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# Press and Publicity Report

SEPTEMBER 2020

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## Pueblo library district gives 300 internet hotspots to students in D60 and D70



□ The Pueblo City-County Library District distributed 300 hotspots to Pueblo School District 60 and Pueblo County School District 70.

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By: [Anna Mankin](#)  
Posted at 7:37 PM, Sep 04, 2020  
and last updated 2020-09-04 21:37:15-04

PUEBLO — The Pueblo City-County Library District is continuing to help narrow the digital divide in the county.

The library district distributed 300 internet hotspots to Pueblo School District 60 and Pueblo County School District 70.

The hotspots will be rented out for free for three months. After the three months, it will be judged on a case by case basis if a student can still rent them out.

"It is super rewarding I'm actually personally contacting the families in district 70 to let them know when their hot spots are available and just the joy some parents are expressing is just very rewarding to hear," said Director of User Services Jill Kleven.

This project was made possible through grants from Kiwanis of Pueblo and the Sperry S. and Ella Graber Packard Fund for Colorado.

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# The Pueblo Chieftain

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## Library lessens digital divide for Pueblo students



Anthony A. Mestas @mestas3517

**Wednesday**

Sep 9, 2020 at 1:09 PM

While a majority of students in both local school districts now have access to digital devices, internet access remains an issue.

To help with that, the Pueblo City-County Library District distributed 300 internet hotspots to Pueblo School District 60 and Pueblo County School District 70.

Funding for the project was provided through grants from Kiwanis of Pueblo and the Sperry S. and Ella Graber Packard Fund for Colorado.

Library officials said about 2,000 households in Pueblo County do not have access to wired internet and 11,000 households do not have access to 25 Mbps wired broadband.

"The digital divide has significantly widened during the pandemic. Young people without access to the tools they need to succeed in the digital learning environment are at a significant disadvantage, unable to realize their full potential," Melanie Bravo, program director for the Sperry S. and Ella Graber Packard Fund for Pueblo, said in a statement.

"That loss of potential has a devastating impact on our community. As an advocate for youth, the Sperry S. and Ella Graber Packard Fund for Pueblo is proud to partner with the Pueblo City-County Library District to ensure that every young person, regardless of their current circumstances, has what they need to thrive in the digital learning environment."

Students who received a hotspot was based upon need as determined by school district officials.

Students in Pueblo's higher learning institutions also have increased access to digital tools. Libraries at both Pueblo Community College and Colorado State University Pueblo will each have 20 Chromebooks and hotspots available for their students to check out. Those items have a three month check out period.

"The Packard Fund for Pueblo has provided such an impactful gift to Pueblo and as a community, we are extremely grateful. The library is proud to coordinate these initial resources for our community and will remain nimble to provide needed resources and services during these unprecedented times," said Nick Potter, director of the library district's Community Relations and Development.

Chieftain reporter Anthony A. Mestas can be reached by email at [amestas@chieftain.com](mailto:amestas@chieftain.com) or at [twitter.com/mestas3517](https://twitter.com/mestas3517). Help support local journalism with a subscription to the Chieftain at [chieftain.com/subscribenow](https://chieftain.com/subscribenow).

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## Southern Colorado Veterans Food Distribution event takes place in Pueblo



THE EVENT PUT ON BY THE CENTER FOR AMERICAN VALUES HAPPENED AT THE RAWLINGS LIBRARY IN PUEBLO FROM 10 UNTIL TWO.



By: [Tyler Dumas](#)

Posted at 5:11 PM, Sep 12, 2020

and last updated 2020-09-12 19:11:31-04

PUEBLO — The second Southern Colorado Veterans Food Distribution took place Saturday in Pueblo.

The event was put on by the Center for American Values and held at the Rawlings Library in Pueblo.

800 pre-qualified veterans and their families received a week's worth of packaged food, fresh produce, and personal care items.

Veterans from nine different counties benefited from the event and twice as many received food as did at the event last year.

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**Partnership reaches hundreds of vets in need**



Jon Pompia Education, health, Colorado State Fair @Jpompia

**Tuesday**

Sep 15, 2020 at 1:34 PM

Whether on the battlefield or within a community, there is strength in numbers.

In this instance, the prosperous power of partnership resulted in \$420,000 worth of assistance placed in the hands of veterans in need.

With the Center for American Values serving as the driving force, the second Southern Colorado Veterans Food Distribution saw 800 pre-qualified veterans and their families receive a parcel of dry goods, fresh produce, desserts and personal care items valued at \$500.

With sponsorship from Pueblo County, Humana, Xcel Energy, Coalition to Salute America's Heroes, Feed the Children, Care and Share, and Pueblo City and County Library District, the distribution doubled in scope from the previous year, reaching veterans in Pueblo, Bent, Conejos, Crowley, Custer, Fremont, Huerfano, Las Animas, and Otero counties.

"Last year, we were so moved by the distribution's impact that we were determined to make this year's event even bigger, ultimately helping many more of our heroes in need," said organizer Matt Albright of the Center for American Values."

The \$40,000 raised by the center in both cash and in-kind donations was leveraged through partnerships with Feed the Children, Care and Share, and Coalition to Salute America's Heroes.

"As a result, every dollar raised for this event was multiplied by 10," Albright added.

Retired Army Sgt. Mary Herrera, national spokesperson for the Coalition to Salute America's Heroes, said the distribution came at a timely juncture in history.

"In the time of COVID-19 and the economic crisis it has unleashed, we know that our work here is critical," Herrera said.

More than 30 veterans service organizations from across the region were asked to identify underserved veterans most in need of food and personal care items.

On distribution day, representatives of those service organizations, as well as individual veterans, arrived at the Rawlings Library to receive the donations from an army of volunteers, including a representative of Colorado State University Pueblo's Military and Veteran Success Center.

"Any time is a great time to give back to veterans," said Daniel Driskell. "Not all of us are on the same walk of life so it's important to remember our brothers and sisters. And those of that can help, help."

Driskell said those who benefited from the distribution recognized in their benefactors a familiar face.

"Veterans are rarely the first to ask for help," Driskell said. "So when they see their fellow brothers and sisters helping them, it lets them know that they are not some strange parasite that's a blight to society."

From the ROTC program at CSUP, 16 volunteers, including Clinton Nau, were on hand to both load up boxes and spread the word about the rewards of ROTC.

"Being an older guy myself, and previously enlisted, I realize that someday we are going to be in that position to need help," Nau said. "And so we want to be able to give out that help while we are able.

"I just wish we were able to do it more often."

After driving up from the Arkansas Valley, veterans service officers Rick Ward and Jay Scott collected 30 parcels destined for those who served and are now in need.

"For a lot of our veterans, this donation means, 'Now I can pay my gas bill and eat too,'" Scott said. "Or, 'Now I can eat and buy my medicine.'

"I really have some that are at that point in their lives."

"This will fill a very huge need for our vets," added Ward.

As the chief commander of the operation, Albright, charts in hand, bounced from station to station to ensure smooth sailing and that every veteran on the list received his or her due.

"Right now, in this difficult time with COVID, a lot of people are in need," Albright said. "And as much as we'd love to help everyone in the community, this is a special 'thank you' to our vets on the anniversary of 9/11.

"We don't see it as a handout but rather a hand-up."

Chieftain reporter Jon Pompia can be reached by email at [jpompia@chieftain.com](mailto:jpompia@chieftain.com) or at [twitter.com/jpompia](https://twitter.com/jpompia). Help support local journalism by subscribing to the Chieftain at [chieftain.com/subscribe](https://chieftain.com/subscribe)

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By [Dan Beedie](#)

September 15, 2020 6:31 pm

Published [September 15, 2020](#) 5:22 pm

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## COVID-19 highlights internet problems in Pueblo for school districts and families

PUEBLO, Colo. (KRDO) -- Classes in Pueblo District 60 might have started two weeks ago, but the district is still dealing with some issues getting internet for students learning from home.

Diana Austin from Pueblo reached out to KRDO News Channel 13 to say her kids don't have access to the internet, and D60 hasn't provided internet hot spots as promised.

"They got their laptops and the chargers but no hotspots," said Austin. "So I called the next morning and asked 'do you have any hotspots? Cause they didn't bring one home,'" Austin said. But the district didn't have an answer for when the family could expect a hot spot.

Austin says she was told D60 would provide internet hot spots for her two kids. More than two weeks into the school year neither have been able to do homework from home. She says they aren't alone.

"Several kids go to the same school, live where I live, and none of them have them," said Austin.

In a statement to KRDO News Channel 13, Pueblo School District says they've been working to provide proper education to all students during the pandemic, no matter the circumstances.

"In just two and a half weeks, D60 has distributed more than 12,500 Chromebooks, 2,500 iPads, and 150 hotspots to support the online learning resources provided to our families. This is a tremendous effort that our school district is proud of. Although we have provided free internet service to the majority of families in need, we have a few that we are still working with to make sure that their students have access to our digital classroom environment," D60 said in a statement.

"Between 12% and 13% of our community don't have internet or an internet-capable device," said Nick Potter with Pueblo and Pueblo County's Library District.

Pueblo's libraries have lent out around 500 internet hot spots to families in need so far this school year. However, library officials say it's an uphill battle.

According to a study from [Broadbandnow.com](https://www.broadbandnow.com), Pueblo County is the tenth most populated county in the state of Colorado. However, in terms of broadband infrastructure, the county ranks 60th.

"I think COVID-19 showed the lack of infrastructure we have for wireless technology and broadband speed," said Potter. "I was hearing stories of people in the community, seniors last year, when COVID-19 hit in March they were finishing up senior papers on a parent's cell phone. Not only were they sharing with a parent, but also with two other siblings."

Local News / Pueblo



**Dan Beedie**

Dan is a bureau reporter based out of Pueblo. [Learn more about Dan here.](#)

# The Pueblo Chieftain

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'It's who I am'



Anthony A. Mestas @mestas3517

**Sunday**

Sep 20, 2020 at 10:50 AM

Jon Walker has no idea how many books he's read in his lifetime. But it's a pretty large number.

The Pueblo City-County Library District Executive Director said he has read so many books —many of which he checks out from local libraries — that sometimes he forgets if he's read them before.

"I'll look at a book and I'll say, 'Did I already read that?' Sometimes I have to go back and check," Walker said with a laugh.

"I read all the time. It's something I've always enjoyed."

Throughout Walker's ever-morphing career as a books person, he's always been dedicated to the importance of libraries.

Walker, who has been with the library district since February of 2004, said as a young person he gravitated toward reading.

"History kind of appealed to me, as well as English literature. When I was in college, I found myself motivated by history. I became a history major as an undergraduate in college," Walker said.

"And, of course, as a history major, you read a lot. You also write a lot and I ended up really enjoying that."

During his undergraduate schooling at Oklahoma State University in the late '70s, Walker minored in philosophy, which required even more reading.

"You end up spending a lot of time in libraries and not only college academic libraries but also public libraries, too. When I got out of undergraduate school, I just sort of reflected on what I enjoyed doing and one of those things was the library," Walker recalled.

After graduation in 1977, Walker applied to work at the local public library, where he worked for two years in a paraprofessional position.

After that he attended the University of Tulsa to get his master's degree in history. He achieved that in 1981.

"At that point I fell back to my work in the public library ... I made a decision at that time in my early 20s that I thought public libraries was a place where I wanted to spend more of my professional time," Walker said.

It didn't take him too long to note that to go into that field, he needed to work on a master's degree in library and information studies, so he did that while working at a public library. He attained his master's of library and information studies at the University of Oklahoma in 1989.

After working at a couple different libraries, Walker ended up working at the Tulsa City, County Library in Tulsa, Okla.

He eventually moved into an administration position.

"I just really enjoyed the work. I really learned a lot working there and I had a lot of opportunities to grow in a lot of different ways. That was sort of by nature, I think. I tend to throw myself into whatever it is I am doing in a passionate way and I was able to do that in Tulsa," Walker said.

While serving as the associate director at the library in Tulsa in 2003, Walker said he thought about becoming a director somewhere.

"So I did a search. I had a few different opportunities, but Pueblo was special," Walker said.

The prior district director, Chuck Bates, had died and Pueblo was in a transition phase at the time.

"I came here and I just saw the opportunity for my family. My wife (Stacy) and I had two young boys (Ian and Sean) at the time. I brought them here and we liked the community. We liked a lot of what we saw, so we just decided to move from Tulsa to Pueblo," Walker said.

"Pueblo welcomed us, which was great."

Walker said working in Pueblo has been a great experience.

"It's a wonderful community. Like many communities around the country, it has its challenges. There are great people who live here. It's a great mix of different sets of cultures from different places," Walker said.

Walker said the abundant outdoor recreation opportunities in Colorado also sparked his interest.

"That's a passion of mine so for me it just worked out really well.

His two boys graduated from East High School with Ian Walker, 27, graduating from Pueblo Community College and Colorado State University Pueblo, and Sean Walker, 23, graduating from Yale University.

Walker said the library district in Pueblo is strong.

"I think we have engaged the community here in a really positive way and we've tried to be responsive to this community in providing the best possible public library service we can," Walker said.

Walker said he is proud of the staff and employees at the district.

"They have helped meet our mission. And I am really proud that the community has responded so well to our efforts," he said.

Under his leadership, Walker said the district has tried to be as transparent as it can.

"We realize that we have this public trust. We realize that we are a public library and that we are publicly funded by in large," Walker said.

"For me, the most important thing is that the libraries are used a lot and that we leverage that public investment and ensuring that people are served."

The district tracks the number of people who come to libraries as well as the number of books and library materials that are checked out. They also track the number of people using computer resources online and the number of people using facilities like meeting rooms.

"We measure our success based on that criteria," Walker said.

Walker said if there's a book on a shelf somewhere, it has potential, but it's only when the book is in the hand of a reader that it's being realized.

"It's really not good enough to just have a lot of books on shelves. That's just not sufficient. It has to be realized and that means we measure that in all these different ways," Walker said.

"We want books that people are going to use. We try to make sure that the things that we are doing in this public library are responsive to this community. That's been a real high priority as well as interaction with the community," Walker said.

For Walker, there's something undeniably special about reading. And he doesn't just love to read books, he loves to talk about them, too.

"I read a lot of American and British 19th and 20th century fiction writers. I really don't keep track of all the books I've read. I wish I had done that," Walker said.

"I do have at least some recent reading history because I mostly check out books from the library. That's most of what I read. And our catalog system will keep your borrowing history if you want it to. I can go back and look at what I've read."

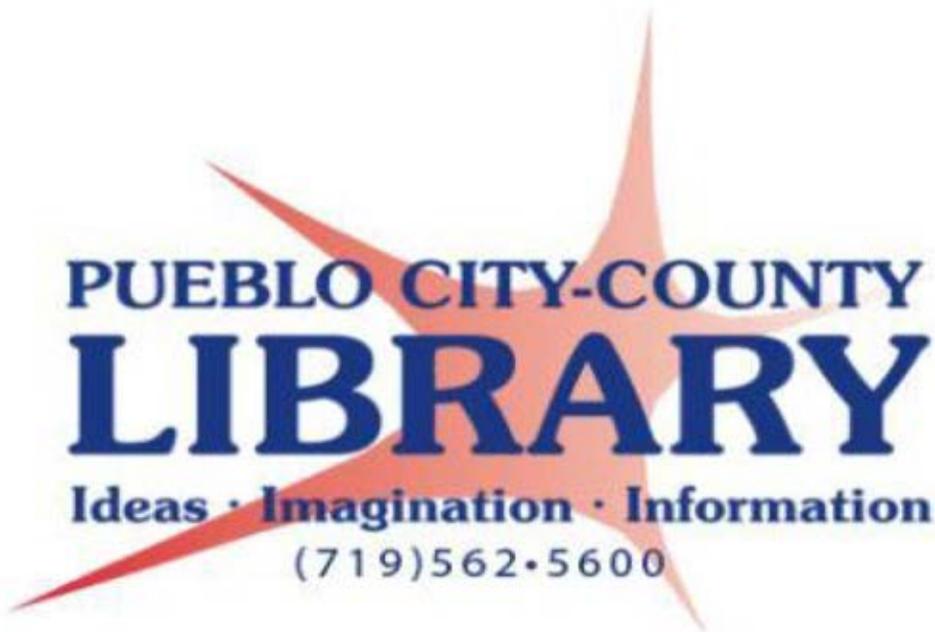
Walker said he is honored to be in his position.

"I consider it a sacred responsibility to be quite honest. I don't take it lightly at all. I take it very seriously," Walker said.

"It's not like a job to me. It's who I am. It's how I spend my time and I am very fortunate that I get to it with something that I care a lot about."

Chieftain reporter Anthony A. Mestas can be reached by email at [amestas@chieftain.com](mailto:amestas@chieftain.com) or at [twitter.com/mestas3517](https://twitter.com/mestas3517). Help support local journalism with a subscription to the Chieftain at [chieftain.com/subscribe](https://chieftain.com/subscribe).

## Pueblo Library seeking photos from Vietnam War era



by: Amber Jo Cooper

Posted: Sep 23, 2020 / 02:36 PM MDT / Updated: Sep 23, 2020 / 02:36 PM MDT

PUEBLO, Colo.,— Pueblo Library is seeking photos of veterans state-side or abroad, protests, activism, or even slices of life from the Vietnam War era (1964-1975).

These images will be included in a video that will be released during this year's **All Pueblo Reads** events.

Images selected by PCCLD staff will be added to the digital archives and preserved for future generations.

Deadline is Friday, September 25.

If you are unable to scan your photos, the team at the Rawlings Branch Library is happy to help. Give them a call at (719) 562-5600.

## Pueblo library district asking for photos documenting the Vietnam War era



By: [Anna Mankin](#)

Posted at 8:49 PM, Sep 24, 2020  
and last updated 2020-09-24 22:49:50-04

PUEBLO — The Pueblo City-County Library District is calling for submissions of photos documenting the Vietnam War era (1964-1975).

The library is wanting to collect photos of veterans here in the states, or abroad, protests or activism, or even photos of life from the time period.

The photos will be put together in a video for this year's [All Pueblo Reads](#) event, which begins on Friday, Oct. 2. This will allow people to learn how much of a role Puebloans played during the Vietnam War.

"As we go along in time, a lot of those stories are starting to be lost, and we are wanting to make sure that the community knows about the Vietnam War here in our community as well as members of our community serving during that time," said Nick Potter with the Pueblo City County Library District.

To submit a photo, click [here](#). The deadline is Sept. 25.