filming the 'Living With Wolves' documentary are on display at the Rawlings Library until Aug. 31. (CHIEFTAIN PHOTO/ZACHARY ALLEN)

See WOLVES, D2

D2 Sunday, June 16, 2019 The Pueblo Chieftain • Pueblo, Colorado



'Living With Wolves' includes fur, bones, and facts concerning the species. (CHIEFTAIN PHOTO/ZACHARY ALLEN)

## WOLVES

From Page D1

to the science section and read about wolves or walk to the fiction section and read a different book that portrays them in a different way."

Rose loves wolves and has since she was in high school. While she was in an AP environmental science class as a senior in high school she began to think about wolves in a different

light.

Because of this class, she became a geography and environmental studies major in college where she'd write several papers about the wolf's reintroduction to Yellowstone.

"I always found it fascinating," she said. "I believe wolves are hugely beneficial to the ecosystem and they are not how some people portray them to be."

Now a full-time artist, Rose focuses nearly half of her mural work on wolves

and spreading positive messages about the species.

She encourages people to read more about the animal and to educate themselves on their importance. Her hope is that through further education, wolves' reputations can be changed. Rose wants people to understand how vital the species is.

"There's still so much that humans don't know about the wolves, even with all this research," Rose said.



Michelle Smith of the Colorado Wolf and Wildlife Center brought Shaya the wolf-mix and onsite ambassador to the opening of the 'Living With Wolves' exhibit at the Rawlings Library on June 8. (CHIEFTAIN PHOTO/ZACHARY ALLEN)

## CALENDAR

### STANDING TODAY

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1:30 to 3:30 p.m., Thurston  
Room of the Robert Hoag  
Rawlings Public Library, 100  
E. Abriendo Ave., 251-1938 or  
jpf6476@hotmail.com.

**Pueblo Storytellers:** 1 to 2:30  
p.m., Robert Hoag Rawlings  
Public Library, 100 E. Abriendo  
Ave., all adults welcome,  
543-6234. 11th St., 542-4578  
or 821-2756. Pueblo Eagles  
Auxiliary, 1450 Montezuma

**Cast Off Knitters:** 1 to 4  
p.m., Pueblo West Library,  
298 S. Joe Martinez Blvd.,  
330-465-0193.

### SATURDAY

**Lacemakers of Southern  
Colorado:** 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.,  
Lamb Library, 2525 S. Pueblo  
Blvd.

## AT THE LIBRARY

### New Books

From the Pueblo City-County Library District

#### Fiction

1. Recursion – Blake Crouch\*
2. Ayesha at Last – Uzma Jalaluddin\*
3. Natalie Tan's Book of Luck and Fortune – Roselle Lim\*
4. The Summer Guests – Mary Alice Monroe\*
5. Call Your Daughter Home – Deb Spera\*
6. Skin Game – Stuart Woods\*

#### Non-Fiction

1. **Elderhood:** Redefining Aging, Transforming Medicine, Reimagining Life – Louise Aronson\*
2. **One Giant Leap:** The Impossible Mission That Flew Us to the Moon – Charles Fishman\*
3. **Reckoning:** The Epic Battle Against Sexual Abuse and Harassment – Linda Hirshman\*
4. **Covert Cows and Chick-Fil-A:** How Faith, Cows, and Chicken Built an Iconic Brand – Steve Robinson\*
5. **The Kennedy Heirs:** John, Caroline, and the New Generation – A Legacy of Triumph and Tragedy – J. Randy Taraborrelli\*
6. **Love Thy Neighbor:** A Muslim Doctor's Struggle for Home in Rural America – Ayaz Virji M.D.\*

\*Titles are either available or can be recommended in the eBook format through PCCLD's Cloud Library Collection



# LOCAL NEWS

## Third Pillars of Unity Summit on Saturday

By Jon Pompia  
The Pueblo Chieftain

For the third year, the Pillars of Unity advocacy group is hosting its Community/School Safety/Pueblo Image Summit.

The event was launched as a way to inspire and uplift area students and inform the community at large of the need to play a central role in the lives of young people.

A stated goal is to “address critical issues affecting local youth with an eye toward improving the city’s overall image – from the standpoint of both resident and outsider.”

Said Ted Lopez, one of the Pillars, “What we hear and read a lot about is the negative aspect of what happens in our community and not enough about the good and positive things that are taking place. At our

summit, citizens can learn and become more informed about efforts ongoing right now and about programs intended to inspire and support our youth to believe in themselves and to set goals. At the same time, we as informed members of the community can spread the positive news whenever the negative image of Pueblo is repeated by members of our own community or outsiders.

“The Pillars of Unity strives to educate and motivate individuals and groups to take on a more positive attitude when it comes to our perception of our community.”

This year’s summit begins at 9 a.m. Saturday at Centennial High School’s auditorium.

In addition to offering a roster of guest speakers, the symposium will serve as a resource fair and opportunity

for networking, with representation from YWCA Southern Colorado, Rocky Mountain SER, the American Legion Auxiliary, Moms Demand Action for Common Sense Gun Laws, the Community Opioid Response Program, Communities That Care and Bessemer Eilers & Grove Improvement Network, among others.

See PILLARS, B2

B2 Wednesday, June 19, 2019 The Pueblo Chieftain • Pueblo, Colorado

### PILLARS

From Page B1

The day’s keynote address, “Start Where You Are!,” will be given at 1:45 p.m. by George J. Koustas, vice president of Koustas Realty Inc. and a 1961 Central High School graduate.

Rounding out the agenda are:

- Diana Jurado, a community outreach specialist, who will address youth and marijuana use: its impact on the youth brain and what adults can do to discourage its use, at 10 a.m.
- Glenn E. Ferguson, director of youth and family services for Health Solutions, will address the gallery on youth issues (suicide, substance abuse, early childhood attachment) at 10:45 a.m.

- From the Pueblo City-County Library District,

Executive Director Jon Walker will speak at 1 p.m. about the impact and influence the library district has in the community and its role as a safe location for young people to visit, to learn at and enjoy activities. Walker is advocating for reauthorizing of a bond issue to sustain and continue those services.

- Retired NBA player Ervin Johnson, a community ambassador for the Denver Nuggets, will inspire listeners with a talk based on believing in oneself, the value of hard work and a positive attitude, along with the benefits of goal setting, at noon.

Free pizza and beverages will be served during a 12:30 p.m. lunch break.

For more information, contact Lopez at 821-2500 or [tlopezcoyotenet@outlook.com](mailto:tlopezcoyotenet@outlook.com).

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# LOCAL NEWS

## Kids first



Dave "Mr. Magic" Moncrieff oils and stretches 4-year-old AziReya Proffer's "squeaky" arm as he entertains at Pueblo Cooperative Care Center during Kidz Day on Friday. (CHIEFTAIN PHOTO/STEPHEN SWOFFORD)

## Little ones take center stage at care center

By Jon Pompia  
The Pueblo Chieftain

With a sly grin and a smooth technique honed over two decades, Dave "Mr. Magic" Moncrieff swiftly began to shape the inflated elastic tube into an animal form.

Looking on with anticipation was a little girl with disheveled hair and a cherub-like face, who jumped a little when a too tight twist of the balloon resulted in a discernible "pop."

"What did you do?," the child meekly asked.

"I broke it," came Moncrieff's reply. "But that's OK. How about a 'poppy?'"

"No," the little one protested. "I said I wanted a puppy."

"Oh, that's right."

And in an instant, Moncrieff transformed the damaged latex into a canine: albeit one slightly smaller than he originally intended due to the unforeseen tear.

"Remember: it's a Chihuahua, not a poodle," he said, handing over the treasure to the thrilled recipient.

With a smile that could illuminate all of downtown, the child scurried away, her newfound inflated friend held close to the heart.

When you don't have a lot, a little can mean the world.

Day in and day out, the tireless staff of Pueblo Cooperative Care Center dispense the food staples and essentials struggling families need to survive.

It's a vital action whose scope continues to grow: a sign that

for many, things are far from getting better.

Three times each summer, the children of those families are offered something above and beyond basic sustenance: a gift that is, arguably, just as valuable: an opportunity to be a kid, at least for a morning.

"Many of these kids are suffering from a lack of proper nutrition," said Corry Higbee, executive director of the center. "But more than that, in many cases, they don't have any social aspect or component in their life. So if we can bring a little fun to the distribution process, it helps mask that a little bit and helps them enjoy the environment a little more."

On Friday, the first Kidz Day again drew its traditional long, anticipatory ribbon of children to the center. There, youngsters ranging in age from toddlers to teenagers were encouraged to exchange anguishes known only to them for balloon creatures, a bag of fresh popcorn, food items and a small gift and the opportunity for healthier vision.

But above all, that needed glimmer of hope from a community that cares.

As the guests of honor, adults in tow, made their way into the center, they were greeted by the jovial ambassador that is Mr. Magic — part clown, part illusionist, all comedian — who enchanted his gallery like only he could.

"That's a nice pink cap," Moncrieff offered to a bespectacled little girl who looked at

his own oversized, multicolored hat with a visible curiosity. "Can I look under it?"

Inside the covering, much to the girl's amazement, was a small rubber chicken, which Moncrieff quickly plucked out.

"Well, would you look at that," Moncrieff said before vanishing the curio in a flash, further baffling his audience of one.

As Moncrieff worked his wonders, the delectable odor of fresh popcorn drifted over to his makeshift stage, stealing a bit of his amiable thunder.

Behind the maker were siblings Gwendolynn, Elizabeth and Justin Paul, the grandchildren of center director Higbee.

"We're here today because we want the kids to be as happy as they can," said Gwendolynn, a student at Pueblo County High School. "A lot of these kids don't have a lot."

"And after we give them the popcorn, I wish them a happy day and a good life," added Justin.

A cornerstone of Kidz Day are Power-Up Kidz Sacks, which offer nourishment for the body, as well as the mind, in the form of snacks and age-appropriate books donated by Executives Partnering to Invest in Children Pueblo.

In the summer months, when school is out of session, the center distributes thousands of the Sacks through the Kidz Days, as do partners El Centro del Quinto Sol and the Patrick

### KIDS

From Page A9

A. Lucero Library.

Although there was a shortage of budgetary funds for sacks this year, distribution was made possible through an army of volunteers, including Southern Colorado Community Foundation, Bank of the San Juan, KPHT Radio, Little Caesars Pizza, Pueblo Web Design, Pueblo Bikers United and Pueblo County United Way.

These small bags of hope,

along with a small trinket or toy, were being handed out to each child by sisters Layla and Jenise Walker.

"I like making kids happy," said Jenise, 10.

"Some of these kids have toys at home and some don't."

"That's why we volunteer," Layla, 12, added.

In another part of the center, an equally critical service, free vision screening, was being provided by members of the Pueblo Charter Lions Club.

"We're screening for six different eye diseases, not just perception and distance

reading, things like that," said club member Kathy Valenzuela. "And if we have a referral that comes up, we let the parents know that we suggest that they see an eye doctor."

"And the Lions Club will pick up the cost for the exam and glasses, if needed."

The next Kidz Day celebrations take place July 12 and Aug. 2.

For more information, the care center can be reached at 543-7484.

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Dave "Mr. Magic" Moncrieff entertains kids at Pueblo Cooperative Care Center during Kidz Day on Friday. (CHIEFTAIN PHOTO/STEPHEN SWOFFORD)



From left, Anthony Proffer, 8, Ariyana Proffer, 16, and AziReya, 4, laugh as Dave "Mr. Magic" Moncrieff performs tricks for kids at Pueblo Cooperative Care Center during Kidz Day on Friday.



Brielle Vargas, 2, reacts as she realizes her three little bunnies have turned into one large bunny during a trick by Dave "Mr. Magic" Moncrieff at Pueblo Cooperative Care Center during Kidz Day on Friday.





## CALENDAR

### STANDING

#### TODAYKnit and Crochet

**Table Gang:** 1:30 to 3:30 p.m., Thurston Room of the Robert Hoag Rawlings Public Library, 100 E. Abriendo Ave., 251-1938 or jpf6476@hotmail.com.**MONDAY**Pueblo Storytellers: 1 to 2:30 p.m., Robert Hoag Rawlings Public Library, 100 E. Abriendo Ave., all adults welcome, 543-6234.11th St., 542-4578 or 821-2756.

**Pueblo West Toastmasters:** meeting, 6:30 to 8 p.m., Pueblo West Library, 298 S. Joe Martinez Blvd., pueblowestm.toastmastersclubs.org or 426-7805.

**Cast Off Knitters:** 1 to 4 p.m., Pueblo West Library, 298 S. Joe Martinez Blvd., 330-465-0193.

Pueblo Toastmasters: 6 p.m., Robert Hoag Rawlings Public Library, 100 E. Abriendo Ave.,415-1176.

**SATURDAYAll Pueblo Grows Seed-Lending Library:** 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., community seed exchange, Thurston Room of the Robert Hoag Rawlings Public Library, 100 E. Abriendo Ave. 583-6566 or volunteers@allpueblogrows.org.**ET CETERA**Calendar

## AT THE LIBRARY

### New Books

#### From the Pueblo City-County Library District

### Fiction

1. The Oracle – Clive Cussler\*
2. Ask Again, Yes – Mary Beth Keane\*
3. The Burning Chambers – Kate Mosse\*
4. Fall; or, Dodge in Hell – Neal Stephenson\*
5. **Anna of Kleve:** The Princess in the Portrait – Alison Weir
6. Frankissstein – Jeanette Winterson\*

### Non-Fiction

1. **Kingdom of Lies:** Unnerving Adventures in the World of Cybercrime – Kate Fazzini\*
2. **Every Man a Hero:** A Memoir of D-Day, the First Wave at Omaha Beach, and a World at War – Ray Lambert\*
3. **Underland:** A Deep Time Journey – Robert Macfarland\*
4. **Eyes in the Sky:** The Secret Rise of Gorgon Stare and How It Will Watch Us All – Authur Holland Michel\*
5. **Songs of America:** Patriotism, Protest, and the Music that Made a Nation – Jon Meacham\*
6. **Broken Places & Outer Spaces:** Finding Creativity in the Unexpected – Nnedi Okorafor\*

\*Titles are either available or can be recommended in the eBook format through PCCLD's Cloud Library Collection

# LOCAL NEWS

## Reaching new Heights



Monica Hernandez, right, of The Colorado Trust, visits with volunteer Selina Ozuna during Saturday's picnic in Eastwood Heights. (CHIEFTAIN PHOTO/JON POMPIA PHOTOS)

### Partnership targets East Side neighborhood

By Jon Pompia  
The Pueblo Chieftain

Three distinct entities with a shared mission are impacting a neighborhood with a rich legacy.

As part of an ongoing effort to unify and uplift Eastwood Heights, commonly known as Dog Patch, the Pueblo Police Department, The Colorado Trust and El Pueblo History Museum hosted an outreach picnic Saturday in St. Anne's Park.

In their own unique ways, police department staff, The Colorado Trust and the history museum have taken Eastwood Heights under a collective wing.

"We are a statewide health equity foundation, focusing on residents and promoting health in communities," said Monica Hernandez, the Pueblo-based community partner with The Colorado Trust. "And are we doing this through partnerships and collaborations."

"As the police department and El Pueblo History Museum are working in Dog Patch as well, it made sense to come together today for this picnic."

In addition to the chance to indulge in barbecue, cold cuts, fruit and refreshments, guests were offered the opportunity to visit with representatives from the three hosting agencies, as well as those from Rocky Mountain SER (Head Start), the Pueblo City-County Library District and Pueblo Community Health Center.

Through Hernandez and The Colorado Trust, Eastwood Heights residents were encouraged to sound off on what makes their community great.

Overwhelming, "the people" was the first choice.

Also sought was feedback on what the neighborhood is lacking — a swimming pool,



Pueblo Police Department officer Ken Cordova visits with Eastwood Heights residents during Saturday's picnic.

festivals, street lights, clean-up projects and a stronger police presence were among the offerings — with drugs, gangs and lack of amenities cited as detriments.

To increase law enforcement presence, protective and proactive capacities, two members of the Pueblo Police Department selected Eastwood Heights for a Community Oriented Policing, COP, project.

"Throughout our department, everyone has an opportunity to do a COP project, and this is the neighborhood that I and Detective Alex Hovet chose back in April," said patrol Officer Ken Cordova. "This is a great community and we wanted to get some more interaction with the people."

"And they have been 100 percent welcoming."

Chief of Police Troy Davenport said that while Cordova and Hovet "are wholeheartedly invested in the Community Oriented Policing project, all of the officers that work different shifts are engaged in the project; we just have two that are leading the cause."

"It's a multi-pronged

approach. Rapport is absolutely an essential piece of it. We want to know what the community wants. It's one thing to look at data and experiences and try to bring services into the community that residents don't perceive as important. So we've had a series of meetings to solicit what they think are the issues."

For its part, El Pueblo History Museum is spearheading the Dog Patch Memory Project.

"It's an oral history to help the neighborhood connect to their history and build community capacity based on that shared history," explained Simon Tearpack, deputy director of El Pueblo History Museum. "Our exhibits coordinator, Jose Ortega, has overseen oral history interviews, with both memory- and picture-collecting days."

"The end result will be an exhibit at El Pueblo History Museum. Dog Patch has a really rich history and really rich community ties and they are very proud of their heritage."

See HEIGHTS, A6

## HEIGHTS

From Page A5

No stranger to Eastwood Heights, Selina Ozuna was volunteering on the food line as part of The Colorado Trust.

"It was always a great community," Ozuna said. "I grew up on 10th Street and my grandma lived three

blocks away from the park. It was a community and I knew all my neighbors, walking to my grandma's house. In the summer, everybody watched out for each other's kids. It was a little Mayberry."

"And now? I see that there needs to be improvement. It's not as tight-knit as it used to be. And that's what the partnership is all about. And today is a wonderful start."

Floyd Jaramillo, perhaps the most vocal supporter of Eastwood Heights, was pleased with the picnic turnout.

"This is needed to unite our neighborhood," he said of the gathering.

"What we need is to build a relationship between the community and our police force."

Pueblo's mayor said events like Saturday's picnic reinforce the distinctive

makeup of the city.

"Pueblo has unique neighborhoods," said Nick Gradisar. "A lot of them reflect the neighborhoods that came here to build in particular areas, and that culture still survives."

"We have fantastic neighborhoods because of that immigrant population and events like this affirm that."

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Mountain West News Bureau (<https://programs/mountain-west-news-bureau/>)

## Could Colorado Bring Back Gray Wolves By Popular Demand?

By ALI BUDNER / PEOPLE/ALI-BUDNER | JUN 24, 2019

The last place you might expect to find a wolf is inside a public library, a place that doesn't even allow pets in the door.

But on an early summer day, Shaya, a so-called "wolf ambassador" was pacing the 4th floor of the downtown library in Pueblo, Colorado, surrounded by an enthusiastic crowd.

Shaya, a grayish-white pale-eyed creature, traveled here from the Colorado Wolf and Wildlife Center (<https://www.wolfeducation.org/>) about an hour away in Divide. His handler, Michelle Smith, explained he's mostly wolf, with a touch of domesticated dog. Smith held Shaya on a leash, handed him the occasional piece of beef jerky, and answered questions from a swarm of excited kids.



([https://mediad.publicbroadcasting.net/p/krcc/files/styles/x\\_large/public/201906/boy\\_asking\\_question\\_1.jpg](https://mediad.publicbroadcasting.net/p/krcc/files/styles/x_large/public/201906/boy_asking_question_1.jpg))

Boy asking question about wolves at Pueblo library

CREDIT ALI BUDNER / 91.5 KRCC

Shaya may have been the event's main attraction, but there was a bigger goal there beyond just giving kids a chance to see a wild animal up close. The event was educating potential voters. A table in the corner of the room staffed with volunteers hosted a display of pamphlets about the plight of wolves.

Over the past several decades, gray wolves have been reintroduced to places throughout the Mountain West in Montana, Idaho, and Yellowstone National Park. But those programs have been decided on and carried out primarily by government wildlife agencies.



([https://mediad.publicbroadcasting.net/p/krcc/files/styles/x\\_large/public/201906/boy\\_and\\_wolf.jpg](https://mediad.publicbroadcasting.net/p/krcc/files/styles/x_large/public/201906/boy_and_wolf.jpg))

Kids feeding Shaya the wolf at the Pueblo library

CREDIT ALI BUDNER / 91.5 KRCC

Wildlife advocates in Colorado want to do it differently. They want to bring the question to the ballot box (<https://leg.colorado.gov/content/restoration-gray-wolves-0>). A group called the Rocky Mountain Wolf Action Fund (<https://www.wolfactionfund.com/>) is working to get an initiative on the state ballot for 2020 (<https://www.sos.state.co.us/pubs/elections/Initiatives/titleBoard/results/2019-2020/79Results.html>).

Delia Malone is a Sierra Club (<https://www.sierraclub.org/colorado/wolves>) ecologist working on the campaign. She said the ballot question is very simple: "Do Coloradans want wolves restored to Colorado?"

Link to story:

<https://www.krcc.org/post/could-colorado-bring-back-gray-wolves-popular-demand>



APR 9, 2019

# BUSINESS

## WHAT TO WATCH FOR TODAY

• Commerce Department releases durable goods for May.

## Water quality report available

The Pueblo Chieftain

Pueblo Water's annual water quality report shows that the city's drinking water meets all federal and state requirements for drinking water quality.

Officially known as the Consumer Confidence Report, the document is available for viewing on Pueblo Water's website: [pueblowater.org](http://pueblowater.org).

Customers may request to have a printed copy of the report mailed to them by calling the Water Quality Department at 584-0467. Printed copies are available at Pueblo Water's customer service lobby at Fourth Street and Grand Avenue and at the Rawlings, Barkman, Lamb and Lucero branches of the Pueblo City-County Library District.

The 2019 CCR provides data collected during the 2018 calendar year. It includes information on source water protection and how Pueblo Water treats water to remove potentially harmful contaminants before distributing the finished water to users throughout the city. Although the water produced by the Whitlock Treatment Plant and pumped into Pueblo's water distribution system contains no detectable lead, the CCR contains special information about lead in drinking water.

Customers whose homes contain lead piping or plumbing materials may have higher levels of lead in their drinking water than other homes in Pueblo. The CCR informs these customers how they may decrease the potential amount of lead in their water by flushing their tap for thirty seconds to two minutes before using the water for consumption. The United States Environmental Protection Agency requires every public drinking water system in the U.S. to provide an updated CCR to its customers each year. In the past, the CCR was required to be sent by postal mail to all customers. However, the EPA now allows the CCR to be published electronically.

"Electronic distribution is more efficient and less expensive than printing and mailing physical copies," said Paul Fanning, a spokesman for Pueblo Water. "In addition, a greater amount of water quality information — beyond that required by law — is provided on the web." For further infor-

## LOCAL BRIEFS

### Kids Parade set Aug. 10

The Kids Parade, sponsored by Pueblo City-County Library District and part of the annual Summer Reading program, is scheduled at 10 a.m. Aug. 10.

This year's theme is "A Universe of Stories."

The parade route is Abriendo Avenue between Quincy Street and Broadway Avenue.

Following the parade, Party in the Park begins at 10:30 a.m. to noon in Grome Park, located on Abriendo Avenue between King and Jewell avenues. There will be food and fun for all ages.

Party at the Park, co-sponsored by Pueblo Parks and Recreation, is free and open to the public.

Parade participants can pick up an entry form at all PCCLD locations or online at [pueblolibrary.org/kidsparede](http://pueblolibrary.org/kidsparede).

Parade rules and regulations as well as award categories also are listed on the form. Forms may be dropped off or mailed to Rawlings Library, Attn: Community Relations, 100 E. Abriendo Ave., Pueblo, CO 81004. They also may be emailed to [sara.schwartz@pueblo-library.org](mailto:sara.schwartz@pueblo-library.org).

There is no registration fee for non-commercial parade entries of less than nine people.

For entries of 10 or more people or for a commercial enterprise, an early-bird registration fee of \$30 must be received by July 15. After this date, the fee increases to \$50 and must be received by July 29. Checks can be made to Pueblo City-County Library District.

## DIVERSIONS

### July StoryKeepers

StoryKeepers will host its July session at 10 a.m.

July 6th at 10:00 am at the InfoZone Theatre in Robert Hoag Rawlings Library, 100 E. Abriendo Ave. The theme is "I Remember When...", and attendees are encouraged to come and share about their memories from significant events in America's history. Refreshments will be served. This is a free community event held monthly sponsored by the Pueblo Area Association on Aging and Peoples Home Services. The setting is open-mic style and all are welcome.

Questions may be directed to Ellyn Reynolds at 251-9808.



# OPINIONS

## Protecting some of Pueblo's greatest treasures



Patty Kester

There are benefits to living in Pueblo. Wide open spaces with mountains on the horizon, breathtaking sunrises and sunsets, football games at Dutch Clark Stadium, the Colorado State Fair, basketball at the slab, Pass Key specials and the ongoing competition for the best slopper. Some are more recent, but we've come to expect them: The Fourth of July celebration at the Historic Arkansas Riverwalk of Pueblo, the Chile and Frijoles Festival in September and ready access to the nation's best library.

The Nature and Wildlife Discovery Center manages Pueblo treasures. Most of us have visited them, maybe even several times. Like many things in our lives, we assume they will always be there.

The Mountain Park Environmental Center, located in the historic Pueblo Mountain Park, was established in 1999. The Nature and Raptor Center of Pueblo located in the northwest area of Pueblo along the Arkansas River was founded in 1979.

The twin entities that shared similar missions formed Nature and Wildlife Discovery Center in January 2018 to offer a world of wonder and discovery in nature's classroom.

The merger was costly. The staff was larger than the new organization could afford. Many donors who had contributed to both organizations

reduced their contributions to the equivalent of what they previously would give to one of the organizations. The costliest program, Earth Studies, provided for all fifth-grade classes in Pueblo City Schools (D60), was heavily subsidized by NWDC through contributions and grants. A foundation that provided much of that funding changed its funding focus and the funding was lost.

Fast forward five months. Expenses were mounting, equipment was breaking down, both city-owned properties were declining. Overwhelmed by the challenges in combination with personal matters, the executive director left.

Several staff members were laid off or left for other employment. We reduced the number of Earth Studies sessions. We reduced

maintenance to the bare minimum. Caretakers David Martin and Henry Pounds stepped up to carry maintenance responsibilities temporarily. We reduced expenses, then cut back even more. We appealed to our membership and supporters and to the City Council for emergency funding and an increase in ongoing maintenance funding. We submitted and received several grants, including but not limited to the Rawlings Foundation, Pueblo Day Nursery Children's Foundation and El Pomar Foundation.

With funding from the city of Pueblo, we hired two outstanding, experienced maintenance men, Ken Krause and Tony Pemberton, who have the expertise to repair vehicles and equipment, and address the deferred maintenance issues. They have made

a huge difference.

Our program director, Ashley Nestman, shouldered extra responsibilities as program director, camp director and counselor. She has worked tirelessly to ensure quality program with minimal staff.

The raptor center, under the capable leadership of Diana Miller, continues to fascinate the public with educational programs while rehabilitating hundreds of injured and/or ill birds of prey.

Tami Montoya and Dave Van Manen, founder of Mountain Park Environmental Center, created Earthkeeper Nature School, which serves preschool and kindergarten students and, to our knowledge, is the first fully licensed outdoor preschool/kindergarten in Colorado.

See KESTER, B4



# BUSINESS

## On the job hunt for 85 years

Pueblo Workforce Center recently was awarded 'Best in Business' award

By Karen Vigil  
The Pueblo Chieftain

Helping people reach their dreams. Helping people love their careers. Helping the Pueblo community become its best.

For nearly a century, the Pueblo Workforce Center (as it was renamed in 1998) has been playing out those roles.

The agency was borne out of seemingly unceasing hardship. In 1933, during the devastation of the Great Depression, America's economy was bleeding. There were some 65,000 Coloradans out of work.

The US employment rate was 24.9% and Congress realized the crisis of Americans attempting to find jobs had to be solved.

On Feb. 28, 1934, Colorado's first state-run employment office opened in Pueblo. The work of helping people find jobs began.

Eighty-five years later, that work along with expanded community partnerships goes on, mostly quietly and without recognition.

But recently, the Pueblo Workforce Center, 212 W. Third St., was honored as being a leading provider of employment and training services with the presentation of the 2019 Colorado Springs Business Journal's "Best in Business" award.

In giving the award, the Journal noted the agency has become much more than a jobs broker.

Bill Thoennes, spokesperson for the Colorado Workforce Center — the Pueblo center's parent agency — said that's an accurate assessment.

In the last 12 months, the agency has assisted more than 6,300 job seekers.

"Staff at the Pueblo Workforce Center can do a critical assessment of a job seeker's career goals and how their skills stack up against the type of work being sought. And for some job seekers, the Pueblo Workforce Center has been a catalyst to bring about a change they desperately needed," said Thoennes.

Beyond that, Thoennes said, the workforce center's work has become more expansive and sophisticated.

"Since July of last year, the Pueblo Workforce Center has invested \$350,000 in helping hundreds of people complete a certificate program, enter college, obtain a degree, stay in an apprenticeship program, obtain their GED, gain work experience, and find employment."

Thoennes said the agency's efforts are multi-pronged and done in concert with a host of agencies, both public and private.

He said the Pueblo workforce center forged strong partnerships with entities such as Pueblo Community College, Colorado State University-Pueblo, SEL Tutoring and IntelliTec



On Feb. 28, 1934, Colorado's first state-run employment office opened in Pueblo. The Pueblo Workforce Center (as it was renamed in 1998) recently was awarded the Colorado Springs Business Journal's "Best in Business" award. [CHIEFTAIN PHOTO/KAREN VIGIL]

College in Pueblo. The agency is working with other government agencies such as the Department of Human Services and Pueblo's library district, along with community organizations such as the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and Catholic Charities.

Thoennes said the partnerships "are sharing ideas and getting important work accomplished. When adding collaborations with the city's business community, the work becomes truly revolutionary."

Joe Mahoney, executive director of Catholic Charities Diocese of Pueblo, echoed his words.

"The close integration with the Pueblo Workforce Center has helped us serve all of Pueblo County with our transitional jobs program, ReHire Colorado. Jobs are

a way out of poverty and Catholic Social teaching calls for the dignity of work to help families thrive and prosper," Mahoney said.

Diana Esquibel, director of the Pueblo and Upper Arkansas Sub-areas for Colorado Department and Employment, said she is extremely proud of the agency being recognized.

"We thank the Colorado Springs Business Journal for this prestigious award," she says. "I hope it will showcase that we have a long history of nurturing our region's economic environment. In both good times and bad, we have been providing employment solutions to businesses and job seekers, offering a comprehensive package of services for Pueblo."

Esquibel, who was promoted to her position 14 months ago after 14½ years with the agency, said the award actually is more of a reflection on the community than the workforce center.

"It takes partnerships to strengthen our community — to make sure that the youth in our community know that Pueblo is a great place to be and that there is opportunity for them. And that others all the way through older workers know there is a place for them in the workforce."

"That's the fabric of our community that makes me so proud for me to be a part of all of it. I love my career because of Pueblo."

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Esquibel



Mahoney

## CALENDAR

### TODAY

#### **Knit and Crochet Table Gang:**

1:30 to 3:30 p.m., Thurston Room of the Robert Hoag Rawlings Public Library, 100 E. Abriendo Ave., 251-1938 or jpf6476@hotmail.com.

#### **MONDAY** Pueblo Storytellers:

1 to 2:30 p.m., Robert Hoag Rawlings Public Library, 100 E. Abriendo Ave., all adults welcome, 543-6234.11th St., 542-4578 or 821-2756.

#### **Cast Off Knitters:** 1 to 4

p.m., Pueblo West Library, 298 S. Joe Martinez Blvd., 330-465-0193.

**Pueblo West Writers:** meeting, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., Pueblo West Library, Jerry King room A, 298 S. Joe Martinez Blvd., [pueblowestwriters.wix.com/pwwg](http://pueblowestwriters.wix.com/pwwg)

### SATURDAY

#### **Lacemakers of Southern**

**Colorado:** 9 a.m., Pueblo West Library, 298 S. Joe Martinez Blvd., 250-4051.

## AT THE LIBRARY

### New Books

From the Pueblo City-County Library District

#### Fiction

1. Big Sky – Kate Atkinson\*
2. Evvie Drake Starts Over – Linda Holmes\*
3. The Most Fun We Ever Had – Claire Lombardo\*
4. After the End – Claire Mackintosh\*
5. Disappearing Earth – Julia Phillips\*
6. On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous – Ocean Vuong\*

#### Non-Fiction

1. **The Weather Machine:** A Journey Inside the Forecast – Andrew Blum\*
2. **Wild and Crazy Guys:** How the Comedy Mavericks of the '80s Changed Hollywood Forever – Nick de Semlyen\*
3. **The Volunteer:** One Man, an Underground Army, and the Secret Mission to Destroy Auschwitz – Jack Fairweather\*
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