



# UTE COUNTRY NEWS

FREE

Putting the "unity" back in community™

January 2022

P.O. Box 753, Divide, CO 80814 • 719-686-7587 • utecountrynews.com

Vol. 14, No. 1

## Welcome to Ute Country

**"If we had no winter, the spring would not be so pleasant: if we did not sometimes taste of adversity, prosperity would not be so welcome."**

*– Anne Bradstreet*



### PEEK INSIDE...



Reducing rotting food



Beasts of the Peaks - Golden eyes



A Look Inside the Artist

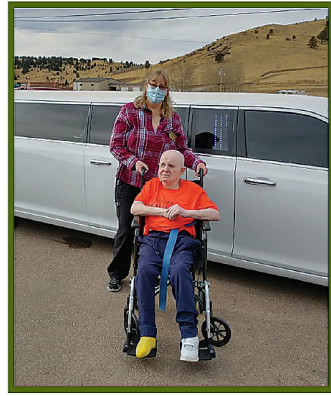
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Jeff took the photo that graces our cover in January of 2020, before the COVID pandemic hit the USA. We felt the quote by Ann Bradstreet, the first writer in England's North American colonies to be published, was fitting especially for a New Year issue because many of us create resolutions for a better life in the coming year. Is it possible that part of what Ann Bradstreet was attempting to convey is that various experiences tend to cloud, color or enhance the next experience, just like a picture frame will enhance certain colors of a painting?

Our January issue features *Musings Along the Way* where we come to understand our experience becomes the "Eyes of God" so we recognize those with a different opinion are simply reflecting a view we do not see from our perspective; perhaps this opens our hearts to accept others even if we do not agree with them. *Life Enhancing Journeys* focuses on compassion for the caregiver. *Beasts of the Peaks* gives us an elusive look at "Golden Eyes" the mountain lion, who represents agility, protection and adaptation (if you are reading this you have in some way adapted to changes in the past two years — good for you!). Perhaps our January issue will encourage you to make changes that not only benefit yourself, but also our world!

I, Kathy the editor of this publication, pledge to put more positive energy into the world each day than negative.

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

Would you like to see your pets in Critter Corner? We would love to feature them! All you need to do is email utecountrynewspaper@gmail.com or snail mail them to POB 753 Divide, CO 80814 or drop them off at Shipping Plus in Divide M-F 9-5:30 p.m.

Thank you,  
— Kathy & Jeff Hansen

A special thanks to all listed here for their professional work and time to make this issue possible. If you have any questions please contact the publishers.

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## Musings Along the Way

The eyes of God

by Catherine Rodgers

"For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind."

— Isaiah 65:17

Years back a workshop leader with Hermeten suggested that our grand ideal of the Christed one, or the Buddha or Vishnu was infinitesimal compared to the infinite possibilities. Such a limited aspiration for transcendence is merely the highest vision that we as human beings had conceived of yet — with the implicit suggestion that we can imagine even greater, even more incredible, even more wondrous out-picturings of the Divine Mind creating reality through us.

For the last thousand years or so we have been working with several esoteric principles, possibly first articulated by Hermes Trismegistus. There is only One Mind. As above, so below. Energy is Vibration or like attracts like by matching frequencies. All paradoxes may be reconciled (Okay, so maybe we've let polarity slide to extremes.) Ebb and flow. Cause and Effect. Everything has masculine and feminine aspects which manifest on all planes. Do you ever think that all the people contributing to Wikipedia are just making it up as we go along? I strive to write authentically, to articulate what I barely sense on the edges of my awareness. But we each need to refer to our own inner resonance — or what rings true for us. What arises in our own consciousness as thought and possibility may be the shadow of some 7th dimensional architecture. The universal laws may shift as our frequency accelerates. As we expand, what seemed impossible before, manifests in an instant.

Lately, I have been working with the notion that other people experience, process, and see things differently than I do. Imagine that. My dad was a high-level

functioning autistic which was definitely not recognized in his era. My mom may have been a narcissist. My daughter has detailed lists and procedures to control her anxiety — especially as protection from my flamboyance. Hello, she says, have you considered YOU might be on the spectrum? Well, no. But one of my new resolutions is to meet someone where they are, listening deeply to their process and responding with compassion.

I imagine reality to be like a dragonfly's eyes. One of my totem spirit guides, I have promised to return one lifetime as a dragonfly at Hanging Lake. I shall wallow in the primal ooze for 6-7 years, then molt 6-15 times as a nymph underwater, and emerge with four wings to hover and whizz about, before I die in 56 days. (Anyone recognize the helicopters in the movie *Dune* as designed after dragonfly wings that operate independently?) Dragonflies are 325 million years old, pause, 325 million years old! They once grew as big as seagulls to avoid an oxygen overdose from trees changing the atmosphere. Dragonflies have three simple eyes which detect motion, and two compound eyes composed of 300,000 hexagonal facets EACH. The latter form a complex mosaic which is integrated in the brain for almost 360-degree vision in all colors including ultraviolet. Talk about a colorful and inclusive perspective! Imagine the Intelligence that makes a whole of all those images.

What I've been musing is that all those people that I don't see eye to eye with, and those that I do, comprise various lenses through which God perceives the world. Each of us contributes our feelings and experiences as the reflection of God's knowing appreciation of Itself. That's Oneness: integrating all the differences in the cosmos into one brilliant, vibrant energy which ensouls the multiverse. How

can we not love one another?

Imagine every cell in our body as an eye, perhaps a compound eye. What do you behold? Your perception, and mine, feed back energy to the Central Sun which radiates love into the cosmos. THAT is transmuting the entire dynamic! "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." (Romans 12:2)

Some try to articulate the ground rules of functioning beatifically in the 5th dimension. Yet there may be far more magnificent expressions of God-ness being broadcast into our experience, impressions from 7th dimensional frequencies that alter our very ground of being. We literally have no idea of what that could possibly mean until we awaken in this transformed state of bliss and stretch our wings. Using The Sacred Transmuting Flame meditation at www.orindaben.com is a powerful gift to clear limitations on all levels and to imagine more light.

I commit to being more available. I allow myself to receive, fearlessly, more love and more healing from the elegant, brilliant, beautiful beings who inhabit my world in all the multidimensions.

What new heaven will we bring forth? We are eternal beings, channeling the infinite power of the Creator to create. Whatever we can hope for or imagine, IS. Additionally, whatever we witness alters the frequency, as our observation changes the harmonic field. Let us be open to witnessing everything as a blessing. Let us focus on the good we desire for all beings in all realms. Let our seeing with the Eyes of God bring forward this as our reality in 2022. Can I get an AMEN?

For anyone who wants to connect with me and to share your musings, write to CatherineJollyRodgers@gmail.com. Namaste.

## Reducing rotting food

by Coalition for the Upper South Platte

Challenged by *Ute Country News* to make a statement "How I pledge to make the world a better place in 2022" many things come to mind. Some great and vast and some less ambitious. NPR Life Kit (https://www.npr.org/2019/12/10/786867315/how-to-reduce-food-waste) to the rescue, Allison Aubrey's piece reflects how we all can easily do better.

Did you know that nearly 40% of the food that is produced is thrown away? Rotting food in landfills emits methane — a potent greenhouse gas — and accounts for up to 10% of human greenhouse gas emissions.

Five easy things to save money, reduce greenhouse gasses, and maybe even make the world a better place.

1. **Make a plan.** Not always the thing

that we want to do before that made dash to the grocery store, but let's be serious, plan, create a list, and stick to it. Buy what you need and will reasonably use.

2. **Repurpose food.** Wimpy carrots and limp greens can be added to soup or sauces. Shredded broccoli stems are the new cool thing to add to your salad. See the link above for avocado chocolate mousse which might just be worth letting the avocados go an extra day.

3. **Don't forget the freezer.** Put excess groceries "on ice" until you are ready to use them. Remember to label and date everything!

4. **The "Sell By" date isn't the "throw**

away" date. The Sell By date is a best guess when the product will be the freshest, not when it may be unsafe to eat.

5. **Compost.** Either at home or at a community site, composting will return nutrient rich soil amendment and keep methane out of the atmosphere.

There you go, easy peasy!



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# Beasts of the Peaks Golden eyes

by Jessica Stevens

Twenty years after I first read them, the stories play like new in my mind. When you are a child and peruse an authentic horror story, they never leave. Though the words have been warped by time, I remember reading a story in the Reader’s Digest about a mountain lion in Boulder back in the 80s. The people of Boulder have long wanted to coexist peacefully with their wild cohabitants (as many of us do) and though this is idyllic, sometimes coexistence is dangerous and deadly.

My memory replays: a rogue mountain lion or two mauled two people and killed a third. I won’t waste your time or cheerful mood with gory details. However, those mental pictures, as a child, were branded into my hippocampus and mountain lions have embodied dread and insecurity in my dreamworld.

I won’t say that predators are villains like in many children’s stories; the fact is, they are simply living according to their design. They don’t kill with murder and malice; they do it to survive. (Of course, there are rare situations in which animals indeed kill without reason.) Wolves, mountain lions, foxes, bears, hawks and all carnivores are designed for hunting. Though no carnivore subsists on 100% meat, obligate carnivores, like mountain lions, require meat to live. In addition, these predators are critical to the health of any ecosystem because they keep the numbers of prey in check and therefore everything else. They are the balance on the other side of the scale.

Interestingly, it seems that many girls or women under the age of 35 have daydreamed of riding a heroic steed, not of equine nature but of canine, ursine, or feline. Digital paintings abound of women befriendng such creatures and riding them as a mysterious queen of some ancient tribe. However, in real life, these creatures are not domesticated fantasy pets. In real life, predators are dangerous and should conjure the fear that cultivates respect.

Once on a mountainside I mistook a mountain lion’s ear for a ground squirrel. The little “rodent’s” head jerked in an odd way. It was then that my brain scrambled the image to reveal a sleeping cougar’s head, all but ten feet from me! Another time, while walking my dog after a spring snow, I came across a set of very large pawprints characteristic of a mountain lion. One had traversed the same path only hours before we had. Experiences like this really make you thankful for your life.

Many animals in the Rockies are like shadows. They come and go with barely any trace. The masters of these ghosts are mountain lions. Their fur is colored as sand and they carry a meter-long tail, dipped in black, with pale beryl or golden eyes. Cougars can be eight feet long from tip to tail and a yard

high at the shoulder. Commonly known as “mountain lion” in Colorado, they are also known by more than 40 other names in English alone. Puma, cougar, catamount, panther, and painter are some of them. They hold the Guinness world record for most names given to an animal. It was once thought that there were 32 subspecies; however, they are all the same on the molecular level (excluding some found in South America).

In 2006, there were six recognized subspecies and today there are only two: *puma concolor cougar* and *puma concolor concolor*. The second is found in South America and the first found everywhere else in its range, which is from the Yukon territory of Canada all the way through South America, from sea to shining sea. Though they prefer sheltered quarters and hunting grounds, they have been found in almost every mid- and low-elevation biome. Some animals’ taxonomy is baffling; sometimes I wonder whatever prompted the scientist to use such a name. However, with cougars, it’s straightforward. “Concolor” is Latin for “the same color” and “puma” derives from the Quechua language, which means “powerful.” The Tupi language gave us “cougar.”

Cubs are sandy brown with dark spots and bright blue eyes. In a single litter, two babies are the norm but can be as many as six. Mothers raise the cubs by herself and bear a litter every two or three years. Young stay with their mother for two full years. Unfortunately, litters have high mortality rates and an average of one kitten survives cubhood. Mountain lions live from 8 to 20 years.

Though mountain lions are like other big cats, they are the only ones (besides cheetahs) which cannot roar. They are missing a certain vocal structure from which the roar comes. Instead, they “scream,” hiss, and churr. Pumas can leap 40 feet horizontally and 18 feet vertically. They are apex predators and favor elk and deer, though they will eat whatever they can find: insects, mice, rabbits, racoons, livestock, and even pets. In Patagonia, penguins are a main staple and in Florida, even eight-foot alligators have fallen to lions. On average, lions kill one large herbivore every fortnight to survive, though a mother with cubs might make a large kill every three days.

Lions are sneaky hunters. They are silent, fighting fast, and extremely powerful. They hide high up in Ponderosa branches and skulk above on rocks. After seizing prey, their most powerful means of defeat is a sharp bite and jerk to the neck, severing the spinal cord and bringing instant death. They then conceal the uneaten portion of their kill in well-hidden places, bury it under dirt or hide it up in trees off the ground.

Though mountain lions can be scary, they just want to be left alone. Mostly solitary



creatures, part of their elusiveness is simply that they don’t enjoy being around people. Attacks are rare, though they have occurred. In the 100 years between 1890 and 1990, there were 53 confirmed attacks and 10 deaths. By 2004 (just 14 years later), there had been another 35 attacks and 10 more deaths. This is mostly due to human population increase and overlap with lions’ territories. People explore deeper into lion territory than they have before and deer populations have also increased, which helps mountain lion populations grow. My escape was lucky because the lion was asleep and also probably had a full tummy. However, following are important reminders if you ever do encounter a cougar:

Do not run. Do not play dead. Pick up small children so they won’t run. Hike in groups and never approach a lion, especially if it is sleeping or with young. If a lion approaches you, speak firmly and calmly to it. Move slowly, never turn your back or drop down. Open your jacket or umbrella or whatever you have to make yourself look bigger. If it attacks, use branches or whatever you can to fight. Stay standing and protect your head and neck. Try to make it clear to the lion that you may be a danger to it and are not prey. If you have a confrontation, call Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Colorado State Patrol, or your local police. It’s a good idea to have these numbers written down somewhere with you anyway, just in case.

Since we live in lion country, make your home safe. Make it hard for them to approach your property unseen. Supervise children when they are outside. Talk to them about mountain lion safety. Try not to be outside from dusk to dawn, and if you must, be, then be loud and keep the area well-lit. Keep pets indoors and livestock in enclosed buildings, if possible. Do not feed wildlife, especially at your home. Mountain lions eat deer and other wild creatures. More deer often means more lions.

Cougars have visited my dreams for years, always a symbol of insecurity. Whether the insecurity is my own or another’s, the symbol has prowled here and there, perched on counter tops, lurked

behind rocks, and swayed on limber branches high in the dark sky. The dream-cat’s tapetum lucidum glow just like they do when seen from a trail camera. Until recently, this image that represents dread shadowed seasons of great change in my life, symbolizing the subconscious worry of what would come from the change. All seasons have an end, though, and all trauma has a restoration if it’s allowed.

One night, my dream-self was trekking the dark, rocky landscape on my way to some important destination. Through the boulders, a huge cougar pounced, sprinting, zeroing in on my life. In that moment, instead of fearing or running, I found the inner courage to intercept the insecurity and hoist the pale panther high by her throat and firmly said, “Never come back.” I dropped her and she ran away. It was years until a mountain lion entered my dream world again. Only after a serious round of trauma did the lions reappear, but this time as a warning, perhaps a warning of falling back into the paralyzing trap of diffidence.

Though mountain lions are fearsome creatures, they are also beautiful, mysterious, lovely. At a distance, sighting one is an honor. At close range, a meeting is terrifying. However, they are good. God created all things, and all those things are good. (I believe they were corrupted by the Fall and then the state of the world after the Flood, but that’s an entirely different topic.) “Diffidence” means hesitant in acting or speaking through lack of self-confidence; unassertive; distrustful. This is another way to say fearful, but fearful of failure. It’s important to face our fears, especially fear of ourselves. Fear is like a mist: it makes things hard to see and is easily blown away by a timely zephyr. Self-doubt is a burden that cripples people for life if they don’t deal with it. Something small you can do to increase confidence every day is just strike a victorious pose and say three positive things about yourself. For example: “I am kind. I am confident. I am courageous.” It’s important for yourself to hear yourself say such things.

Don’t fear the “mountain lions” in your life. Grab them by the throat and tell them to leave you alone. Just don’t do that to a real cougar.



# Life-Enhancing Journeys Compassion for the Caregiver

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

How do I take care of myself when I am laboring 24/7 caring for someone who is incapable of tending to their own needs? Last month’s article described how difficult it can be to look after an adult who needs help or is no longer capable of caring for themselves. This article will address the demands on the caregiver who may be a paid or an unpaid member of a person’s social network who helps them with activities of daily living. Although feelings of fatigue and frustration are common, the problem is actually not caused by compassion fatigue but by a lack of compassion for ourselves.

*Help Wanted: Energetic person to provide constant companionship to someone who is unable to care for self. Position includes all cooking, housecleaning, yard work, and personal care. Must be responsible, creative and alert 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Experience dealing with Social Security, Medicare, insurance, and other agencies is a plus. Heavy lifting required. No vacations. No holidays. No pay: Call... 1-800-SUPERHUMAN*

Who would want this job? It doesn’t sound like many would, however millions of people have that crushing responsibility now. Caregivers not only perform hands-on tasks like bathing, cooking or handling financial business — but they also provide emotional support and assist with problem solving and decision making regarding the care they are giving.

## Caregiver statistics (source: AARP)

- 43.5 million adults in the United States are providing unpaid care to an adult or a child
- 4.2 million informal caregivers of adults who are 50 years of age and older
- 60% are female
- 60% are employed elsewhere — working an average of 34.8 hours per week
- Average age of caregiver is 50.3 years
- 86% care for relatives
- Contribute an average of 24.1 hours per week of care

Most people who provide direct care have no formal training and they usually have their own busy lives caring for their own children, grandchildren, work, and other responsibilities. Since being a caregiver is so demanding, they tend to sacrifice their own needs; they put themselves low on their priority list. They may get too little sleep, skip meals or eat foods which are convenient yet unhealthy, avoid physical activity or social time with friends or forestall seeking their own healthcare needs. This unsurprisingly can lead to exhaustion and palpable resentment.

## Understanding Human Compassion

*“Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Without them humanity cannot survive.”*

— Dalai Lama

Compassion is a part of being human; a part of who we are. It communicates that as I witness a person suffering, their suffering hurts me as well. It is important to realize that, although we can feel another’s pain, it is imperative to prevent it from overwhelming us. Our compassion can flow out to them yet, to be more effective, compassion must flow toward ourselves as well. Our job is not to repair the incurable, but to help our loved one live as comfortably as possible during this season of their lives.

When my mother was dying of cancer in 2002, my older sister and I moved in with our parents in Florida during the final four months of our mother’s life. We did everything we could to provide comfort for our mother yet our father needed support and relief as well while he watched the strong woman he had been married to for nearly 55 years approach the final chapter of her life. After my sister and I finished our nightly tasks such as feeding, massaging, bathing and medicating our mother and witnessing and listening to our father’s pain (among many other tasks), my sister and I took ourselves to the ocean where we sat on the beach in the lifeguard’s chair, listening to the waves, smelling the salt air and laughing and crying together. The support we provided each other as well as for our parents was so important and such a rich experience that I will always cherish even though it was agonizing at times.

When death seems inevitable and there is the realization that symptoms likely will worsen, caregivers are faced with the dilemma of trying to solve the unsolvable. It is the tension between trying to fix the unfixable and manage the unmanageable that is the cause of much of the distress. This predicament is at the very core of the suffering that healers experience — which is why it is important for the caregiver to have compassion towards themselves, too.

What would it be like for you when there is no remedy for the uncontrollable? What do you tell yourself when you have no ability to fix the unfixable?

Many caregivers question themselves: Have I done enough? Another question that is commonly asked: Am I enough? (See “Am I Good Enough” *UCN* August 2019) If you question whether you are (good) enough, it is likely that someone in your early experience taught you that you are not enough, therefore one of the ways of compensating for that is to become a helper to others and ignore your

own needs. How do we keep ourselves from absorbing the pain of those for whom we are caring? What can be done to create more balance between caregiving for another and being engaged in our own life? These are important questions to contemplate.

Caregivers are strongly encouraged to practice self-care to help prevent burnout and manage stress.

## Some methods of self-care include:

- Practice relaxation/rejuvenation techniques
- Express feelings/talk to someone
- Avoid the “I have to do it all” attitude — accept help or ask others for help.
- Educate yourself about the incapacitated person’s condition and the skills needed to assist them
- Set realistic expectations of yourself and the ailing person
- Take care of your own physical needs (schedule a massage, take a trip to the hot springs or anything else that might be rejuvenating)
- Participate in support groups
- Utilize respite care (such as Daybreak — an adult day program in Woodland Park providing services to three counties — 719-687-3000)
- Acknowledge sensitive emotions such as — Anger — Guilt — Fear — Resentment
- Practice positive self-talk

Below is information and several select resources addressing some commonly asked questions:

## Can I get paid to be a caregiver for a family member?

In some cases and some places you can. Your chances are best if you are caring for someone eligible for Medicaid and living in a state with a Medicaid care program or caring for a U.S. military veteran but there are other possibilities.

As of October 2015, all 50 states and the District of Columbia offer Medicaid waiver self-directed long-term services and supports (LTSS) programs that allow qualified individuals to manage their own care — meaning that people can hire and fire their own caregivers. Some states permit the care recipient to hire a family member to provide care.

## Veterans

Veteran Directed Home & Community Based Care is available in 37 states, Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico for veterans of all ages enrolled in the Veterans Health Administration standard medical benefits package who need the high level of care a nursing facility provides, but who want to live at home or the home of a loved one.

## Resources for Caregivers

- Colorado 2-1-1 is a confidential and

multilingual service connecting people to vital resources across the state. No matter where you live in Colorado, you can find information about resources in your local community.

- Colorado Association of Area Agencies on Aging — Provides programs and services created to help support consumers in their homes and communities.
- Colorado Respite Coalition (CRC) — The CRC provides all Colorado family caregivers access to quality respite care and resources through a network of community partners.
- HeartLight Center (720-748-9908) — Provides affordable education programs for professional and volunteer caregivers in our community who are working with those who are grieving.
- AARP Colorado

303 E. 17th Avenue Denver, CO 80203  
Phone: 1-866-554-5376 (toll-free)  
Fax: 1-303-764-5999  
Email: coaarp@aarp.org

- State Medicaid Office Health First Colorado (800-221-3943) — Medicaid is a joint federal and state health care program for people with low income and limited or insufficient resources to pay for health care. Through the Medicaid Waiver program, older adults who are eligible for nursing home payments can receive medical and support services that enable them to continue living at home. Waiver services prevent or delay nursing home admission.
- Prescription Assistance Program — Colorado Drug Card is a free prescription assistance program available to everyone living in Colorado. The program was launched to help the uninsured and underinsured residents of Colorado gain access to significant savings on prescription medications at their local pharmacies. This card cannot be used in conjunction with other drug discount cards or insurance claims.

Although we are unable to affect the outcome of an illness, we can be helpful and compassionate to our loved ones and to ourselves simultaneously.

*“You have two hands. One to help yourself, and one to help others.”*

— Audrey Hepburn

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

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# Pickles

## The Singing, Apocalyptic, Zombie, Phantom, African Clawed Frog

Orlando was concerned about his goldfish. They weren't eating right, and he was afraid that they may die. So, he went down to Walmart and bought some tadpoles to feed to his fish. After bringing them home he put the tiny creatures in the fish tank fully expecting to have his goldfish eat the tadpoles over time and restore their good health.

What Orlando didn't know was that the crew at his local Walmart had mixed up the tadpoles of the American common frog with the tadpoles of the African Clawed Frog and that was what Orlando had brought home to feed his goldfish.

It was but a short time later, perhaps five days, when Orlando walked to his fish tank to look at his goldfish and found that they were gone and in their stead was a single large frog.

After a quick inspection of the area around the tank, he looked again at the large frog that remained in the fish tank. It wasn't supposed to be there. It was to have been eaten by the five goldfish, but the frog had eaten the goldfish instead.

How could this have happened? The common America frog doesn't eat fish; he is eaten by the fish. The closer Orlando looked at the frog the more he realized that this wasn't just your ordinary frog. This frog had long sharp claws on its flippers and was bigger than most frogs.

What had he bought at Walmart? Down to his local Walmart went Orlando and right to the fish and reptile department. There on a large sign he found the truth. The sign said that Walmart was very sorry, but a mistake had been made and the tadpoles of the two different frogs had been switched.

Well, it was too late to return the tadpole for it was a tadpole no longer; but what to feed the thing? He asked the clerk what he should feed the creature and was told to give it reptile food and any insect that he could catch, like crickets or ants even worms. He purchased the reptile food and some packaged crickets and left the store. Orlando returned home and looked at his new pet and noticed that it seemed to be even larger the before he had gone to the market.

Orlando fed the frog some of the reptile food and a few crickets and left it alone in the tank. It ate everything dropped into the tank and then settled to the gravel on the bottom of the tank.

A few days passed and Orlando had to return to college. What was he to do with his frog? Of course, he would give it to Mom.

That was how Sandy came into possession of the frog. The fish tank and the frog were transported to Sandy's house. Sandy was instructed on how to care for and feed the frog and Orlando left for college.

It was some time before the first incident occurred; it wasn't a major event, just a

missing frog. The top of the tank had been lifted and set to one side and the frog was nowhere to be seen.

Sandy found Pickles, for that was his name, by listening to the odd little song he was humming. It sounded like an old Sam Cooke tune. Oddly enough that was just the tune that Sandy had been listening to not an hour ago called "Bring it on home to me."

It wasn't so much the tune, but the fact that the frog was humming it and humming it accurately. If it had been any louder, she could have sung along with the frog. But as it was Sandy was just glad to find the frog and after she had put on her plastic kitchen gloves, she picked up Pickles and put him back in his tank of water and gave him some reptile food. She then put the top of the tank back on and taped it down with duct tape.

"Let's see him push the top off again now!" Sandy thought to herself, "No frog alive can overcome duct tape."

Sandy walked up stairs to see that her mother, Bertha, was alright and then went off to work at the salon, leaving Kojac, her dog, in charge of the house.

It was a typical day at the salon, haircuts and perms and a dye job and then back home to fix supper and rest from her day and read a good book.

This went on for a few days, until one Sunday Sandy awoke to find that, once again, Pickles had escaped from his tank. The duct tape had been torn to shreds and the top of the tank was lying on the floor of the spare room where the frogs' tank was kept. Not only that, the box of reptile food, which was normally on the shelf above the tank, was now lying empty on the floor.

"How could this have happened?" thought Sandy, "Pickles couldn't possibly have done this, he's just a little frog. But then who ate all that reptile food? Surly not Bertha, then again, she does get hungry while I'm at work. But that doesn't explain the missing frog or the tank top on the floor."

Sandy was at a loss as she walked back downstairs only to hear that same Sam Cooke tune being hummed down the hall toward the kitchen.

"It can't be," she thought as she hurried toward the kitchen. When she walked through the kitchen door, there on the floor near the refrigerator was Pickles the frog and he was considerably larger than the last time she had seen him in his tank.

"That's it!" thought Sandy, "The stupid frog has been out of his tank too long and is swelling up from lack of moisture. I have to get him back in the water before he dies. Orlando would be so upset."

So once again Sandy put on her kitchen gloves and picked up the fat frog and carried it back to its tank and dropped it back in the water then put the top back on the tank.

Another strip of duct tape and a brick should

hold the top on. No frog could lift the taped top and the brick.

Two days later it was a dark and stormy night after work and Sandy was tired from the day's work. She and Bertha had eaten supper and Sandy had gone to bed with Kojac next to her as she read a book.

The thunder rumbled through the house and the rain pounded on the roof and the windows. Sandy could see flashes of lightning through the windowpanes, the resulting thunder was deafening.

Kojac was lying as close to Sandy as he could get and still be on top of the blankets when a scratching sound and some movement caught Sandy's eye. She looked up from her book and saw the door to her room, which was not completely closed, move a little more open, but there was no one there. "Is that you, Mom?" she called.

There was no response, so she called again with the same results; Kojac was whining and trying to nose himself under the blankets.

Sandy slowly put down the book she was reading and jumped to the floor and grabbed her shoe as she walked toward the door which was still moving a little. There was no one to see until she looked down.

There was Pickles sitting at the door of her room with one claw on the door and slowly moving the door as he looked up at Sandy. He was considerably larger than earlier this evening when Sandy had fed him in his tank, he must have been nearly four feet tall standing on his back flippers.

Pickles the frog was humming a tune that Sandy didn't recognize as a Sam Cooke tune. No, this tune was from a movie that had been advertised on the TV earlier this evening about a Zombie film that was coming to theaters soon. It was called "The Zombie Apocalypse."

Pickles was moving awkwardly too, as though his back legs were stiff, and his arms were crooked. His skin was mottled and looked like he had been injured in a fall and there were red spots all over him. He looked like one of the zombies that had been shown in the movie previews.

Sandy panicked and went back to her nightstand and picked up her cell phone and jumped on her bed then called Bertha upstairs.

"MOM!" she cried into the phone when Bertha answered from upstairs, "Mom, you've got to help me! There is a singing, apocalyptic, zombie, African clawed frog at my bedroom door!"

"What?" answered Bertha, "You have what?"

Sandy repeated what she had said and then dropped the phone as Pickles started stumbling forward into her room.

Kojac was now under the blankets and Sandy could hear his muffled howling as she

backed away from the approaching frog. Sandy could hear Bertha coming quickly down the stairs and could hear her calling and asking; "What did you say about a zombie?"

Sandy saw the light turn on in the hallway as Bertha flipped the switch at her end of the hall and Bertha walked quickly toward her door. She was about to warn her, but Pickles was gone.

Bertha stopped at the doorway and looked in at Sandy standing on her bed.

"What's wrong with that dog?" she asked, "And why are you standing on your bed looking like you've seen a ghost?"

"Pickles was right there where you are standing now," Sandy replied, "Only it wasn't really Pickles. It was a giant zombie version of him, but when you turned on the hall light, he disappeared, POOF, just like that!"

Bertha looked around the room while Sandy still stood on her bed. She looked under the bed and in the closet and behind the door, she even looked back down the hallway and then came back into Sandy's room.

"Go to bed!" she said and walked out of the room mumbling to herself about insanity running in the family and drinking too much and nightmares from too much work and bad food.

Sandy got down from the bed just as Kojac stuck his head out from under the blankets and looked at her.

"It's ok, Kojac," she said as she comforted the frightened dog, "I think it's gone now. But I'm going to make sure."

Sandy walked down the hallway to the extra room and turned on the light as she looked in.

There was the fish tank and there was Pickles sitting on the bottom looking for all the world like he was asleep as he lay on the rocks and didn't move. The top was still on the tank and the rock was still in place as was the duct tape.

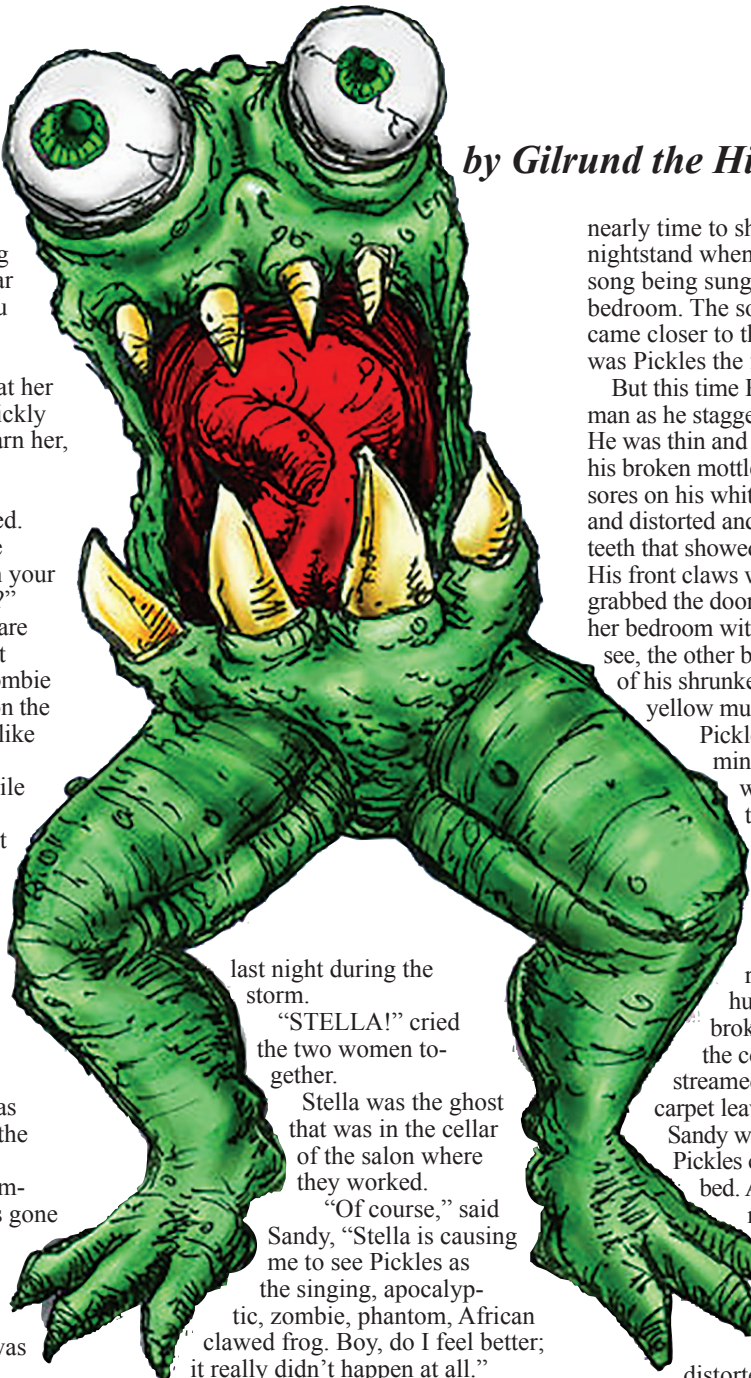
Sandy looked around the room and everything was still where she had left it. She turned out the light as she closed the door and started back down the hallway to her bedroom.

"What did I see?" she thought, "What had the dog seen? Could she have dreamed the whole thing? But Kojac was afraid too and we couldn't have had the same dream, could we? Nah, that's silly!"

Sandy went back to bed and went to sleep with Kojac right by her side.

The next day life went on as it always did; up early, eat breakfast, feed the dog, the frog and Bertha and then off to work.

Luckily Anna, that did the ladies finger-nails in the salon, had come in today and Sandy told her about what had happened



by Gilrund the Historian

last night during the storm.

"STELLA!" cried the two women together.

Stella was the ghost that was in the cellar of the salon where they worked.

"Of course," said Sandy, "Stella is causing me to see Pickles as the singing, apocalyptic, zombie, phantom, African clawed frog. Boy, do I feel better; it really didn't happen at all."

Anna was quiet and Sandy asked

her why. "What about the top of the tank coming off," she asked, "and the torn duct tape and having to put the frog back in the tank all those times; that actually happened. Stella couldn't have made you think that you did all those things, could she?"

"Yeah, I didn't think about that," answered Sandy, "I think I'll wait and see what happens tonight. I hope nothing, 'cause my mom is going to think I'm a nut case."

The two women went on with their day and Sandy went home as another storm gathered in the west and promised a noisy and wet night.

It was a quiet evening until the storm broke and the thunder rolled across the sky with the lightning and rain fell to the ground as Sandy and Kojac went to bed.

Once again Sandy was sitting up in bed with Kojac and reading a book. It was

nearly time to shut out the light on her nightstand when she heard the Sam Cook song being sung down the hallway to her bedroom. The song grew louder as the frog came closer to the door and Sandy knew it was Pickles the frog.

But this time Pickles was the size of a tall man as he staggered on his back flippers. He was thin and his bones showed through his broken mottled skin. There were running sores on his white belly. His face was twisted and distorted and his mouth had long broken teeth that showed when he opened it to sing. His front claws were thin and twisted as they grabbed the door frame and he looked into her bedroom with the only eye that still could see, the other being broken and hanging out of his shrunken face streaming thick pale-yellow mucus.

Pickles was no longer humming the Sam Cook tune but was singing the theme from the Zombie Apocalypse movie and he was singing it loudly as he started to enter the room leaving wet and slimy flipper prints on the carpet. He dragged his right flipper and his left arm hung down as though it were broken. He was drooling from the corners of his mouth and it streamed down and soaked into the carpet leaving a green stain.

Sandy watched as the thing that was Pickles came closer and closer to her bed. All too soon the creature was next to her and reaching for her throat with its thin, slimy, hand like claws, the clawed fingers wiggling back and forth.

Sandy looked up at the distorted frog and said, "Stop it, Stella!"

Pickles the Singing, Apocalyptic, Zombie, Phantom, African Clawed Frog, was gone!

Sandy slowly pushed back the covers of her bed and swung down her feet to the carpet as she looked for the creature that had just been standing next to her bed. She found nothing to indicate that the thing had ever been there. No wet carpet or flipper prints, no green stains from the drool, nothing!

But she could faintly hear the sound of a Sam Cooke song being hummed from down at the end of the hallway. It was coming from the spare room where Pickles the frog sat in his tank.

~ THE END ~

*Editor's note: This story was first published in a book titled 'Stella the Hair-Raising Ghost.'*

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## Sagentic Web Design and DARE Print & Sign

by Flip Boettcher  
photo by Flip Boettcher

November 1, 2021, the Sagentic Web Design and DARE Print & Sign businesses moved from the 400 block of Cañon City's historic Main Street to their new location at 710 Main Street.

Owners of the businesses are Kenny Haferkamp, specializing in website development, and Erica Haferkamp, creative director.

The couple design and develop websites, including all social media and email for their clients. DARE specializes in items to advertise your business. DARE features all things print including business cards, brochures and labels; all kinds of signs and banners in a large print format; as well as developing logos and doing graphic design, and much more.



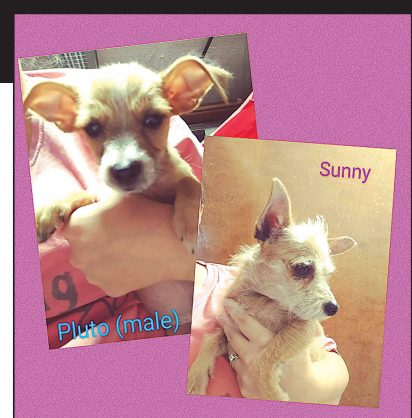
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*This space donated by the Ute Country News to promote shelter animal adoption.*



## A Look Inside the Artist Marcy Wadlington

by Mary Shell

I have known Marcy for several years now and she still amazes me with new concepts and dazzling jewelry. I am a proud owner of several of her necklaces and wear them whenever I can. She has a natural ability to find balance and flow in her designs. I sat with her in her studio and watched her arrange, move, rearrange, and transform small random pieces to a work of art. The most difficult thing for me is to choose which one I want. Each piece has a personality of itself and changes the whole atmosphere of what you are wearing and how you feel while wearing one of her pieces. You feel transformed.

**How long have you been making jewelry?**  
*I've been creating jewelry for about 10 years.*

**What type of necklaces do you like to make most?**  
*I prefer to make large statement necklaces.*

**What inspired you in creating your jewelry?**  
*I saw a piece that I really liked and felt I could make it. I did a version of it along with two others. They were all different themed necklaces and sold quickly.*

**How do you know what arrangements to make?**  
*I lay things out before I put anything together. It works most of the time, but sometimes things must be reworked. There is a difference in how a necklace falls when creating on a flat surface vs putting it around your neck.*

**Can you explain your process?**  
*My process is to put pieces together un-*

*til I find the right combination. This could take some time because searching for the best combination can be time consuming, but it must work for me before I attached them together.*

**What is your favorite material you use?**  
*I love working with copper; it is a beautiful metal and can have the most wonderful, aged patina.*

**What else do you create along with your necklaces?**  
*I also create earring, boot and ankle jewelry, corsets, and body jewelry.*

**What's in the future for you?**  
*My first love is horses. When I am not riding, I work in my studio creating art jewelry. Due to a nonrelated horse injury, I have not been able to ride lately so I spend more time creating things. I am looking at trying some different venues such as bling out horse bridles, saddle pads etc. I also have a large collection of vintage and antique jewelry I have collected in the '70s, '80s, and '90s that*



Marcy Wadlington (left) and one of her necklaces (above).



*I will be selling on my website. I plan to increase my website visibility after the new year.*

**Making jewelry is equal to creating a painting, do you envision a design before you begin?**

*My designs get triggered by something I see. An old piece of broken jewelry, something someone is wearing, jewelry parts in my studio or talking with other artists. I like to deconstruct pieces and mix different metals to create something new. I make only one-of-a-kind pieces. I do consignment pieces upon request.*

You can see more of Marcy's beautiful jewelry and her other creations at [www.necklacesandmore.com](http://www.necklacesandmore.com). You can reach Mary Shell at <https://maryshellart.com/>

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April 26th-May 31st - Six Tuesday sessions 5:00-7:00pm at Community Partnership. Meal and childcare provided.

For more info Call (719) 686-0705 or email [Michelle@cpteller.org](mailto:Michelle@cpteller.org)

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[www.cpteller.org](http://www.cpteller.org)

## ~OUT AND ABOUT~

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

### AVAILABLE VIRTUALLY

4 Crossroads of Parenting & Divorce 4:30-8:30 p.m. via zoom. Teller County court approved co-parenting class. Registration fee required. FMI Michelle@cpteller.org or 719-686-0705.

• NAMI COLORADO: <http://www.namicolorado.org/>  
• Suicide prevention: <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/> or 1-800-273-8255

### CAÑON CITY

5 Free Legal Clinic 2-5 p.m. at Cañon City Library. Call 719-269-9020 to sign-up.  
• B.O.O.K. Babies on our Knees Monday 10:30 a.m.  
• Story time and craft Tuesday and Thursday 10:30 a.m.  
• Virtual story time Wednesday 10:30 a.m.  
• Lego Club 1st Friday each month 3-4 p.m.  
• Break out box 2nd Friday each month 3-4 p.m.  
• Filler Friday (different activity each month) 3rd Friday each month 3-4  
• Chess Club Wednesday 2 p.m.

• New Neighbors Genealogy 1st Friday 1 p.m.  
• Metaphysical Group 2nd and 4th Saturday 10:30 a.m.  
• United Health Care 2nd and 4th Thursday 9:30 a.m.  
• Fremont Brain Injury Support 1st Tuesday 12:30 p.m. All at 516 Macon Ave. FMI 719-269-9020.

### COLORADO SPRINGS

28 Tool performs at the Broadmoor

### PIKES PEAK CENTER

8 Mystery Science Theater 3000 Live: Time Bubble Tour  
26 The Life and Music of George Michael 7 p.m.  
29, 30 Shen Yun at 2 p.m.

### CRIPPLE CREEK

6 American Legion Post 171 meets the first Thursday of every month at 6 p.m. at 400 Carr St. Food and refreshments at 5 p.m.  
• GED 1-3 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays FMI Michelle@cpteller.org or 719-686-0705.  
• CC Senior Clubhouse at Aspen Mine Center dining room

10-2 p.m.  
• Tues 10:30 a.m. Bingo  
• Tues 1 p.m. Scrabble  
• Thurs 10:30 a.m. Mexican Train a board game.

### DIVIDE

• FREE Yoga with Leah 10-11 a.m. Mondays at Pikes Peak Community Club. FMI Michelle@cpteller.org or 719-686-0705.

### LITTLE CHAPEL FOOD PANTRY

10, 24 This is a drive-up distribution, and to make sure to avoid traffic issues our distribution times are:  
Last name beginning with:  
A-H 3:30-4:30 p.m.  
I-Q 4:30-5:30 p.m.  
R-Z 5:30-6:30 p.m.

### FLORENCE

8 Happy 150th Birthday Florence, Colorado! Come enjoy an evening Birthday Party at the Florence Pioneer Museum and Research Center 4-7 p.m. Wine and cheese will be served. Come, relax, enjoy, mingle and check out the museum. The Model Train

displays will still be up if you missed seeing them in December. FMI [www.FlorencePioneerMuseum.org](http://www.FlorencePioneerMuseum.org).

### FLORISSANT

8 Pine Needle Basket and Gourd Art Class 9-noon. All supplies are provided. Fee is a donation to the Grange, except gourds are \$10 each. FMI 719-510-2325.  
13 Free Legal Clinic 2-5 p.m. at Florissant Library. Call 719-748-3939 to sign-up.

### MANITOU SPRINGS

22 Annual Fruitcake Toss 1-3 p.m. in Memorial Park. FMI <https://manitousprings.org/events/fruitcake-toss>.

### SALIDA

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

### WOODLAND PARK

8 Family Time at Our Gallery 3-5 p.m. This activity is in

collaboration with the Ute Pass Kiwanis. Families are invited to visit the Gallery. There will be art activities and featured guests to celebrate the day, Elvis Presley's birthday. FMI page 10 or call 719-401-2301.

11 Nonprofit Cooperative Training 9-10:15 a.m. 400 West Midland, Suite 100. Training topic is establishing a CHAMPION program to increase awareness. FMI 719-233-9902.

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

18 Grupo Conversacional De Engles Mantes 18 de Enero 10:30 a.m. Biblioteca publica de Woodland Park Para personas que no hablan ingles como primer idioma. Ven y unete a la conversacion con Emilia Paul una instructor Registrare en 719-203-9443 also by calling 719-687-9281 x 103.

22 Immune Support During the Winter Months 2 p.m. presented by Cassandra Bachrach on the many ways you can boost your immune during the cold winter months.

### COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

• GED 5-7 p.m. Mondays & Wednesdays FMI Michelle@cpteller.org or 719-686-0705.  
• Playgroup Mondays & Wednesdays 9:30-11 a.m. (no group 3 & 17) at The Resource Exchange 509 Scott Ave., Suite 203. Parent of caregiver with children ages 5 & under. FMI Jackie@cpteller.org or 719-686-0705.

24-Feb 14 Active Parenting First Five Years 5-7 p.m. at Community Partnership. For parents of children birth to age 5. Build a strong bond to give your child a solid foundation to grow upon. Meal and childcare provided. FMI Michelle@cpteller.org or 719-686-0705.

• Ute Pass Historical Society Gift Shop is located at 231 E. Henrietta Ave., next to the library. The Gift Shop has 2022 14-month Pictorial Calendars for \$14+tax. We also offer historical books, cookbooks, Indian art, jewelry and gifts. Hours 10-noon Wed., and 11-3 p.m. Thursday through Saturday. FMI 719-686-7512 or [utepasshistoricalsociety.org](http://utepasshistoricalsociety.org).

## Adopt Me by SLV Animal Welfare Society

### Brandi

This is Brandi. She is loving and very people oriented. Brandi loves to cuddle! She is best as the only pet as she doesn't like to share her food. Brandi is 5-years-old, spayed, current on vaccinations and microchipped. If you think Brandi might be a good fit for your family, please contact SLV at 719-587-9663 (woof).

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



## Adopt Me by TCRAS

### Romy

This sweet, beautiful, 3-year-old girl is looking for a family who would like to take her on adventures and give her daily love and cookies. She seems to be housebroken and does pretty good on a leash. Romy is spayed. Please call TCRAS 719-686-7707 to set up an appointment to visit with this lovely dog.

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## Celebrate ReserveOur Gallery and Ute Pass Kiwanis on the King's Birthday

Reserve Our Gallery in Woodland Park Rhosts an event for families on January 8 from 3-5 p.m. You are invited to participate by joining in the fun to celebrate the birthday of the late Elvis Presley. He would have been 87 years old on his birthday. It is unfortunate he won't be able to join in the celebration but we plan to have Elvis look-alikes, as well as other fun activities to honor him.

You are encouraged to dress up. There will be awards for the best-dressed Elvis. An individual in each of the following

age brackets has the opportunity to win an award: 5 and under, 6-12, 13-17, and over 18. If you're not interested in dressing up as Elvis you can dress in his favorite colors, pink and black.

There will be food at the event, including Elvis's favorite sandwich made with peanut butter and bananas. We will skip the bacon on this sandwich so it won't be the "official" fried delight.

Elvis was only 42 when he died. The "King of Rock and Roll" had already accomplished so much by that time. His death

brought many mourning fans to his home of Graceland in Memphis, Tennessee. Kids today continue to know the King's songs and they even choose to dress up like him. His songs are popular during Karaoke and dressing in a white jumpsuit with rhinestones can only remind us of one person, the King.

Reserve Our Gallery is happy to host an event honoring Elvis' birthday in partnership with Ute Pass Kiwanis. FMI 719-401-2301 or email [reserveourgallery@gmail.com](mailto:reserveourgallery@gmail.com). You can also check the Facebook Page for details at [Reserveourgallery.com](http://Reserveourgallery.com)

## Call for Artists by Blue Spruce Gallery

The Blue Spruce Gallery is hosting its' 21st annual winter theme show during January. The artist chosen theme this year is "Still Life." This fun and exciting event always encourages artists to be creative with the theme. All artists are encouraged to enter the show — we are looking for a wide variety of work, including two dimensional and three dimensional. Deadline for work to be at the gallery is January 4, 2022. The show will open on January 8 with a reception on Second Friday, January 14. Cash prizes will be awarded, as well as ribbons in several categories.

Entry forms can be picked up at the Blue Spruce Gallery, 205 West Main Street in Florence or downloaded from our website at [www.bluespruceart.com](http://www.bluespruceart.com). Call for more information at 719-784-1339.

## Where is the snow?

by WPHS Freshman Student

Where is the snow?  
Where is that show?  
The trees don't look like a fashion show  
What do I know?  
It's late November  
What do I know?  
There is still December  
Then there can be warm cozy times that I will remember  
But what if it doesn't  
What if we're late  
What if we were too busy with our debates  
Ice caps are falling and they make the coast shake  
Or maybe the cold is just making us wait  
Oh well, patience is a virtue  
A lack of snow could never hurt you  
At least as of now, there's a lack of the flu  
I can't control this weather, what can you do

*\*The student has requested we do not use their name.  
We felt the poem was worth printing and hope this student will continue to develop this talent!*

## Where is Katee this month?

During January, Katee and her friend Baylee will be collecting food and treats from

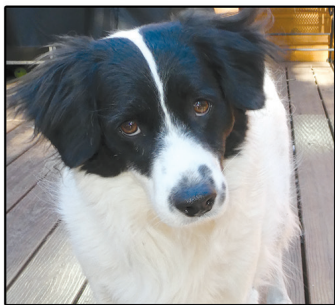
businesses and friends. Katee wants to thank everyone who is continuing to support the Pet Food Pantry with donations so hat her canine and feline friends can stay at home with their families.

You can drop off donations at TCRAS, Blue's Natural Pet Market or the UPS Store located in the Safeway Shopping Center. You may also donate online, [www.PetFoodPantryTC.com](http://www.PetFoodPantryTC.com). Thank you for your support!

The Pet Food Pantry wishes you a happy and prosperous New Year!



Katee hopes that you will continue to support us!

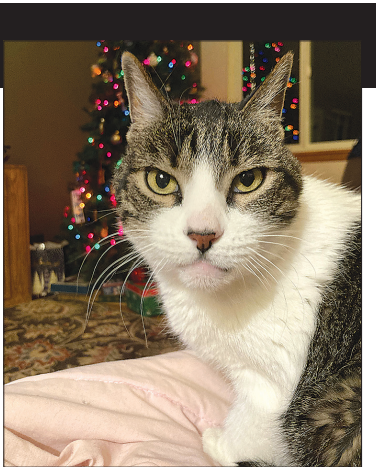


## Adopt Me by Ark Valley Humane Society

### Sammie

Sammie is a 12-year-old domestic shorthair mix who was first brought to the shelter when a member of the public found her outside. Sadly, no owner ever came forward for sweet Sammie. She gets along with other mellow cats. Sammie is declawed in her front paws so will need to be an indoor only cat. She has been spending most of her days in a warm and loving foster home but needs to come back soon as her foster family is traveling for the holidays. We'd love to find her a home of her own! Her foster family raves about Sammie every time we get an update. She is a playful, snuggly, and independent cat. If you'd like to meet Sammie, please give the shelter a call at 719-395-2737.

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



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(1-866-432-8435)

[www.colorado.gov/cdhs/leap](http://www.colorado.gov/cdhs/leap)

Applications can be accessed online or at your Teller County DHS office at Tamarac Business Center in Woodland Park or Aspen Mine Center in Cripple Creek.

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