

MAY • 2020

WYOMING

RURAL ELECTRIC NEWS

WREN

GF Harvest

High school project
grows into family
business

★
Family
Farming
Tradition



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Safe &
reliable
power.



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WREN MAGAZINE

THE WREN MAGAZINE WYOMING RURAL ELECTRIC NEWS

*The official publication of the
Wyoming Rural Electric Association*

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GF Harvest

STORY BY ILENE OLSON

Cover photo: Seaton, left, and
Forrest Smith stand outside the
GF Harvest processing facility in
Powell.

PHOTO BY NICK ALLEN

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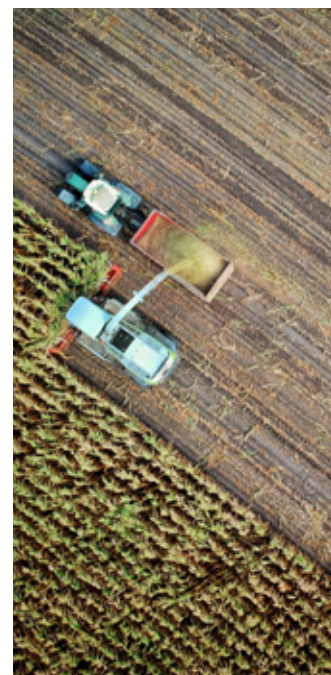
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'I Get by With a Little Help from my Friends'



SHAWN TAYLOR
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I'm almost certain that C-3PO said this to R2-D2 at some point throughout the "Star Wars" saga ... maybe not but I couldn't think of a better title for this guest column from my friend Pennie Hunt. I had planned to write about the "takeaways" from the COVID-19 pandemic and then I read Pennie's column in the Wyoming Tribune Eagle one day and thought, "she nailed it," so I asked if I could run it in the WREN because I think the message is perfect these days. Enjoy.

What If?

BY PENNIE HUNT

This is an unusual time. I have had moments that I felt as if we are in a sci fi movie. Scenes on the news of people dressed in a wardrobe of total protection are not just frightening to children, but to all of us.

Words like; isolation, social distancing, quarantine and rationing spill through every news report. Conversations all begin with, "What store has milk, bread or eggs?" or "Where can we find toilet paper?"

I don't like it.

Seeing my loved ones through a computer is not the same as kissing their cheeks.

Virtual game night is fun, but it is not the same as sharing the same bowl of chips. (Will we ever be able to share chips again?)

I miss coffee and lunches with friends. I miss dinner and movie dates with my husband. I miss manicures and massages. I miss trips, concerts and sporting events that have been canceled. I miss running to the store just to pick up a tomato for my BLT without feeling like my life could be in danger.

All of this feels like distant memories of a past life that becomes increasingly blurred as the days go by.

I feel pressure when I hear people are using this time to clean out every closet, write a book and get in shape by working out and eating right. I am sure the new Corona Diet Plan will be out any day. That just makes me want to eat Pop Tarts – *which I did before I went to bed last night.*

I feel fear for those in areas with the most cases of this coronavirus, the elderly and the recently unemployed. I fear the financial ramifications to the world.

I feel admiration for those in the front lines of leadership trying to make the right decisions; for those serving us with formidable strength in the health care world; and for the entire chain of workers it takes to produce, transport and stock the shelves of supermarkets.

When it isn't cold and snowing, I go for walks. I cross to the other side of the street if I see someone



It felt slow.

It felt quiet.

It felt peaceful.

It felt fresh and new.

It felt different.

walking towards me. I count the cars in driveways and wonder if they are having a gathering of more than 10 or if they have gathered as a family to shelter at home – together.

Yesterday, I walked. It wasn't to add steps to my fitness counter or burn as many calories as I could. I walked slow and with the intention of enjoying every step. The sun hit my face with a warmth that made 40 degrees feel like summer. I took deep breaths of clean fresh air. It felt amazing to be out of my house where the air is continually circulated through the furnace.

I looked up to the bluest sky I have ever seen that was speckled with cotton white clouds. In the silence of not hearing traffic, or the noise of daily life, I heard birds. Birds singing glorious songs with their choir of friends. I saw carefree bunnies scampering through yards. You are probably thinking this sounds a bit gushy and the next thing I will say is that bluebirds appeared to tie ribbons in my hair like I was Cinderella in a Disney movie. I won't go that far, but...

It felt slow. It felt quiet. It felt peaceful. It felt fresh and new. It felt different.

What if this is the message of this virus? The message to slow down. To listen. To see things again – the things we take for granted and the things we miss in our hurried life.

What if the speed of which our life and world had gotten to was spinning so fast that we were heading for an implosion? What if this is it?

What if we needed a shake down? A wake-up call to be grateful for what is important.

As the days go by, I realize how grateful I am for simplicity. How grateful I am for food, water and the shelter of my home. How grateful I am for the security of love from my family and friends. How grateful I am for dinner and movie dates with my husband **at home** with our sweet dogs snuggled next to us.

I realize what I really miss. I miss smiles and hugs. I miss cheek kisses. I miss the touch of my loved ones and voices that are not muffled by technology. I miss the freedom to move in whatever direction I desire.

The events, travel and manicures seem of little importance.

The uncertainty of not knowing how or when this will end is nerve-racking and I don't have the answers. I do know that the most important lessons are taught in the most difficult of times. I do know that the sky is bluer, the birds are singing louder and the world has slowed to a pace that we need to remember when this time of hunkering down ends.

What if it is time to listen to the quiet?

What if it is time for **you** to take a walk?

Pennie's life lesson: "The most important lessons are taught in the most difficult of times." **W**

Pennie Hunt is a Cheyenne-based author, blogger and speaker who teaches how to "Love Your Life ... NO MATTER WHAT!"

PHOTO BY NICK ALLEN



HARTLY THORINGTON



HOMETOWN:

Powell

HIGH SCHOOL:

Powell High School

YEAR OF GRADUATION:

2019

COLLEGE:

Northwest College

MAJOR STUDY INTEREST:

Elementary Education and
Special Education

WREN: Tell us about your studies and interests.

HT: I am currently majoring in elementary education but would like to get a degree in special education. I am not sure what grade level I would like to teach but I love working with kids, so I chose to major in elementary education at Northwest. My interests include being outdoors, paddleboarding, being with my family and going on adventures.

WREN: How have your hometown, family and/or friends influenced you?

HT: My family has influenced me the most. The reason I would like to go into special education is because my younger brother has autism. He has helped me see how special life can be. Watching him grow up and how much his teachers and paraprofessionals have impacted him made me want to help other students like my brother. Growing up in Powell gave me a sense of community. In small communities like Powell everyone supports each other. It has been great to see that growing up here.

WREN: What are your plans for the future?

HT: After graduating Northwest College I plan to attend Black Hills State University in Spearfish, South Dakota, to be in their K-12 Special Education program. Black Hills is such a beautiful campus and their education program is immaculate. After that I hope to become a special education teacher. Also something that I want to learn in the future is sign language.

CO-OP YOUTH

Wyoming's rural electric cooperatives are proud to support our youth, giving college scholarships and lineman scholarships. In addition, our co-ops sponsor high school students on the NRECA Youth Tour in June and Youth Leadership Camp in July.

THIS MONTH:

Garland Light and Power's Hartly Thorington was awarded the \$1,000 Basin Electric Power college scholarship in 2019. She now attends Northwest College in Powell.



Interested in applying for a scholarship, D.C. Youth Tour and/or Leadership Camp? Contact your local rural electric cooperative! See the insert in the center of the magazine for contact information.

A Partner & Trusted Source

Wyoming's rural electric cooperatives are part of a much larger network of cooperatives that strive to provide the safest, most reliable electricity possible to their members. The cooperative difference is that you, the members, own your electricity provider, and your needs drive the cooperative.

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) recently commissioned a national telephone survey to find whether cooperative members are satisfied, and engaged, with their cooperative. During the past few months, WREN magazine published the survey results. This month, the last month of the series, we'll look at survey results regarding member perception of electric rates.

FROM THE NRECA

Consumer-members across the country are increasingly satisfied with the performance of their electric cooperatives and more than ever before see them as trusted information sources and partners in keeping energy costs low.

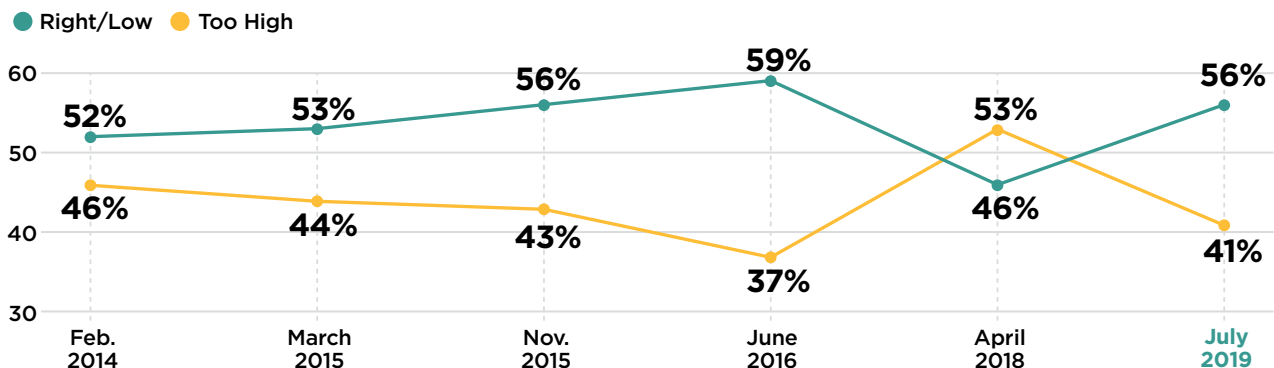
These are among the key findings of a recent national survey commissioned by NRECA and conducted by Frederick Polls.

Most respondents (56 percent) say their household electric bills are "about right" or "a bit low" versus 41 percent who say their bills are "too high." Fifty-seven percent say they would be loyal to their co-op even if allowed to choose a provider whose "price is slightly lower." Even more (69 percent) would be loyal to the co-op over a competitor with no price difference.

Other data showed co-ops holding steady with prior surveys on overall job performance (93 percent positive), providing reliable service (95 percent positive), and quickly restoring service after outages (92 percent positive). Eighty-three percent said they have a positive opinion of their co-op as a trusted source of information about energy use and consumer choices.

PERCEPTION OF ELECTRIC RATES

More than half of survey respondents said their co-op's rates are "about right" or "a bit low."



Source: Survey of 750 electric co-op members, July 2019, margin of error +/-3.6% by Frederick Polls



Lineworker Appreciation Day

Cold weather, snow and coronavirus couldn't stop Gov. Mark Gordon, left, from celebrating Lineworker Appreciation Day with Jesse Robbins, above, and Garrett Zwiebel of High West Energy on April 13.

In past years, dozens of lineworkers from around the state have attended the governor's Lineworker Appreciation Day proclamation signing and gathered for a group photo. With the COVID-19 pandemic, and recommendations to gather in groups fewer than 10, only two lineworkers were able to attend this year.



PHOTO BY KELLY ETZEL DOUGLAS

LINEMAN SCHOLARSHIP FUND



A GOOD PROBLEM IS STILL A PROBLEM, BUT WITH YOUR HELP, OURS CAN BE FIXED.

Due to its popularity and the generosity of our board, and increased interest in the trade, WREA's Lineman Scholarship Program is in danger of running out of funding.



WHAT IT IS

The WREA Lineman Scholarship offers scholarships year-round to one or more individuals, including recent high school graduates who are interested in a career as a lineworker and plan to attend an approved regional lineworker training program.



CANDIDATES

To be considered, applicants must submit the application form, a resumé describing their education and work experience, three letters of recommendation and a transcript of grades. (If the candidate has not attended an educational institution in the three years prior to submitting the application, the transcript is not necessary.)

Candidates must submit their scholarship application to the Wyoming Rural Electric Association; they are then passed on to the WREA board for consideration.

SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

Over the past several years the board has awarded many scholarships, donating a total of \$146,540.00 since 2015.



FUNDING

For over a decade, the scholarship's main source of funding has come from a fundraising golf tournament during the Cody Hotline School. Vendors, cooperatives and others who do business with cooperatives have been solicited for donations to the fund. It has been very successful, raising as much as \$20,000 in some years.



APPRECIATION

We appreciate your support!

During the last few months, WREA members and friends have contributed to the scholarship fund. A heartfelt "thank you" to everyone who has reached out!

*But we aren't done yet.
If you haven't already, please
consider donating to the WREA
Lineman Scholarship fund.*

DONATIONS CAN BE MADE BY:



Calling the WREA Office
Manager, Robin Feezer:
(307) 634-0727



Mailing a check to the WREA Office:
2312 Carey Ave. Cheyenne, WY 82001
Make check out to WREA Lineman Scholarship

TRACING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

EDITOR'S NOTE:

We are living in historic times, and we know that by the time you read these words, headlines about the COVID-19 pandemic will look dramatically different than they do as we finish this page on April 20, 2020. We have questions for our future: What has changed? What is the same? We've compiled the following pages to remember the history we are living right now.

We also know that you may be suffering from economic hardship. We've put together a list of agencies that are available to help, including phone numbers and websites.

WHERE TO SEEK HELP IN WYOMING

CORONAVIRUS RELIEF BILL

The federal government began automatically issuing checks to qualifying individuals mid-April. The FBI is warning consumers that phone calls, texts or emails asking for personal or financial information to get your \$1,200 federal payment are not legitimate. **Call the IRS at 1-800-919-9835 or visit irs.gov to learn more.**

MEDICAID

Individuals and families can apply for Medicaid or Kid Care CHIP by calling the Wyoming Department of Health Customer Service Center at **1-855-294-2127**. Hours are Mon-Fri, 7a-6p. **For more information log on to health.wyo.gov.**

NO KID HUNGRY

Wyoming First Lady Jennie Gordon's Wyoming Hunger Initiative has compiled a list of resources by county, including school feeding programs. **307-274-0365, nohungerwyo.org.**

RURAL ELECTRIC CO-OPS

Each of the Wyoming Rural Electric Association's 11 utility cooperatives have a system in place to help members. While many offices are closed to visitors, we are working to keep your power on. Look to the center of this magazine to find news and contact information for your co-op.

SCAMS

Beware of phone calls, texts or emails offering money or threatening utility disconnects. Never click links or give out personal information to sources you can't verify.

UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIMS AND LAYOFF AVERSION GRANTS

In order to reduce hold times for telephone filings at the Wyoming Workforce Services offices at **307-473-3789**, unemployment claims will be taken on specific days,

based on the first letter of the claimant's last name.

If your last name begins with A-M: please file your claim on Monday, Wednesday or before noon on Friday. If your last name begins with N-Z: please file your claim on Tuesday, Thursday or after noon on Friday, or **file anytime online at wyui.wyo.gov/benefits/home.do**. Layoff Aversion Grants for businesses, CARES Act and other federal aid information are also available through Workforce Services.



HOW TO HELP

Those who would like to help others can consider donating to trusted charity organizations, ordering takeout from local restaurants and buying gift certificates from local businesses.

USDA

The Department of Agriculture (USDA) has issued an extensive resource guide with opportunities for immediate relief. **Call your local office, or log on to rd.usda.gov/coronavirus for information.**

WYOMING 2-1-1

Dial 2-1-1 or 1-888-425-7138, Mon-Fri 8a-6p to reach a community resources specialist to find local help for everything from food and housing assistance to mental health care through both government and nonprofit agencies. Wyoming 2-1-1 is also offering reliable information on COVID-19. **Online at wy211.communityos.org.**

WYOMING BUSINESS COUNCIL

Economic development agency offers business resources. **Visit wyomingbusiness.org or call 307-777-2800.**



— CONCERN FOR — COMMUNITY

If you're familiar with electric cooperatives you know this is one of the guiding principles in our not-for-profit business model. It's part of who we are proud to be. During these challenging times, our cooperative family is here for you. We are responsibly doing our part to help power you through the unknown. There are a million things on your mind, making sure the lights stay on, shouldn't be one of them. Because whatever the future holds, we'll power it.



TRI-STATE

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COVID-19

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS

FROM THE CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (CDC)

01

Know how it spreads

- There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).
- The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus.
- The virus is thought to spread mainly from person to person:
 - Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
 - Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks.

02

Everyone should

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home as much as possible.

03

Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face cover when around others

- You could spread COVID-19 to others even if you do not feel sick.
- Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.
- The cloth face cover is meant to protect other people in case you are infected.
- Do NOT use a face mask meant for a health care worker.
- Continue to keep about 6 feet between yourself and others. The cloth face cover is not a substitute for social distancing.

REACHING OUT TO HELP



On April 14, Cowboy State Volunteers flew private airplanes to deliver COVID-19 testing kits and equipment to 10 Wyoming communities in one day. Also on April 14, the Gillette News Record published a story on good news throughout the state, including the “Be The Light” campaign to illuminate high school football fields on Friday nights, donations of more than 1,500 hand sewn masks, local gift card donations, drive-by birthday parties and drive-by Easter egg hunts.

Photos: Cowboy State Volunteers

COURTESY OF THE WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

COVID-19

STATE COLLECTING COVID-19 MEMORIES

FROM THE WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF STATE PARKS AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

The Wyoming State Archives and State Museum, the University of Wyoming American Heritage Center (AHC), and Wyoming State Historical Society are working together to encourage you to consider how you would tell future historians about your experiences and memories of this unusual time.

Do you keep a journal or a blog? Have you created your own mask for making essential trips outdoors? Are you creating artwork or craft projects to commemorate or pass the time? Are you talking on Facebook or Instagram with your friends about how this pandemic has affected your life? Preserving those memories are all ways that you can remember this time for yourself – and give future historians clues about how we coped, how we communicated – and how we memed.

If you're writing down your thoughts, please consider donating a copy to the state archives or the AHC. If you prefer to

reflect on social media, use the hashtag #Covid19WY so we can pull together all the tweets and posts later. That includes Instagram photos of empty streets or teddy bears in windows. If you've used your crafting skills to make masks, signs, or documented your feelings visually, the state museum is interested in hearing from you, and you may see those objects someday in an exhibit about the challenges of life in 2020.

Why is it important to preserve these memories and experiences now?

Partly because it is fresh in our minds, and partly because we don't want Wyoming's story and the lessons we learn through this crisis to go untold. You may be reading stories about the Influenza Pandemic of 1918. Historians learned about this devastating time through personal stories and photographs, as well as official accounts and newspaper articles of the time. Letters, diaries, photos, and artifacts speak volumes about the courage, fear and community support that people experienced.



HOW TO SEND YOUR DIGITAL MEMORIES

Visit wyoarchives.wyo.gov and click on the COVID-19 donations link.

For information call
307-777-8691.



HOW TO SEND YOUR MEMORIES BY MAIL

State Archivist
Wyoming State Archives
Barrett Building
2301 Central Ave.
Cheyenne, WY 82002

Be sure to include your contact information.

There are so many reasons we find ourselves where we do in life. Wherever you're at and however you got there, you're never alone. For resources on temporary housing and shelter, affordable housing, financial assistance grants, help paying bills or for groceries, and more – dial 2-1-1 and talk to a real person who's ready to listen to and serve you.



Dial 2-1-1 or 888-425-7138 or visit www.wyoming211.org



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Attorneys At Law

CENSUS UPDATE



NEARLY 40% OF WYOMING HOUSEHOLDS HAVE RESPONDED

FROM THE U.S. CENSUS BUREAU – DALLAS REGIONAL OFFICE

Wyoming residents are generating new momentum in responding to the 2020 Census. As of April 14, the statewide response rate for Wyoming is at 39.6 percent. This represents a large increase in self-response for Wyoming; in fact California, Iowa, Montana, Nebraska, South Dakota and Wyoming were in a six-way tie for the highest daily total self-response rate in the nation on April 13.

For comparison, the national self-response rate is 48.6 percent. One of the biggest challenges facing response rates in Wyoming is the fact that approximately 23 percent of residents live in an area designated as “Update Leave.” Update Leave areas are part of a special operation for the Census Bureau and encompass rural locations that have city-style addresses but may use P.O. boxes to receive their mail, or it can be homes that contain rural route or highway contract route addresses. These locations have not yet received a formal 2020 Census invitation or paper questionnaire, which is contributing to the lower statewide self-response numbers.

Does this describe your situation? You can still respond online if you live at a home with a city-style address (ex: 510 Rangeview) but use a P.O. box to get your mail. Go to my2020census.gov and click on “Start Questionnaire” and then click on the link underneath the ID field that reads, “If you do not have a Census ID, click here.”

The census is asking Wyoming residents with non city-style addresses, like rural routes or highway contract routes, to please wait for the census packet with ID to be dropped off at your home due to the complexity of these types of rural addresses. The Update Leave operation is currently slated to resume in mid-June 2020 but is subject to change. It is much more efficient and accurate for the Census Bureau to count residents with complex addresses when they use their Census ID to complete the questionnaire.

Bank Branches Not Accessible?

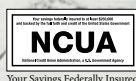
If you have a smartphone, you're there with Meridian Trust!

You don't need to make a special trip into town just to deposit checks, transfer money, or pay your bills.

With the free Meridian Trust Mobile App, online banking and bill pay – you can do all of that, and more, right from the comfort of your home.

Branches in Cheyenne, Jackson, Lander, Rawlins, Scottsbluff, Wellington, Yellowstone NP, Casper, and Rock Springs.

 **Meridian Trust**
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION
1.800.726.5644 | MyMeridianTrust.com



EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE 2020 CENSUS

The census data provides monetary funds for Wyoming. Wyoming towns and counties each received about **\$600/person** from state tax distribution based on census data in the 2019 fiscal year.

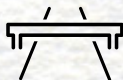
CENSUS INFORMATION IS USED IN WYOMING FOR PLANNING AND FUNDING



NEW SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION



MEDICARE DISTRIBUTION



ROADS AND BRIDGES



POLICE AND FIRE DEPARTMENT LOCATIONS



LIBRARIES AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS

THE CENSUS IN YOUR COMMUNITY

The census will not be mailed to P.O. Box addresses. Instead, a census worker will bring a postcard or questionnaire to your home.

How to identify a census field representative:

The representative must present an I.D. badge with:



THEIR PHOTOGRAPH



A DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE WATERMARK



AN EXPIRATION DATE

The representative will have a letter from the director of the U.S. Census Bureau and can provide the number for the regional office for verification. Wyoming residents can also call 211 for census information.

THE CENSUS IS SAFE

The U.S. Census Bureau is bound by law to keep your answers strictly confidential. Data cannot be used for law enforcement purposes or to determine personal eligibility for government benefits.

The census will NEVER ask for:



SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS



BANK OR CREDIT CARD INFORMATION



MONEY



ANYTHING RELATED TO POLITICAL PARTIES

CENSUS TIMELINE

2010	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JULY 31	2020
The last census took place 10 years ago.	You will receive an invitation to participate in the 2020 census. Some households will receive a postcard, others will receive a questionnaire.	If you haven't responded yet, you will receive a reminder letter and paper questionnaire.	Census workers begin visiting homes that haven't responded. Home visits may be delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.	Census closed.	The next census will take place 10 years later.

★ **MAKE SURE YOU COUNT!**

Wyoming's rural electric cooperatives encourage you to participate in the 2020 Census.

For more information call 211, log onto 2020census.gov or visit your local library.

Sources: Wyoming Department of Administration & Information Economic Analysis Division, Wyoming State Library.

CENTERPIECE

GF Harvest

BY ILENE OLSON

The Smith family poses in an oat field near Powell, with Heart Mountain in the background. From left are Alyssa Smith, Seaton Smith, Forrest Smith and Jill Smith.



PHOTO BY NICK ALLEN

**High school ag project
grows into successful business**

A thriving agricultural business in Powell got its start as an outgrowth of a high school student's unusual FFA project.

After growing up on a meat-and-potatoes diet, Forrest Smith wasn't looking to raise cows, pigs or lambs. He wanted to help people who suffer from celiac disease, an immune disease in which gluten damages the small intestine.

Forrest was diagnosed with celiac disease at the age of 2. That diagnosis meant that he could not eat grains that contained gluten. As a result, his diet was very limited. No wheat; no barley; no rye; no oats. No bread; no cake; no crackers; no cereal; no oatmeal.

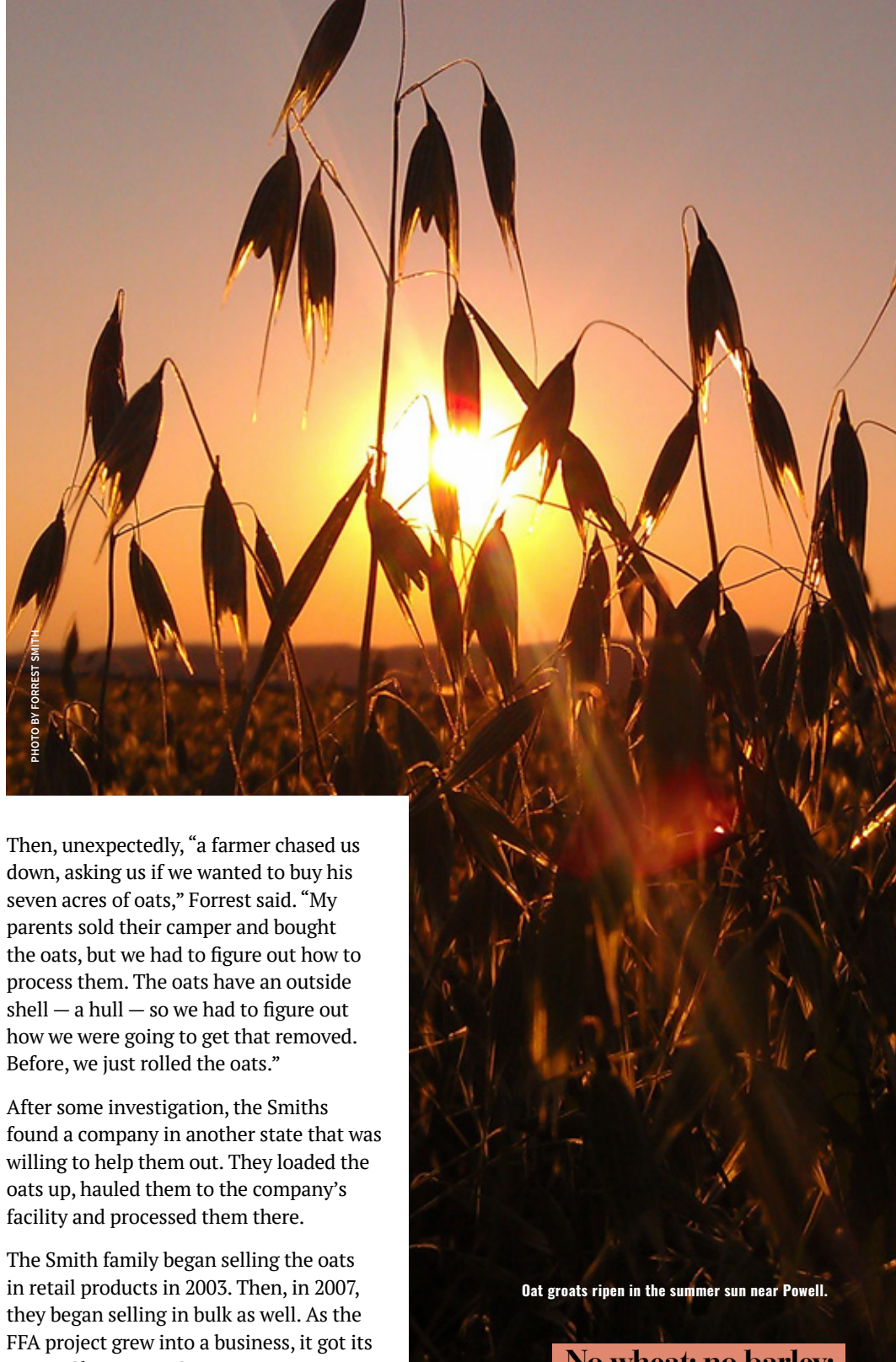
But, around the time he started high school, scientists began realizing that oats, when grown and processed carefully, actually contain no gluten.

Forrest decided to put that theory to a test. So, for his supervised FFA agricultural experience, he obtained 50 pounds of oats grown in a field where no wheat, barley or rye had been planted for a few years, thereby preventing cross-contamination. He and his parents hand-sorted the oats, and Forrest rolled them with a small electric roller he purchased for his project.

The results were promising; Forrest was able to eat the rolled oats without suffering digestive problems.

The following year, Forrest's project expanded to 500 pounds of oats, which he bought from a local farmer. After sorting and rolling the oats, he bagged and sold them to other celiac sufferers.

But in Forrest's junior year, the farmer who had supplied the oats before said he couldn't guarantee his oat crop that year wouldn't be contaminated. Forrest and his parents figured that was the end of his FFA project.



Then, unexpectedly, "a farmer chased us down, asking us if we wanted to buy his seven acres of oats," Forrest said. "My parents sold their camper and bought the oats, but we had to figure out how to process them. The oats have an outside shell — a hull — so we had to figure out how we were going to get that removed. Before, we just rolled the oats."

After some investigation, the Smiths found a company in another state that was willing to help them out. They loaded the oats up, hauled them to the company's facility and processed them there.

The Smith family began selling the oats in retail products in 2003. Then, in 2007, they began selling in bulk as well. As the FFA project grew into a business, it got its name: Gluten Free Oats.

They continued the arrangement with the processing company for several years, but found the 100 man-hours it took each time just to clean the machines to be burdensome and expensive. But the cleaning was absolutely necessary to ensure there would be no cross-contamination from other grains that were processed in the facility. ➡

Oat groats ripen in the summer sun near Powell.

**No wheat; no barley;
no rye; no oats.
No bread; no cake;
no crackers; no cereal;
no oatmeal.**

STATE AND LOCAL INVESTMENTS

The Smiths decided it was time to look into building a mill and processing facility for Gluten Free Oats. In 2009, Forrest's father, Seaton Smith, went before the Powell City Council to ask if it would be willing to sponsor a Business Ready Community Development grant and loan to help them buy the property and pay to build the facility.

"The presentation was put together really well," said Powell's former mayor, Scott Mangold. "Seaton already had information about the grant program. Basically, all we had to do was put together the application and send it in to the state."

The Council agreed to sponsor the grant. Seaton did another presentation for members of the Wyoming Business Council, who made a trip to Powell to learn more about Gluten Free Oats as part of the application process. The Business Council recommended that the project receive full funding from the Wyoming State Loan and Investment Board.

Two grants were awarded to the city of Powell on behalf of Gluten Free Oats: a Business Committed Grant for \$450,000 in January 2010, and an additional \$267,795 in January 2011, when construction bids came in higher than expected.

In addition, the city of Powell loaned \$108,000 for the Gluten Free Oats project through the city's economic development fund. Only the funding from the city carries interest, at 4 percent; the grant money is interest free.

The city of Powell owns property and the 2,880 square-foot facility, and Gluten Free Oats leases it for \$1,994 per month. Once the 30-year grant/loan is paid off, Gluten Free Oats will own the property and the building free and clear, and the money the city receives in payments will be available for future economic development projects.

Coping with Celiac Disease

When Forrest Smith was 2 years old, he looked like the victim of a famine. His arms and legs were scrawny, his belly distended. He was sick, malnourished, and he had no energy.

His parents, Jill and Seaton Smith, were desperate to find out what was wrong with their son.

"We watched him fall asleep in his food," Seaton said. "We had to hold his head up in the barbershop so they could cut his hair; he would fall asleep in the chair."

Eventually, the Smiths were referred to a gastroenterologist, who came up with a diagnosis: Forrest had celiac disease.

Celiac disease is an auto-immune disorder in which eating gluten causes a person's immune system to attack the lining of the small intestine. That prevents the intestine from absorbing nutrients, resulting in diarrhea, fatigue, malnutrition, weight loss and anemia.

There was a simple solution to Forrest's problems, the doctor said: "Take him home, feed him meat and potatoes, and you'll have a brand-new child."

Almost immediately, Forrest gained weight and became a normal, energetic little boy. But his limited diet could be frustrating. Forrest couldn't eat bread or cereal, cookies, cakes, crackers or sauces. He couldn't eat school lunches, and when other students brought cupcakes to share for their birthdays, he couldn't eat them.

Two years after Forrest's diagnosis, Jill learned she also has celiac disease. Several years after that,



Seaton was diagnosed as well, as were 15 other family members of Forrest's extended family.

Before Gluten Free Oats, Seaton said, the only flour that people with celiac disease could eat was rice or potato flour, and those don't provide the fiber a person's digestive system needs.

When Forrest brought the idea for his gluten-free oat FFA project to his father, Seaton was supportive.

"We taught him to give back to others," Seaton said, "and this was a way for him to do that."

Giving back also was a big part of the reason the family decided to broaden the project into a business.

In doing so, "We were the first company in the United States that was certified as a gluten-free processor."



GF Harvest employees inspect an oat field and remove any plants that don't belong. Keeping the oat crop free of contaminants ensures it is gluten-free.

Farm trucks line up for inspection at GF Harvest in Powell prior to the oat harvest. Inspection is necessary to ensure that no barley or other grains containing gluten are present in corners or creases in the truck beds. A small amount of gluten contamination can cause big problems for people with celiac disease.



PHOTOS BY FORREST SMITH

DIVERSE MARKET

These days, Gluten Free Oats, now marketed as GF Harvest, is a thriving business that employs 16 people in addition to the Smiths. Seaton and Jill are co-owners; Seaton is president of the company, and Jill serves as quality assurance manager. GF Harvest offers rolled oats, oat flour, pancake mixes, steel-cut quick oats, oatmeal in microwaveable cups and ready-to-go oatmeal in small, pop-out containers.

Now they're considering going into hemp as well.

In a presentation to the Powell City Council in March, Jill said the Smiths envision adding hemp to GF Harvest's oat products to increase the protein and omega content of the foods they offer.

Seaton told the Powell Tribune in 2011 that most of the money Gluten Free Oats earns is from out of state, and much of it comes from international sales. Local farmers grow the oats, further benefitting the local economy.

Forrest said last month that GF Harvest ships products to countries around the world, including Scotland, Australia, Brazil, Singapore and Taiwan.

GF Harvest also provides Passover-certified oats for people of the Jewish faith who are gluten intolerant. The entire process has to be observed from

harvest to processing to certify that the oats are free from water and unleavened.

"Last year, we had one rabbi and his helpers," Forrest said. "They cannot take their eyes off the oats. Once they are harvested, they have to watch constantly to make sure there is no water, so no leavening can happen. Then we stored it, and they came back at a later date with some more rabbis, and we made it into flour. There's a lot of headaches to it, but it's a service to them, and they thank us for that ability so they can celebrate the Passover." →

**“I look back and say
that the good Lord
put blinders on us to
not see those pitfalls
that could be there.”**



STAYING ON TOP

Big-name companies have since entered the gluten-free market, and GF Harvest has more competition than it once did. But Seaton said those big companies can't match the quality control needed to ensure GF Harvest's extremely low cross-contamination rate of 10 parts per million. That's the equivalent of finding 10 dimes in a stack of pennies a mile high. And it's accomplished by careful planning, cleaning and inspection, he said.

PHOTO BY ILENE OLSON

“I know what seed went into the planter, who was growing it, and what the fields had in them for the last two years,” Seaton said. “We inspect it, the grower inspects it, and the Wyoming Seed Certification inspects it in the field. We inspect the combine and the trucks prior to the harvest.”

Barley is harvested earlier in the season than oats. If some barley got stuck in a corner of a truck bed, that would contaminate the whole load of oats, Seaton said.

After delivery to the GF Harvest processing facility, the oats are placed on a large table, where they are inspected again, and any stray grains removed.

Those details might not matter as much to someone whose gluten sensitivity is low, but they're very important to celiac sufferers who have a high sensitivity to gluten.

Seaton said he realizes now that he and his family were spared serious problems that could have befallen them when creating and expanding their business.

“We didn't realize how far we were on the cutting edge,” he said. “I look back and say that the good Lord put blinders on us to not see those pitfalls that could be there.”

The Smiths also were fortunate to find the support they needed to grow their business, Seaton said.

“First Bank said, ‘Yes, I'll walk along with you.’ Community Development said, ‘Yes, I'll walk along with you.’ Growers said, ‘Yes, I'll walk along with you.’ Now we look back, and we've built a great opportunity and a great product,” he said.

Mangold, who now serves on the Powell City Council, said GF Harvest has grown from its humble beginnings as a student project into a thriving business.

“It's a big success story, not only for Park County and Powell, but also for the state,” he said. He noted that state officials often point to the company as an economic development success story. **W**

Ilene Olson is a freelance photographer, writer and editor in Powell.



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a farmworker? You've come
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Farm and Ranch Workers in Wyoming



01

WHEN I GROW UP

I want to be a

Farmworker

How to Become a Farm and Ranch Worker

Farmworkers are needed all across the state. College education is not always necessary, but a strong work ethic is!

03

04

Tools of the Trade

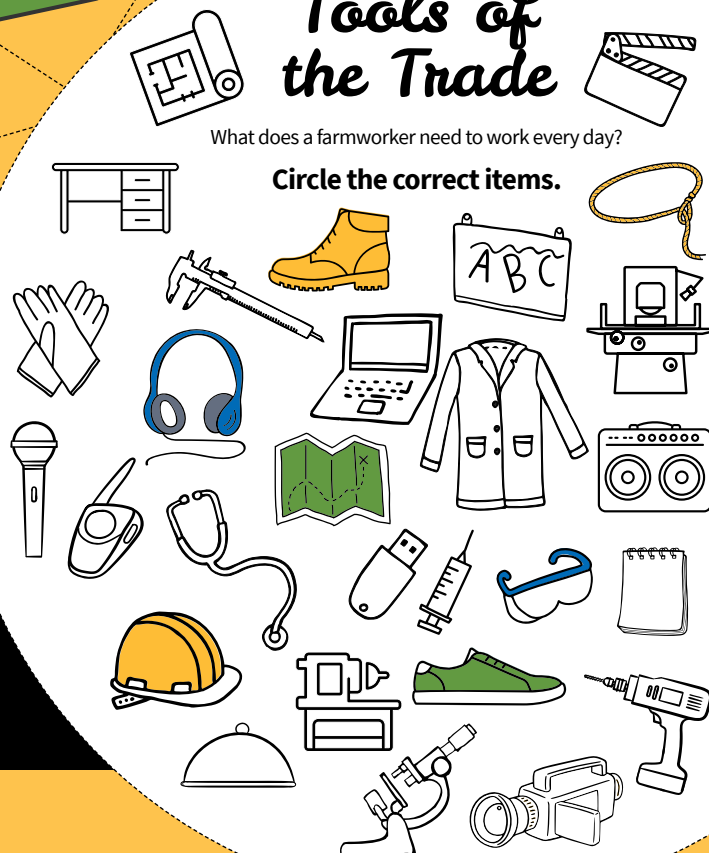
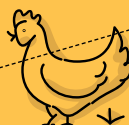
What does a farmworker need to work every day?

Circle the correct items.

- What does your personality say about your job? Add up your points to find out.**

- 1) Do you like horses or dogs the most?
Horses +1 • Dogs +2
- 2) Would you rather sleep in a camper or in a tent?
Camper +2 • Tent +1
- 3) Do you like to stay in one place or change the scenery every day?
Stay +2 • Change +1
- 4) Which are cuter, lambs or calves?
Calves +1 • Lambs +2
- 5) Do you like rodeos?
Like +1 • Dislike +1

Answers: 5: You're all cowboy! 9: You're a shepherd! Somewhere in between? So are we!





— RIC RODRIGUEZ —

Continues Family Farming Tradition

‘Farming is in my blood’

BY ILENE OLSON

As a third-generation farmer, Ric Rodriguez follows in the footsteps of his grandfather and his father, both of whom farmed for decades in the Powell area, served by Garland Light and Power.

Ric’s grandfather was a field worker who came to Powell during the spring, summer and fall in the 1930s to work in sugar beet fields. There, he met Ric’s grandmother, who also came up to Powell with her family to work the beet fields. In the late 1930s or early ’40s, Ric’s grandfather decided to take up farming on his own southwest of Powell. There, the couple raised their six children.

Ric’s father, Paul Rodriguez, served in the Korean War in the early 1950s, after which he returned to the Powell area. He began farming near Heart Mountain in 1955. Two of Paul’s brothers returned to Powell in the late 1960s, and Paul got them started in farming as well. Each brother had his own farming operation.

A Rodriguez Farms employee uses an air seeder to plant barley in a field west of Powell, with the Bighorn Mountains in the background. The seeder opens a small trench, injects seed and fertilizer, and closes the trench, all in one pass of the tractor.

After graduating from high school, Ric left Powell for a time, earning an education degree from Montana State-Billings. But in 1981, his heart led him back to Powell. He began farming on his own, with his father’s help.

Paul mostly retired from farming in 2000. “At 86 years old he still comes out every day to help where he can on the farm,” Ric said.

Ric’s son, Marc, and daughter, Nicole, both went to college in Montana and “kind of bounced around a bit.” But, like their father, they eventually returned to Powell.

These days, Marc farms alongside Ric, making Marc the fourth-generation Rodriguez farmer. One of Ric’s uncles also farms with him part time.

Ric Rodriguez



A stream of barley seed pours into a hopper from an opening in the back of a semi trailer. An auger then lifts the seed and pours it into a seeder tank.

Marc Rodriguez watches the fill level of a seeder tank while an augur pours barley seed into the tank through a chute.



PHOTOS BY ILENE OLSON

Ric said they grow mostly sugar beets and malt barley, throwing in some dry beans and alfalfa now and then. This year, they're planting about 1,400 acres of sugar beets, and another 1,400 acres of barley.

Working the soil and tending crops is in the Rodriguez blood.

"I enjoy the work [and] being my own boss," Ric said. "You can control your own destiny. Hopefully you can make enough money to go on a trip now and then, and maybe buy some machinery."

But pitting yourself against Mother Nature year after year isn't easy — especially when she's temperamental.

"It's always a challenge," Ric said. "It seems like there's a different challenge every year.

"Last year, the weather just stuck us hard, both in the spring and the fall. We froze some beets in the spring, then had to replant. Then we had a devastating freeze in the fall and had to leave some beets in the ground."

The financial side of farming is what Ric likes least.

"As long as the markets are good, you don't mind going to the bank, but when you've had a bad year, financial planning is the toughest," Ric said.

But, even after a bad year, "you want to go and do it again, to prove you can do it," he said. "Overall, we've done well."

The right machinery makes a big difference, and it makes farming very different from when Ric's grandfather, and even his father, farmed the land. It minimizes the number of tractor passes in the field, and it maximizes yield.

Unlike most farms in the Big Horn Basin, Rodriguez Farms use very little flood irrigation. Ric prefers pivot irrigation systems — very long assemblies of sprinklers that use motorized wheels to rotate the sprinklers around the pivots. He said the pivots apply the correct amount of moisture over each field and crop and save the manual labor required to run water down flood irrigation furrows.



The machine Rodriguez Farms uses to plant barley is 32 feet wide. A tillage tool in the front tills the ground, followed by an air seeder that injects a precise amount of fertilizer along with the seeds. Then wheels on the back of the machine tamp the dirt back in, all in one pass.

The tractors that pull the seeders are guided by GPS receivers, which ensure that every row is straight, with no gaps or overruns between passes.

Perhaps Ric's favorite machine is the ROPA sugar beet digger, manufactured in Germany — the only one in the state of Wyoming.

"It will dig in snow or mud or whatever," Ric said.

The behemoth machine defoliates the beet plants, digs the beets, brings them up on a conveyor belt, then an auger distributes the beets throughout the ROPA's huge storage bed. Once the storage box is full, the beets are transferred via an adjustable double-wide conveyor belt into a waiting dump truck for transportation to a beet dump station.

Doing all that in one pass saves time, labor and fuel, but the machine has a hefty price tag.

"You have to have the right amount of acres to justify one," Ric said. "But it's freed up a couple of men from harvest to do field work."

In addition to farming, Ric also serves as the Lovell Factory District representative on the Western Sugar Cooperative's nine-member board of directors. The grower-owned cooperative, based in Colorado, owns sugar factories in Wyoming, Colorado, Montana and Nebraska. Those factories process sugar beets grown on a total of about 115,000 acres annually. **W**

Ilene Olson is a freelance photographer, writer and editor in Powell.

The Riven Country of Senga Munro

BY RENÉE CARRIER

Riven: adjective, literary; alternate past participle of to rive. 1. torn apart 2. broken into pieces, split asunder.

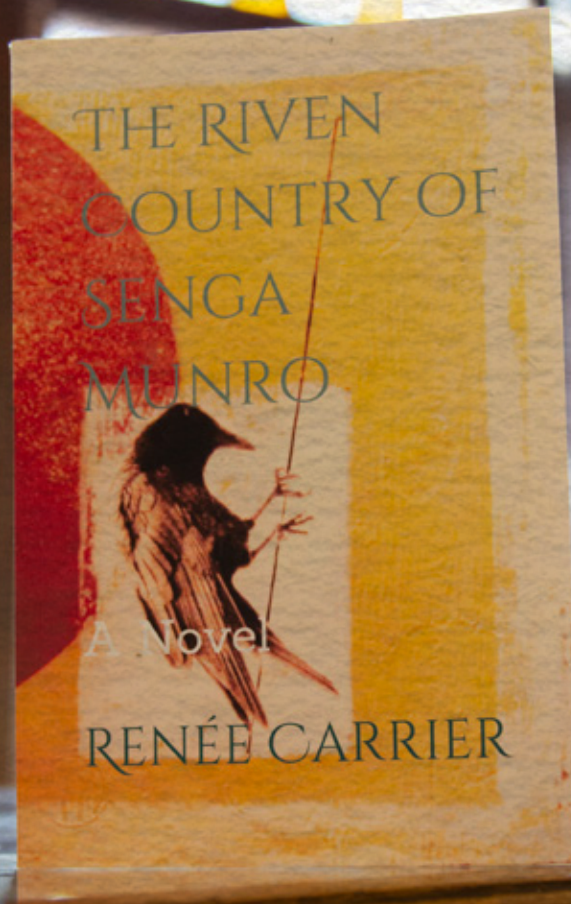
"My daughter would have been 29 years old this year," begins this intergenerational story. Senga Munro still blames herself two decades after her daughter's death. A literary novel, "The Riven Country of Senga Munro" explores the aftermath of unspeakable tragedy and what it means to be "other" in rural Wyoming; Senga sees what others can't, via the novel's thread of magical realism.

An arrow shot through time by a 19th century Indian scout jolts her awake at last. Will Senga risk the relative safety of routine and finally come to terms with her purpose and life, even as she provokes the ire of a modern-day outlaw? Senga Munro, the not-so-simple herbal simpler is earning a Ph.D. in life's mysteries.

We meet Senga's friends: Gabe Belizaire, a bull rider from Louisiana with an M.F.A in creative writing, who chooses to live in a state where his skin color is rare; Rufus and Caroline Strickland, a sympathetic, if irascible, elderly ranching couple; Francesca Albinoni, Gabe's Italian muse; Joe Rafaela, the hardy Franciscan; and the old Berry place folks – outlaws and proverbial snakes in the garden, of the poisonous variety.

Readers learn that resilience and grit triumph as the most useful antidotes in the bag as they journey through "The Riven Country of Senga Munro," Book One in the Riven Country Series.

DESCRIPTION BY THE AUTHOR



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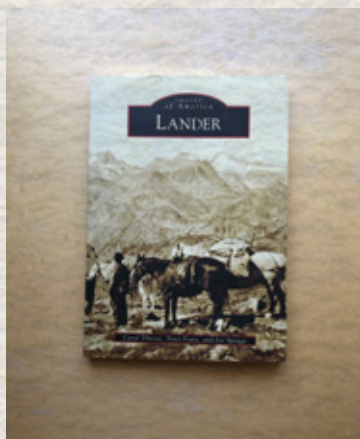
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03

The Little Black Goat



WAYNE HOLYOAK ★ ROZET

This is a goat that I often see driving between Rozet and Gillette on Highway 51. Sometimes the goat is alone and sometimes hanging out with the antelope.

He stands there, grazing in the green pasture
Sometimes alone, other times in the midst
Of an antelope herd who do not mind
the company of this strange immigrant.

Odd bedfellows these natives and this dark
Foreigner, yet they coexist without
Apparent rancor or enmity.
What is the secret of their accordance?

Apparently, they share more in common,
Overriding the insignificant
Visible differences which we see
And misconceive to be preeminent.

Is the little black goat content – does he
Feel alienated – or conflicted
Because of the queer company he keeps?
Is he lonely when the antelope leave?

It must be that he only focuses
On being a goat. Accepting all else
Without regard for his forthright goatness.

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BEETS

PICKLED BEETS

3 (16 OZ) CANS SLICED BEETS

1 CUP SUGAR

1 CUP VINEGAR

2 TBS CORNSTARCH

12 WHOLE CLOVES (OR MORE)

3 TBS CATSUP

3 TBS COOKING OIL

1 TSP VANILLA

DASH SALT

Drain beets, reserve 1 1/2 cup juice. Place beets in saucepan with the reserved juice and remaining ingredients. Mix well and cook for 3 minutes over medium heat, until the mixture thickens. Let cool, store in the refrigerator.

DOROTHY WOOD ★ HULETT

BEET JELLY

8-10 BEETS, PEELED AND SLICED

7 CUPS WATER

2 SMALL PKGS SURE JELL

1/2 CUP LEMON JUICE

8 CUPS SUGAR

2 (3 OZ) PKGS JELL-O GELATIN MIX, ANY FLAVORS

Simmer beets in water for 30 minutes until beets are tender. Strain off 6 cups of juice. Pour juice into a large pot and stir in Sure-Jell and lemon juice. Bring to a boil; add sugar and JELL-O. Bring to a boil and boil 6 minutes. Remove from heat and skim. Seal in sterile jars.

NANCY DENK ★ RIVERTON



MARINATED BEET SALAD

1 (16 OZ) CAN WHOLE BEETS

1/4 CUP WHITE SUGAR

1 TSP PREPARED MUSTARD

1/4 CUP WHITE VINEGAR

1/4 CUP DICED RED ONION

Drain beets, reserving 1/4 cup beet liquid and slice beets into 1/4 to 1/2-inch slivers. Add onion and toss.

In a saucepan over medium heat cook sugar, mustard and reserved 1/4 cup beet liquid until dissolved. Add vinegar and bring to a boil; remove from heat and allow to cool.

Pour over the beets and onions, toss and refrigerate 4 to 6 hours. Remove from refrigerator and serve at room temperature.

NANCY DENK ★ RIVERTON



JULY:
SALMON

SUBMIT
A RECIPE

Send complete recipe by June 10!

Please include your name, address and phone number.

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Prairie Dogs in Wyoming

BY NEVA BODIN

“What’s that noise in the garage?” I asked my husband.

“I don’t know! Go see.”

I opened the door to our attached garage. “No one’s out here, must be the wind.” Some small items were knocked over on the work bench.

A few days later, while working in a small shed in the backyard and feeling someone watching him, my husband checked the doorway. A small, tan prairie dog sat in the doorway studying him – the source of our mysterious noise in the garage.

The small rodent was obviously misplaced. This creature’s usual home is on the range of flat Wyoming vistas rather than in a people’s town.



Though prairie dogs are found to possess an extensive vocabulary, he said nothing about why he visited us. Nor did he turn to a fellow prairie dog to bark, “Alert! A tall, thin human wearing a blue shirt is standing in front of me!” But he could have.

According to India Hayford, retired range conservationist and museum assistant at Casper College’s Werner Wildlife Museum, prairie dogs invent new “words” to describe things they’ve never seen before. They are amazing little linguists.

Northern Arizona University professor C.N. Slobodchikoff studied prairie dog language extensively. In his publication, “Prairie Dogs,” co-authored by Bianca S. Perla and Jennifer L. Verdolin, he wrote that by introducing different objects into their environment and recording their calls with sophisticated sound analyzation systems, researchers discovered that prairie dogs can specify a type of predator, size, shape, danger level, color to a limited extent, speed at which it is approaching, and develop new language to describe something they have not encountered before. He found that their behavior in standing upright to observe near or away from their burrows,

or dive into their burrows immediately, depends on the announcement from the alerting animal.

Slobodchikoff wrote that if a predator is approaching slowly, their calls are slower, if faster, they bark or chirp faster. If a domestic dog approaches instead of a coyote, they may stay close to but outside of their burrow longer. Chattering to each other for no apparent purpose other than to be social also seems to occur.

PRAIRIE DOGS IN WYOMING

There are five types of prairie dogs: black-tailed, white-tailed, Gunnison’s, Utah and Mexican. Hayford said Wyoming sees two of the five species: white-tailed and black-tailed. Depending on altitude and environmental temperature, Gunnison’s, Utah and white-tailed species hibernate for varying lengths of time writes Kim Long in her book “Prairie Dogs: A Wildlife Handbook,” part of the Johnson Nature Series.

Researchers in animal behavior have studied black-tailed and Gunnison’s prairie dogs to decode their language. Each species has complex communications skills. There can be the same language with different accents in the same species who live in different areas, said Hayford. Just as someone from Texas says things differently than someone from Minnesota although voicing the same message, so goes the language of prairie dogs.



HISTORY AND ENVIRONMENT

Named by the French for their sharp little barks, prairie dogs look more like gophers or ground squirrels than dogs. During their Corps of Discovery expedition, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark encountered them in Nebraska and, fascinated, wrote long, descriptive paragraphs about them. After catching one, they sent it to President Thomas Jefferson. According to their journal, they also ate one with Lewis writing, “this little animal is frequently very fat and it’s flesh is not unpleasant.”*

This wasn’t an original idea. While Long writes of myths and songs by Native Americans regarding the prairie dog,

Slobodchikoff writes that Hopi and Navajo had recipes for prairie dog and prairie dog bones were found at Anasazi lodging sites.

Prairie dogs are a keystone species, providing food and homes for many types of animals. Burrowing owls and mountain plovers nest in their burrows. Hawks, coyotes, bobcats, badgers, falcons, fox and snakes eat these small animals. The black-footed ferret eats prairie dogs almost exclusively.

Prairie dogs eat vegetation, such as grass, roots and small seeds and insects. They provide fertilizer with their waste, eat the grass so it is shorter and becomes more

concentrated with protein, and aerate the soil with their digging.

As many as 70 burrows may make up a prairie dog colony or town consisting of family groups called coteries. Prairie dog burrows contain separate rooms for eating, sleeping, storing food and elimination. Within the town are neighborhoods – groups that bond and become someone to visit, play, and socialize with.

When prairie dogs who like each other greet one another, they often touch their lips, tongues or teeth together, making it look like they are kissing. This is a common picture on postcards for sale in Wyoming.

Prairie dogs may host the rat flea, which carries the bacterium for three types of plague, Bubonic being the most common. The rat flea, itself not harmed by the bacteria, transmits the disease when biting an animal such as the prairie dog, or human. The disease can be transmitted by a bite, direct contact with infected tissue, or even exposure to human coughing.

Our little visitor needed to move on, and we encouraged him to do so. Hopefully he found more suitable country real estate for his new home.

W

Neva Bodin is a Casper-based freelance writer, registered nurse, painter and poet.

*From July 1, 1806, lewisandclarkjournals.unl.edu

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cheyenneregional.org/smartexam

Forget chimps, whales and dolphins. According to current research, the award for nature's most sophisticated vocal language has gone to the dogs. Prairie dogs!

Yes, those shrill – some might even say irritating – yips and barks are actually descriptive sentences that contain nouns (e.g. human, coyote, dog) as well as adjectives (e.g. green, tall, triangular). Using sonic and behavioral analysis of prairie dog alarm barks and “jump yips” scientists have been able to decipher a vocabulary, document five species-specific languages and regional accents, and even observe individuals creating new calls to describe things they’ve never seen before. I’ll be doggone.

Unlike prairie dog language, in which each sound represents an entire word, this cryptogram pairs a sound with a letter. Use the key to keep track of letter-sound pairs as you decipher the quote. Furrowed brow?

Dig up the answers on page 33.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
			yip									
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
blaf									eef			

W _____ , _____ , _____ .
eef yap reet reet boof voff ow voff waf squeep yap

W _____ D _____ N _____ _____ _____ _____
eef yap yip art blaf art voff reet boof zeep yap

_____ N _____ _____ _____ _____
boof blaf weet bork art art

_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ N _____ _____ _____ N
ike squeep voff haff weet blaf boof ow weet blaf

_____ N _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
weet blaf boof haff weet reet voff art art

— D _____ D _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
yip waf yip art art reet boof voff voff reet yap

Want more?

Learn more about prairie dog language in the videos at conslobodchikoff.com



Crittergram
BY KENDRA SPANIER

WHAT'S HAPPENING REGIONAL MAP



01 | SOUTHEAST

CENTENNIAL

JUNE 20

Centennial Valley Volunteer Fire Department Open House: Family-friendly fundraiser with pig roast, silent auction and raffle. Noon, Centennial Fire Department, free, info 307-745-9322.

ONGOING

Nici Self Museum Hours: Museum open on Memorial Day weekend, May 23, 24, 25 and 12-4p Thu-Mon to Labor Day weekend, 12-4p Sat-Sun in September. Nici Self Museum, free, info 307-742-7763, niciselfmuseum.org.

CHUGWATER

JUNE 20

Chugwater Chili Cookoff: Annual event with ranch rodeo, live music, car/tractor show, games, vendors and chili to raise funds for the Chugwater Fire Department, Historical Society, FBLA and FFA, Community Center and more. Info 307-715-9518, chugwaterchilicookoff@gmail.com.

ENCAMPMENT

ONGOING

Grand Encampment Museum: Main Gallery and GEM store most days 10a-4p, info 307-327-5308.

HARTVILLE

JUNE 20

Sunrise Mine Tours: Three-hour mine and town tour, barbecue lunch to benefit the Western History Center. Gates open at 11:30a, tour leaves at 1p. Meet at Sunrise Mine, \$20, \$35 family, no credit cards. Info 307-575-2010.

GUERNSEY

FOURTH SUNDAYS

American Legion Riders: 2p, Crazy Tony's Bar & Grill, info 307-575-0838.

JAY EM

THROUGH SEPTEMBER

Historic Jay Em on the Rawhide:

Tour historic buildings by appointment only. Info 307-735-4364, 307-322-2839.

02 | NORTHEAST

BUFFALO

THURSDAYS

Bluegrass Jam Session: 6:30p, Occidental Saloon, free, info 307-684-0451.

GILLETTE

JUNE 6

Dance Through the Decades:

Family-friendly event with dancing, silent auction and raffles to benefit the Rockpile Museum Association's paid summer internship program. 5:30p, dinner 6p,

Campbell County Senior Center, \$40, info 307-682-5723, assocrma@gmail.com.

TUESDAYS

Levis and Lace: Square dance club will give modern square dance lessons, 7:30p, Rockpile Community Center, free trial lessons, info 307-660-7207.

ONGOING

Ava Community Art Center: Info avacenter.org or 307-682-9133.

NEWCASTLE

SECOND & FOURTH WEDNESDAYS

GiGi's Closet: Providing free gently-used clothing for the family. 9a-1p, First United Methodist Church, info 307-746-4119.

FEATURED EVENT



LEGEND ROCK TOUR

MEETEETSE

JUNE 6 - 9A, TOUR AT 10

Annual tour includes kids' activities and a visit from Joshua Mann of the Eastern Shoshone Tribal Historic Preservation Office. Dress for the weather, bring water and lunch.

Meet at Meeteetse Museums or Legend Rock State Petroglyph Site at 9a. Tour at 10a. Free.

INFO 307-868-2423

PROGRAMS@MEETEETSEMUSEUMS.ORG

NORTHWEST

★
Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, events may be postponed or canceled. Please call ahead before attending events.

PINE HAVEN

JUNE 20

Show and Shine: Classic car show, contest, barbecue. 9a, winners announced at 2p. Waters Park, \$10 entry fee per vehicle. Info 307-756-9807.

UPTON

MAY 26

Library Summer Reading

Program: Sign up at Upton Branch Library, info 307-468-2324, srandall@westongov.com.

ONGOING

Upton Gun Club Events: June 2, 9, 16, 5-Stand Shotgun Course, 5p \$5; June 3, 10, 17 Trap Shooting, \$5, 5p; June 13 Wyoming State Youth Hunter Education Challenge, 7a, \$10. 2579 State Hwy 116N, info 307-281-9980, rrothleutner@yahoo.com.

ONGOING

Senior Center Activities: Lunch is served at noon Mon-Fri, \$4, call for reservation before 9a. 307-468-9267. Stop by Tuesday mornings for coffee and treats, with an exercise program at 9a. Seniors welcome Thu and Fri from 1-4p. Potluck at 5:30p third Mondays. Ask about medical equipment loans. 1113 2nd St., info 307-468-9251.

02 | NORTHWEST

CODY

ONGOING

Cody Country Art League

Gallery: 9a-5p Mon-Sat, 836 Sheridan Ave, info 307-587-3597.

DUBOIS

JUNE 9

Five Mile Creek Tie Hack Tour:

Between 1920 and 1927, tie hacks operated dozens of logging camps in the forests surrounding the base of Ramshorn Mountain. 9a, Dubois Museum, \$10 advance registration required 307-455-2284.

JUNE 12-14

Don Scheer Memorial Packhorse

Races: Calcutta at Outlaw Saloon 8a Fri, Packhorse Race 10a Sat, Ladies' Race 10a Sun. Dubois Overlook on McKinley Dr. Info 307-455-3134, Facebook.

WEDNESDAYS IN JUNE

Kids' Corner: Education, crafts for the younger ones. 9-10a at the Dubois Museum, 10-11a at the National Bighorn Sheep Center. \$3, info 307-455-2284.

ETHE TE

MAY 29-30

Chief Yellow Calf Memorial Club

Fest and Powwow: Grand Entry times: Fri 7p, Sat 6p. Blue Sky Hall, 506 Ethete Rd. Info 307-438-0863, aldene.skypepeople@yahoo.com.

HUDSON

JUNE 20

Hudson Daze: Old-fashioned Western games, events, car show, skateboard demos and BBQ. 10a-3p, Gold Star Memorial Park, info 307-335-8125, bnicol@wyoming.com, Facebook.

LANDER

JUNE 4

Wyoming's Snow Chi Minh Trail:

Author traces the history of I-80 and the Lander folks who helped get it built. 7p, Pioneer Museum, free, info 307-332-3339.

JUNE 6

Gold Panning Day: Children will pan for gold along Baldwin Creek on the museum grounds and design a bag to store gold. 1p, Pioneer Museum, \$4 advance registration required 307-332-3339.

JUNE 12-13

Brewfest and Golf Tournament:

Brewfest features 20-plus brewers from Wyoming and surrounding states, live music, vendors 2-7p, City Park. Golf Tournament tee-off 9a-12p for 9-hole scramble, Lander Golf & Country Club. Tickets and info 307-332-3892, landerbrewfest.com, landergolfcourse.com.



Send complete
information for the July
issue's events by
JUNE 10!

Please remember that events
from the 20th of July to the
20th of August are included
in the July issue.

Be sure to include the date,
title, description, time, cost,
location, address and contact
information for each event.

Photos are always welcome.



Look for more events at
wyomingrea.org/news.

QUESTIONS & SUBMISSIONS:

✉ wren@wyomingrea.org

☎ [307] 772-1968

✉ 214 W. Lincolnway
Ste. 21C
Cheyenne, WY 82001

💻 wyomingrea.org/wren-submissions

JUNE 13

Fremont Area Road Tour Cycling

Event: Bike routes between 15-100 miles around scenic Lander nestled up against the Wind River Mountains. Yoga cool-down at Lander City Park, 6:30a-3p, info 307-332-3394, fremontarearoadtour.com.

MEETEETSE

JUNE 3

History of Conservation in Park

County: Archivist will cover the history of conservation in Park County to set the stage for new ongoing summer seminar series "Humans and Wildlife Interactions." 6p, Meeteetse Museums, free, info programs@meeteetsemuseums.org.

JUNE 13, 20

Photography Field Trips:

Visit the Double Dee Ranch June 13, Kirwin June 20 with professional photographer. 10a, Meeteetse Museums, \$25, pre-registration required. Information 307-868-2423, programs@meeteetsemuseums.org.

RIVERTON

MAY 21

Frenchie Draw History: Learn history of area and failed attempts at homesteading. 6:30p, Riverton Museum, free, info 307-856-2665.

TUESDAYS JUNE 2 TO AUGUST 25

Native American Song and

Dance: Guests can join the circle dance. 6-7p, Wind River Hotel & Casino, info 307-840-5805, windriverhotelcasino.com. Does not take place June 23.

JUNE 12-14

Blue Sky Powwow & Expo: Wind River Hotel & Casino, info 307-840-5805, windriverhotelcasino.com.

JUNE 13

Dutch Oven Bread & Homemade

Butter: Children's event puts a modern twist on the cooking techniques of generations past and maybe stretching the limits of what can be cooked in a fire. 2p, Riverton Museum, \$5 registration required 307-856-2665.

JUNE 17-20

Indian National Finals Qualifying

Rodeos: Over 700 contestants expected. Rodeo, youth rodeo, Indian National Finals Rodeo at Fremont County Fairgrounds. After the rodeo parties at Wind River Casino. \$10, kids \$5, info 307-349-1168, 307-840-5191, fremontcountyfair.org, windriverhotelcasino.com.

ONGOING

Library Events: May programs have been canceled. Summer Reading Program for all ages begins June 1; Safe Kids Fair is tentatively scheduled for June 3. Fremont County Library, free, info 307-856-3556.

SHOSHONI

JUNE 13

Shoshoni Day: Events all weekend include pancake breakfast at the fire hall, co-ed basketball tournament at the Shoshoni gym, ATV poker run, kids day at the park, Dutch oven dinner with a cobbler contest, dance at the fire hall, turkey shoot at the rifle range. Info 307-856-1164, shoshonichamber@gmail.com, www.shoshoniwychamber.com.

JUNE 13-20

Wind River Flywheelers Antique

Tractor & Engine Show: 10a-5p Sat and until 2p on Sun, East Park, free, info 307-856-1164.

SOUTH PASS CITY

SATURDAYS IN JUNE

English Tunnel Mine Tour: One-mile hike and candle tour of a real mine. Reservations required, 11a-1p, 125 South Pass Main St. \$3 WY residents, \$5 visitors, under 18 free. No kids under 8. Info 307-332-3684. info@southpasscity.com, southpasscity.com/tours.

THERMOPOLIS

JUNE 11

Singing the good old songs again:

Sing along with Jackie Davidson and Gary Brandt, 7p, Hot Springs State Park pavilion, info thermopolischamber.org.

SECOND FRIDAYS

ArtStroll: Stroll on Broadway Street in Historic Downtown Thermopolis. Info 307-864-3002, gatherer@panix.com.

CRITTERGRAM

Well, it's true.
We do not live in a zoo.
But Man is an
animal too.

— Dr. Doolittle



PUZZLE ON PAGE 30

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01

01 | Pivots on a hay meadow,
Carole Martinez, Kaycee



02

02 | Bug? Anson Meagher, Wright

03 | Tools of the trade, Jana Ginter,
Carpenter

04 | God made a farmer,
Krissy Borchert, Moorcroft

03



04



Krissy Borchert Photography

JUST PICTURE IT

THIS MONTH:

FARM WORK



JUL (DUE JUN 10):

FISHING

AUG (DUE JUL 10):

QUARANTINE



05



06



07

- 05 | Brothers, Ruth Zeller, Lovell
- 06 | Recycled chute (made from old power poles), Gregg Moretti, Lyman
- 07 | Dad using our team of horses, Linda Torczon, Cody
- 08 | Ready and waitin', Brenton Lapp, Carpenter
- 09 | Harrowing the field with Mike and Jimmy, Carol Dewey, Carlile
- 10 | Taylor feeding chicks, Pat Townsend, Newcastle



08



09



10



✉ wren@wyomingrea.org
 214 W. Lincolnway Ste. 21C Cheyenne, WY 82001
 📧 wyomingrea.org/wren-submissions

Please include your name, hometown and a title.

Please submit high-quality digital files* or an original we can scan, as well as details about the artwork, the artist's name, and the co-op. *Use the highest quality setting on your camera, or save digital artwork as a .jpg or .tif file with at least 300 dpi resolution. Don't use Kodak Easy Share®.

If you would like your work returned, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

My sweet wife says that kids need to learn a few things when they're young. The first is that they're loved. That part is easy. But right behind that, and not unrelated to it, is the notion that they can do hard things. Depending on which one of our kids you talk to, you might come to believe that every waking moment of their childhood was spent weeding a garden, hauling firewood or butchering one of God's creatures.

Hard Things

BY WALT GASSON



I'm not sure it was quite that hard, but I am sure that we managed to raise three very strong women who can handle pretty much any situation. One of the many wonderful things about Wyoming is that if you give it half a chance, it will give you the opportunity to do hard things.

My grandma Harrie knew how to do hard things. Her husband Walt must have been one of the last people to die in the great pandemic. Harrie probably thought her family had dodged the bullet. But Walt fell sick at the ranch in early January of 1920. She cared for him at their home in town, knowing all the time there was only so much she could do. In the end, it was mostly a matter of keeping him comfortable, and by January 20 Walt was dead. Harrie was suddenly a 40-year-old widow with two small children.

My grandma Mabel knew how to do hard things. She was 36 years old, with two kids and 6 months pregnant with my mom when her husband Gid died in October 1918. It must have been a nightmare. When little Grace was born, Mabel was too depressed to care for her. She just didn't care if she or the baby lived another day. Mabel had three kids, no job, no training and no money in the face of a worldwide pandemic. The family went from comfortable to destitute in a month.

In both these sad stories, the culprit was the same – influenza, known then as the Spanish flu. It killed 675,000 people in our country. About

one-third of the entire population of the world was infected with the virus and 50 million died, including both my grandfathers. But as always, the numbers don't tell the entire tale. They don't tell about how Harrie's sister-in-law stepped in to raise my father and his sister

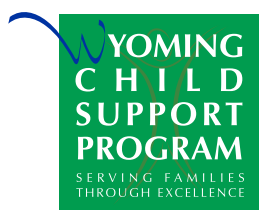
as if they were her own. They don't tell how the women of her church stepped up to help Mabel with every aspect of life

until she could do it on her own. These were hard things indeed, but with the strength of faith and family these Wyoming women and their families made it through.

Now comes another pandemic. And despite a century of medical advancement, a new virus threatens us. Along with it comes an economic downturn that will certainly affect all of us long after the virus has run its course. Hard things are upon us again. But I think Wyoming people will do the same things they've done before. They'll do their best to protect themselves, their families and their communities. They'll reach out in love to their neighbors. They'll share the burdens that these days bring upon them just like their grandparents and great-grandparents did. They'll work and they'll support each other and they'll get through these hard things. Because that's what we do here.

I pray that by the time you read this, things will be looking up. The grass will be green and there will be water in the ditch and new calves and new lambs – lots of them. I pray we won't have to self-isolate or close businesses or avoid hugging or shaking hands. But no matter what we do, we will do it together. Because we know how to do hard things. **W**

Walt Gasson is a fourth-generation Wyoming native and the director of endorsed businesses for Trout Unlimited.



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02 | FOR SALE

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07 | WANTED

Antique Collector Looking For Oil Company Gas Pumps, Globes And Signs. Will pay fair market value! Also looking for general antiques for our antique shop. Please go to our website FrontierAutoMuseum.com. Located in Gillette WY, our passion is to preserve Wyoming history and the nostalgia of the past, especially Parco, Sinclair, Frontier, Husky and any car dealership along with all brands. We are also always looking for WY license plates and WY highway signs and State Park signs. Please call Jeff Wandler 307-680-8647 wandlerfrontier@gmail.com or daughter Briana Brewer 307-660-2402 bbrewer@frontierauto.net.

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18 | HEALTH

Medicare supplement plans for 65+ seniors. Which options might be best for you? Contact Carol Maras for help guiding through the Medicare supplement process. Insurance Services, LLC, 40 years experience in the state of WY. Call (307) 686-0639, or email cjmaras@centurylink.net.

20 | FREE

Soon Church/Government uniting, suppressing "Religious Liberty" enforcing "National Sunday Law." Be Informed! Needing Mailing address. TSBM Box 99, Lenoir City, TN 37771, thebiblesaystruth@yahoo.com, 1-888-211-1715.

Murphy



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Once in a lifetime, a product comes along that truly moves people. Introducing the future of personal transportation... The Zinger.

Throughout the ages, there have been many important advances in mobility. Canes, walkers, rollators, and scooters were created to help people with mobility issues get around and retain their independence. Lately, however, there haven't been any new improvements to these existing products or developments in this field. Until now. Recently, an innovative design engineer who's developed one of the world's most popular products created a completely new breakthrough... a personal electric vehicle. It's called the **Zinger**, and there is nothing out there quite like it.

"I can now go places and do things that I wasn't able to go or do before. It has given me a new lease on life and I am so happy I found it!"

—Dana S., Texas

The first thing you'll notice about the **Zinger** is its unique look. It doesn't look like a scooter. It's sleek, lightweight yet durable frame is made with aircraft grade aluminum. It weighs only 47.2 lbs but can handle a passenger that's up to 275 lbs! It features one-touch folding and unfolding—when folded it can be wheeled around like a suitcase and fits easily into a backseat or trunk. Then, there are the steering levers. They enable the **Zinger** to move forward, backward, turn on a dime and even pull right up



Available in Green,
Black and Blue (shown)

to a table or desk. With its compact yet powerful motor it can go up to 6 miles an hour and its rechargeable battery can go up to 8 miles on a single charge. With its low center of gravity and inflatable tires it can handle rugged terrain and is virtually tip-proof. Think about it, you can take your **Zinger** almost anywhere, so you don't have to let mobility issues rule your life.



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85204



BIKE RIDING FOR **STRONG & HEALTHY BODIES**

Riding a bike is fun for kids and parents of all shapes, sizes, and abilities. It's an activity that benefits your kids' development, and it's a healthy activity that can be enjoyed together. Here's why riding bikes is great for your kids, and for you.

Don't forget your helmet! A properly fitted helmet is the most effective way to prevent head injury resulting from a bicycle crash.

1

EXERCISES MUSCLES

Builds and strengthens muscles slowly and steadily
Helps with coordination and balance

2

ACCELERATES STAMINA

Heart rate increases
Good for weight control

3

BOOSTS CONFIDENCE

Fosters independence
Leads to accountability and responsibility

4

BUILDS SOCIAL SKILLS

Encourages interacting with other kids who ride bikes
Provides an opportunity to make friends

5

OUTDOOR ACTIVITY

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Pollution-free form of transport

★ For activities that support your kids' strong and healthy bodies, visit wyqualitycounts.org/wren ★







THIS MONTH'S ACTIVITY — **7 MINUTE MORNING ANIMAL WORKOUT!**



WY Quality Counts, housed in the Department of Workforce Services, helps Wyoming parents and child care providers identify and create quality learning experiences for children, thanks to the funding of the Wyoming Legislature.



All WY Quality Counts activities are supported by the Wyoming Early Learning Foundations and Guidelines, as well as the Domains of Development, which include:

- | | |
|---|---|
|  COMMUNICATION |  SENSE OF SELF & RELATIONSHIPS |
|  CURIOUS MINDS |  STRONG & HEALTHY BODIES |