

AUG+2020

WYOMING

RURAL ELECTRIC NEWS

# WREN

## Staying Afloat

Wyoming  
distilleries shift  
to high-proof  
hand sanitizer

JUST PICTURE IT

Quarantine

GRETCHEN GASVODA-KELSO

★  
Creating  
a Spark



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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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AUG ✨ 2020



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# ‘You can’t stop change any more than you can stop the suns from setting.’



**SHAWN TAYLOR**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

These words of Star Wars wisdom are spoken by Shmi Skywalker to her son, Anakin, in the film “The Phantom Menace.” Wise words indeed as we all face changes in our daily lives, be it personally or professionally.

Change is hard! But as Shmi says, we can’t stop it. During “the ‘Rona” we’ve all had to adapt to change. Now that we’re getting into the fall season, people will have to adapt to changes in educating our children. Business owners, many of whom have already had to deal with changes in how they work, will more than likely have to continue to adapt.

Beginning over 80 years ago, when the electrification of rural America first began, we’ve gone through many changes. Sometimes these changes are subtle, and other changes are fairly monumental, such as the merging of co-ops, territorial battles with other utilities, and policy decisions both at the state and federal levels that force change upon us.

Whatever the world throws at us, your rural electric cooperative is ready, willing and able to adapt ... so long as it makes sense and furthers our collective mission of enhancing the livelihoods of our members and the communities we serve. Some of these changes, or proposed changes (regulatory and legislative proposals that threaten the cooperatives), we’ve been fighting for years, and we will continue to push back because it doesn’t fit our mission. With regard to other changes, however, we have stepped up to the challenge.

One example of this is in the world of broadband or internet service for rural Wyoming. For better or worse, people (co-op members, elected officials, etc.) have been asking why the rural electric cooperatives can’t just recreate the process of electrifying rural Wyoming for broadband? While we’ve had a few cooperatives dip their toes into the broadband water, and one system does provide satellite internet service, our position has been that we are willing and able to assist existing broadband providers in whatever ways we can.

One way we can assist in this endeavor is to update our existing rights-of-way so that broadband providers can use our current infrastructure for broadband purposes. This will require a change in how landowners allow access to their property. We are very cognizant of what this means, and we value our relationships with all of our members and landowners. We trust that we can reach a common goal of working with rural telecommunications providers to get the internet service to all of our members who need and deserve it.

Having said that, there will be more to come on this issue. Until then, let’s all embrace the change as best we can, because as Shmi said, we can’t stop it any more than we can stop the suns from setting.



# “This is one of the best areas in the nation to raise bees.”

— Dusty Backer, Backer Bees

Environment isn't just a buzz word at Basin Electric.

Backer Bees has bees at Glenharold Mine, a reclaimed coal mine that used to supply coal to our first power plant. The reclaimed pasture has a variety of flowers—alfalfa, clover, sunflowers, wildflowers—making it one of the best areas in the nation to raise bees.

Environmental stewardship has always been a guiding principle for us. That's why we're committed to reclaiming and restoring land back to its natural state, like Glenharold Mine.



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# 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:

Lower Valley Energy's Scott Shumway attended the Youth Rally summer energy education camp in Caldwell, Idaho in 2018. He returned as a camp director in 2019.



While Youth Tour and youth camps were canceled this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, your co-op may be taking applications for next year. See the insert in the center of the magazine for information from your local rural electric cooperative.

PHOTO COURTESY OF SCOTT SHUMWAY



## SCOTT GAYLON SHUMWAY



**HOMETOWN:**  
Bedford

**HIGH SCHOOL:**  
Star Valley High School

**YEAR OF GRADUATION:**  
2021

**COLLEGE:**  
Undecided

**MAJOR STUDY INTEREST:**  
Sociology or Psychology

**WREN:** Tell us about your studies and interests.

**SS:** I personally wish to go into a path of sociology. Being able to understand and help people on an emotional level as well as physical is an aspiration of mine. I currently host weekly group problem solving and team building sessions for many people around me.

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

**SS:** I have personally seen a lot of heartache and sadness from the people around me. It is because of this reason that I want to help people. My family has always shown an immense amount of love for me and the rest of my family. I want to spread this love to as many people as possible.

**WREN:** What are your plans for the future?

**SS:** The future is a fickle thing. One moment you're believing it will go one way, and the next moment it prevents the eventuality from happening. My future is not set in stone. How could it be? The only thing that I know is that I want to help people. I wish to allow creativity to flow within the world and plant seeds of inspiration within the hearts and minds of people. The only true thing set in stone is to encourage creativity and love. Whether that means by becoming a psychologist or writing a book, I plan on helping others to grow.



# 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 Fund is in danger of running out of funding.



## WHAT IT IS

The WREA Lineman Scholarship Fund offers grants 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

The scholarship's main source of funding has been a golf tournament, which was canceled this year. 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 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



# What's in a Substation?

1

## 1. TRANSMISSION LINES

Electricity enters the substation via high-voltage transmission lines.

2

## 2. LIGHTNING ARRESTER

Safely transfers lightning surge current to the ground.

3

## 3. THREE PHASE AIR BRAKE SWITCH

Disconnects the substation from the transmission feeder circuit.

## 4. PERIMETER SECURITY FENCE WITH WARNING SIGNS

Substations are extremely dangerous! Never enter a substation for any reason.

4

DANGER

## 5. POWER TRANSFORMER

Lowest the transmission voltage to 14,400/24,940 or 7,200/12,470 volts, depending on the rural electric co-op's needs.

5

## 7. POTENTIAL TRANSFORMERS

Used to lower voltage for measurement.

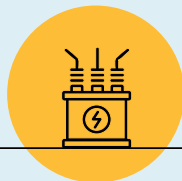
## 6. CURRENT TRANSFORMERS

Used to lower current values for metering purposes.

6

7





Wyoming's rural electric cooperatives build and maintain substations to provide safe, reliable electricity to members. When electricity enters the substation, it passes through a series of devices to step down and regulate the outgoing voltage.

#### 8. VOLTAGE REGULATORS

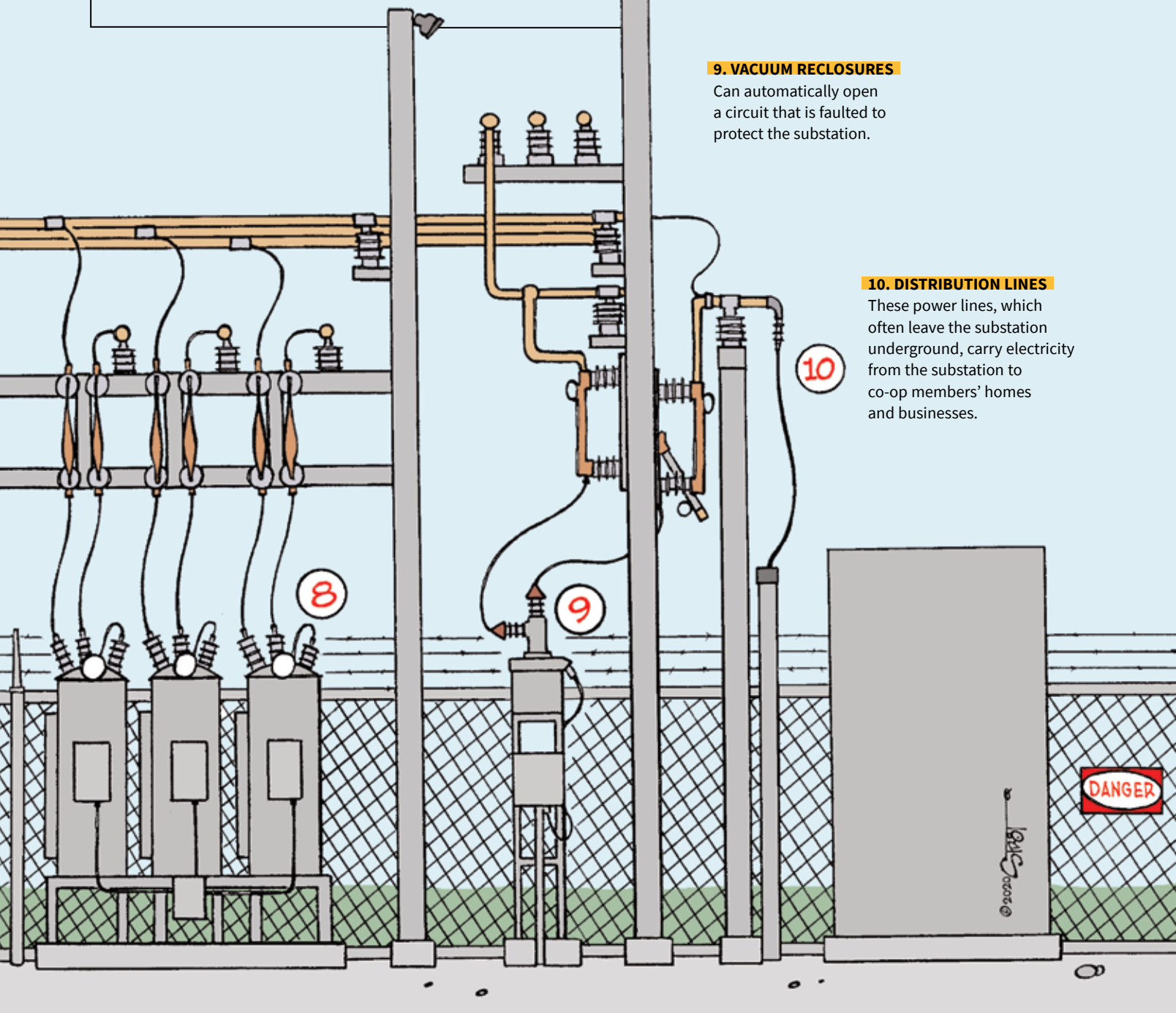
Used to step up or step down voltage according to demand.

#### 9. VACUUM RECLOSURES

Can automatically open a circuit that is faulted to protect the substation.

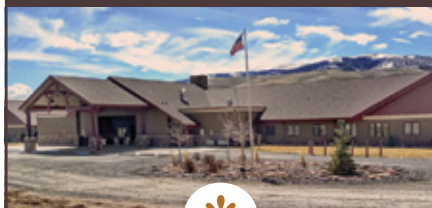
#### 10. DISTRIBUTION LINES

These power lines, which often leave the substation underground, carry electricity from the substation to co-op members' homes and businesses.



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# Annual Meeting Roundup

At this time of year in any other year, almost all of the Wyoming Rural Electric Association's 11 utility cooperatives would have met in person at an annual meeting. Members would have had the chance to elect board members, share a meal, and possibly bring home a door prize.

With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and statewide ban on gatherings of large groups of people, cooperative leadership had to decide how to proceed. Each of the cooperatives made a decision based on their particular membership's needs.

## 01 LOWER VALLEY ENERGY MEETS ONLINE

Lower Valley Energy (LVE) may prefer to conduct business in person, but board chairman Fred Brog kept a positive outlook as he began the co-op's annual meeting on Facebook Live June 25.

"We're excited by having this medium as an opportunity to reach more of our members as possible," Brog said during the meeting. He paused to note that LVE doesn't have "members," it has "owners," all of whom own the co-op.

Brog also spoke of current events.

"We're all in the same boat during these challenging times, and Lower Valley has adapted well. We made the decision to hold a virtual meeting in an effort to provide as much stability in our sphere of influence during these unusual times."

During the meeting, Brog and CEO/President Jim Webb talked about LVE's rates for electricity, which are kept low by investments and careful planning. Webb also announced that LVE had purchased 7 acres of land next to the co-op's Jackson Hole office to build employee housing because of the high cost of homes in the area.

Longtime LVE employee, then longtime board member Linda Schmidt was recognized for her service during the meeting. Schmidt retired from the



Lower Valley Energy board chairman Fred Brog speaks during the annual meeting on June 25.

PHOTO COURTESY OF LOWER VALLEY ENERGY

board and was given the Craig Thomas Cooperative Spirit Award by the Wyoming Rural Electric Association in February.

While up to 34 people watched the meeting as it took place, more than 2,500 LVE owners sent in ballots to vote in the co-op's election for board members in districts 1, 6 and 7. Sen. Dan Dockstader was reelected for the District 1 seat, incumbent Scott Anderson of District 6 retained his seat and Linda Schmidt of District 7 chose not to run for her open seat. Ray Elser ran uncontested for the District 7 seat and won.



02

**CARBON POWER & LIGHT VOTES BY MAIL**

Carbon Power & Light members sent in hundreds of mail-in ballots to elect its board this year after concerns for the COVID-19 pandemic forced it to postpone its annual meeting.

General Manager Russell Waldner appeared on Facebook Live June 29 to announce election results and door prizes. He noted that the co-op had received 502 ballots for this year's election, while last year the co-op only had 170 members register.

"We got a big bump in the number of people that were interested," Waldner said. During the livestream, Waldner used a computer program to randomly draw two names from the list of members who turned in ballots. The co-op gave one winner a \$500 cash prize, the other winner was awarded a door prize.



Carbon Power & Light elected board members for three-year terms in three districts. Laurie Forster was reelected to the District 1 seat despite a challenge from David Fairbanks. John Page and Clay Thompson ran unopposed and were reelected to District 2 and District 3, respectively. John Page had been appointed to District 2 in March after Bill Sherwood stepped down.

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[cheyenneregional.org/covid](http://cheyenneregional.org/covid)



# 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.

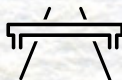
## CENSUS INFORMATION IS USED IN WYOMING FOR PLANNING AND FUNDING



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

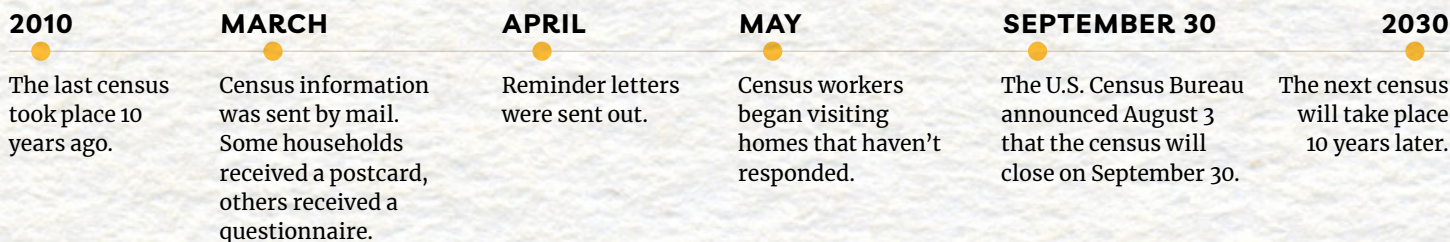


MONEY



ANYTHING RELATED TO POLITICAL PARTIES

### CENSUS TIMELINE



★ **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](https://2020census.gov) or visit your local library.

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





# Carbon XPRIZE Research Begins

ADAPTED FROM THE WYOMING INFRASTRUCTURE AUTHORITY

**In June, the Wyoming Integrated Test Center (ITC) at Dry Fork Station in Gillette welcomed the first team of finalists competing for the \$20 million Carbon XPRIZE.**

The CO2Concrete team includes researchers from UCLA Samueli School of Engineering and professionals in the energy and environmental sectors. Professor Gaurav Sant leads the team's efforts towards the industrial realization of CO2Concrete, a process for carbon dioxide utilization by manufacturing a low-carbon concrete-equivalent material.

Five Carbon XPRIZE teams from around the globe will conduct their research at the ITC — their arrival was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The competitors will use flue gas from the coal-fired Dry Fork Station for their research. Each team is provided with a test bay to connect their research equipment.

**To learn more, visit [carbonxprize.org](http://carbonxprize.org).**



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— J. Fitzgerald, VA

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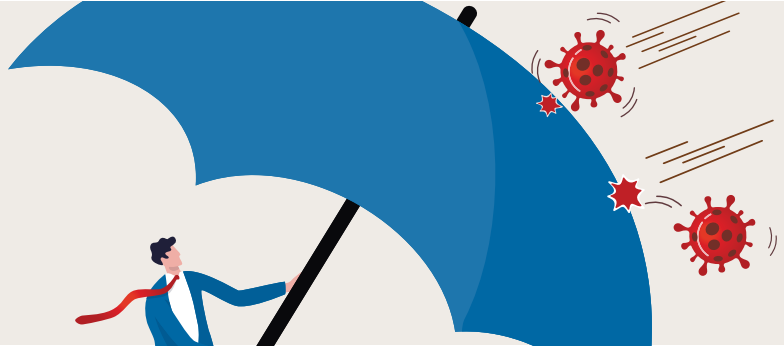
Because each Perfect Sleep Chair is a custom-made bedding product, we can only accept returns on chairs that are damaged or defective.

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# COVID-19 RESOURCES

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has led to economic hardship for many of our cooperative members. These are just a few of the resources available to help.



## WHERE TO SEEK HELP IN WYOMING

### ENERGY SHARE

This aid program provides a one-time disbursement of up to \$400 per household for energy costs. A payment for propane customers is also available. Assistance is distributed by the local Salvation Army field office. Call 303-866-9296 to find the nearest office. Donations can be made to Energy Share of Wyoming, c/o Align, 1401 Airport Parkway Suite 300, Cheyenne, WY 82001.

### NO KID HUNGRY

Wyoming First Lady Jennie Gordon's Wyoming Hunger Initiative has compiled a list of resources by county, including school feeding programs. Call 307-274-0365 or visit [nohungerwyo.org](http://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. 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

Wyoming Workforce Services offers the latest information on state and federal aid at [wyomingworkforce.org](http://wyomingworkforce.org).



### HOW TO HELP

*Those who would like to help others can consider donating to trusted charity organizations, visiting local restaurants and shopping or buying gift certificates at local businesses.*

File unemployment claims anytime online at [wyui.wyo.gov/benefits/home.do](http://wyui.wyo.gov/benefits/home.do), or call 307-473-3789 during office hours.

### 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](http://rd.usda.gov/coronavirus) for information.

### WIC

The Wyoming WIC program, also known as the Women, Infants and Children program provides nutritious foods and education as well as breastfeeding support and health care referrals. Recently updated guidelines are available. For example, a 3-person family with income of \$40,182/year or less and children under age 5 may be eligible.

WIC clinics are located throughout the state and can be found online at <https://health.wyo.gov/publichealth/wic/> or by calling 1-888-996-9378.

### 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](http://wy211.communityos.org).

### WYOMING BUSINESS COUNCIL

The economic development agency is helping businesses by distributing funds from the federal CARES Act. Visit [wyomingbusiness.org](http://wyomingbusiness.org) or call 307-777-2800. See the payments distributed so far at [WyOpen.gov](http://WyOpen.gov).

CENTERPIECE



⌘  
KOLTISKA  
DISTILLERY

# Stavi



« JACKSON HOLE STILL WORKS

COWBOY COUNTRY DISTILLING »



# Aflood



« SWEETWATER SPIRITS

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JACKSON HOLE STILL WORKS  
& CHRONICLES DISTILLING »



KOLTISKA  
DISTILLERY



## WYOMING'S DISTILLERIES USE HIGH-PROOF EQUIPMENT TO KEEP STATE SAFE

**When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, Wyoming distilleries quickly pivoted their business strategy to produce much-needed hand sanitizer for their communities and the state.**

Producing thousands of gallons of hand sanitizer has provided a lifeline to the state's distilleries, many of which had returned to making Wyoming-made spirits, as well as offering sanitizer for sale by June.

"It has been a win-win situation for everyone," said Amber Pollock, who co-owns Backwards Distilling Company with her parents and brother. "We cover our operational costs, and community organizations and businesses as they reopen can have the item necessary to continue their operations."

BY RACHEL GIRT

« BACKWARDS  
DISTILLING COMPANY



SINGLE TRACK SPIRITS »



A nationwide container shortage led distilleries to use any FDA-approved bottle, carton or bucket they could find.

## ◀ NATIONAL SHORTAGE

Early on during the COVID-19 crisis, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommended using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, at least 60 percent alcohol, when soap and water were not available. The CDC recommendation caused a panicked rush to buy sanitizer in February, leading to severe national shortages.

On March 16, a few days ahead of the mandated statewide closure, Backwards Distilling closed its tasting room which opened less than a year ago in downtown Casper. Three days later, local restaurants and bars, many of which carry Backwards products, closed.

Losing the majority of its revenue stream, Backwards Distilling temporarily laid off its employees, leaving the four owners to run the distillery. The company devised creative ways to raise revenue, selling cocktail kits, ready-made cocktails and its signature spirits curbside and hosting a cocktail video series where viewers could virtually tip the bartenders.

"We were trying to figure out how to survive this when we started getting calls," Pollock said. "The effort went sort of from 0 to 60 really quickly."

Pollock saw an opportunity to help her community and maybe save her family-owned business.

To address the national shortage, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) had relaxed its regulations on hand sanitizer production — which is regulated like an over-the-counter drug — if the FDA-approved recipe was followed. Distilleries were uniquely positioned to make hand sanitizer because they have the distilling equipment necessary to make high-proof ethanol alcohol, the main ingredient for sanitizer, Pollock explained.

However, Pollock discovered that insurance regulations would only allow distilleries to donate hand sanitizer.

Chase Leshar, co-owner of Chronicles Distilling in Cheyenne, wears protective clothing while measuring hydrogen peroxide for hand sanitizer at Jackson Hole Still Works. The two companies teamed up to create hand sanitizer at the Jackson distillery.

»

"We had no revenue coming, so we couldn't produce it, donate it and continue to survive as a business."

Several distilleries partnered together and reached out to the Wyoming Business Council for assistance. They quickly developed a plan to ramp up production, coordinate procurement of ingredients and distribute the sanitizer. The money to pay for their supplies came from Imminent Threat Grants funds available through the Community Development Block Grant Program, administered by the Business Council.

The Business Council awarded a \$250,000 grant to the Town of Mills, which worked with Backwards Distilling Company, Chronicles Distilling in Cheyenne, Jackson Hole Still Works in Jackson, Koltiska Distillery in Sheridan, Single Track Spirits in Cody and Wyoming Whiskey in Kirby. Outside of the grant, Arcola Distillery in Carpenter, Cowboy Country in Pinedale, Pine Bluffs Distilling in Pine Bluffs and Sweetwater Spirits in Lander have made sanitizer in their communities.



PHOTO COURTESY OF CHRONICLES DISTILLING

Chronicles Distilling sold some hand sanitizer locally, including to the Wyoming Home store in Cheyenne.

»

PHOTO BY KELLY ETZEL DOUGLAS





Hand sanitizer at  
Backwards Distilling  
Company in Casper.

»

## PRODUCTION TO DELIVERY

Within a matter of about two weeks after initial conversations with the Business Council, the group successfully distributed hand sanitizer in five-gallon containers up to 55-gallon drums to every county free of charge due to the grant funding, Pollock said.

The distillers distributed the sanitizer to each county's emergency management team, who prioritized where the sanitizers went in the counties. Usually sanitizer went first to hospitals, first responders, clinics, nursing home facilities and grocery stores.

Pollock said procuring ingredients like glycerol and hydrogen peroxide and smaller dispensers were the biggest challenges to the effort. Backwards Distilling received packaging donations from Pepsi-Cola of Casper for smaller bottles while Sutherlands and The Home Depot helped with the larger containers.

For its first sanitizer batch, Backwards Distillery used 150 gallons of high-proof ethanol, originally destined to make vodka, but later turned to other sources.



PHOTO COURTESY OF BACKWARDS DISTILLING COMPANY

## WORKING TOGETHER

With the largest production capacity in the state, Wyoming Whiskey helped jumpstart the overall effort by using its grain on hand to make 1,500 gallons of alcohol and ship it to Backwards Distillery. Since Wyoming Whiskey's still is not made to kick off 190 proof spirits, Backwards Distillery re-distilled it up to 190 and then added in the other ingredients necessary to make a finished hand sanitizer product.

"We did not do this for profit," said David DeFazio, Wyoming Whiskey co-founder, explaining his company's involvement in the effort. "It is not our intention to get into the hand sanitizer business. Our intention was to help the state during a time of need and then get back to what we do best — make whiskey."

The fast and furious sanitizer production effort leveled out in early June. Although still supplying the counties, the majority of the distilleries returned to making their products, as well as starting to sell sanitizer to businesses, individuals and other organizations.

Work continues as usual for Wyoming Whiskey. "We are back to making whiskey and will continue to do so unless additional alcohol is needed for hand sanitizer," DeFazio said. He plans to release this year's Wyoming-only bourbon in the summer.

This year's release for Wyoming Whiskey is called Hole in the Wall, honoring the outlaw past in and around Hot Springs County. The Whiskey Shop in Kirby is open for tastings and sales, but distillery tours have been temporarily put on hold.

Backwards Distillery has returned to distilling its circus-inspired spirits alongside its hand sanitizer, which now features donated artwork by Casper artist Zachary Pullen. In June, the small business had started the process of bringing back its employees to reopen its tasting room.



PHOTO BY DEREK SPROVERI

PHOTO COURTESY OF KOLTISKA DISTILLERY



April Bocek prepares to work with ingredients for hand sanitizer at Koltiska Distillery in Sheridan.



Darren Rowe loads alcohol for hand sanitizer at Wyoming Whiskey in Kirby.

"We're really proud to be able to help other businesses in our community reopen safely," Pollock said. "I'm super thankful that so many other Wyoming companies are choosing to get sanitizer from Wyoming distilleries. It's not a long-term solution for us, but they are helping keep our businesses afloat." **W**

---

Rachel Girt is a freelance writer and owner of Girt Communications based in Cheyenne.



# What do Waiters and Waitresses do?

Waiters and waitresses help customers in restaurants and cafes. They take orders for food and drinks, bring the orders to the table and make sure customers have what they asked for.



# Waitstaff in Wyoming

Wyoming Workforce Services counted 4,880 waiters and waitresses working in Wyoming in March 2019 and reported their average wage at \$9.47 per hour. Workforce Services counted a total of 25,310 people working in the food service industry in the state, including waiters and waitresses, cooks and baristas.

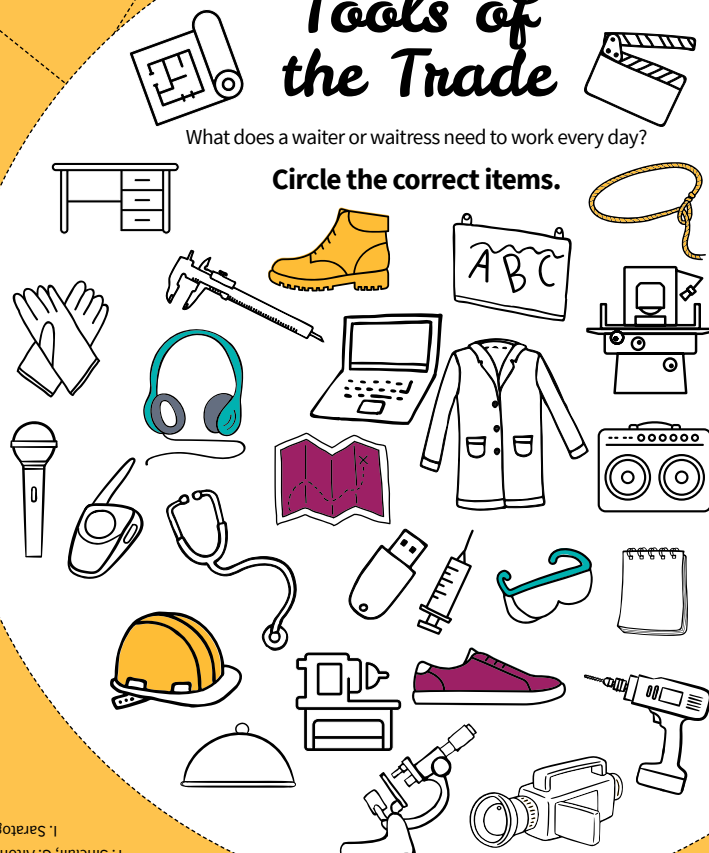
# How to Become a Waiter or Waitress

You don't need a college degree to be a waiter or waitress, but you do need excellent people skills to make sure your customers are happy with their dining experience.

# Tools of the Trade

What does a waiter or waitress need to work every day?

**Circle the correct items.**



## Quiz

**Match this Wyoming establishment with the town where you'll find it.**

Establishment	Location
A. Born in a Barn	Sinclair
B. Claimsteak Restaurant	Saratoga
C. Hi-16 Drive Inn	Newcastle
D. Lira's	Afton
E. Stogie Joe's	Riverton
F. Su Casa Café	Laramie
G. Trapper's Steakhouse	Lingle
H. Tunnel Inn	Banner
I. Whistle Pig Saloon	Upton
J. Remys Diner	Worldand

**Answers:** A. Laramie, B. Riverton, C. Newcastle, D. Lingle, E. Worland, F. Sinclair, G. Afton, H. Banner, I. Saratoga, J. Upton

GRETCHEN GASVODA-KELSO



# Creating a Spark

VOLUNTEER SHARES  
LIFETIME OF LEARNING

BY RACHEL GIRT

Gretchen Gasvoda-Kelso hopes to instill  
the importance of giving back to the  
4-H youth in Big Horn County.



“You help others because someone is in need, not for a pat on the back or recognition,” Gasvoda-Kelso explained. The Big Horn Rural Electric Company member was nominated for the WREN Co-op Spotlight by her friends and neighbors.

Over the last nine years, she has worked with hundreds of youth as the Big Horn County 4-H/Youth Development Extension Educator through the University of Wyoming (UW) Cooperative Extension Service. Her 4-H kids support many community events throughout the county and have become like family to her, she said.

Gasvoda-Kelso's lifelong commitment to community service stems from her upbringing, she said. “I was raised to help people out and be engaged in the community.”

She grew up on family farm and ranch in Montana operated by her father and his two brothers. The eight cousins were best friends, working hard side by side to help out on the property. When their chores were completed, the cousins escaped to the local swimming hole in the creek or participated in 4-H or FFA activities. Their family spent vacations at the county fair.

“My mom and dad really believed in the importance of 4-H and they made sure all those benefits were available to my brother and I,” Gasvoda-Kelso said. “Those are just good family roots to provide for your kids.”

Through 4-H, Gasvoda-Kelso traveled to Washington, D.C. and Chicago and received a 4-H scholarship to college where she earned an associate's degree in animal science from Northwest Community College in Powell. She then went on to receive a bachelor's degree in animal science from Utah State University.

After graduating college, she joined her parents, who had moved to Wyoming, and worked running cows for her father and as a substitute teacher. Discovering a love for teaching, she started a preschool

first in Burlington and then one in Basin. In 2001, she became the county's Cent\$ible Nutrition Program educator, launching what has become an almost 20-year career with the UW Cooperative Extension Office.

“I work in the best county with such a very supportive community,” she said. “I feel pretty blessed to work here.”

In 2011, Gasvoda-Kelso became the 4-H educator, providing opportunities for youth engagement for learning through 4-H throughout the county. Her ongoing commitment to 4-H youth was recognized in 2016 when the Wyoming Association of Extension 4-H Agents gave her the Champion 4-H Educator award.

“I love that this is a lifetime learning job,” she said. “I have had to learn new things, like sewing, to try to create a spark in our kids.”

Separating what Gasvoda-Kelso does for work versus her personal life is difficult, especially when it comes to volunteering. “It all goes hand in hand,” she said.

Through her job at the Cooperative Extension Office, Gasvoda-Kelso coordinates outreach education programs and volunteer work through 4-H. As an Elks Lodge member, she also volunteers.

One of the more popular programs is adopting a veteran at Christmas. Helping facilitate the program, Gasvoda-Kelso obtains names from the local nursing homes and other organizations, matches veterans to community members and the Elks Lodge helps with the delivery of presents.



PHOTO COURTESY OF GRETCHEN GASVODA-KELSO



“It's our amazing community that truly makes this happen, not me,” Gasvoda-Kelso explained.

Gasvoda-Kelso's desire to help others also led to her and her husband fostering 18 children over the years.

“Fostering kids was a great blessing to us and how we built our family,” she said. She explained that they adopted three boys, siblings who they had fostered, as well as a girl from Russia.

For her work fostering children, Gasvoda-Kelso was named a Wyoming Department of Family Services Hero in 2004.

She enjoys seeing her former foster kids. “It's fun to see them, but you hope that you gave them a little bit of a foundation that was positive along the way.” **W**

**Rachel Girt is a freelance writer and owner of Girt Communications based in Cheyenne.**



# World War II POW Camps of Wyoming

BY CHERYL O'BRIEN

Wyoming's 19 prisoner of war camps held several thousand incarcerated Italian and German prisoners during World War II. Historical records, photographs and personal stories shared by camp residents reveal details about this little-known part of the state's history. Local agricultural and timber industries utilized POW labor, while positive relationships developed between the civilian area residents and prisoners. Author Cheryl O'Brien recounts the experiences of the prisoners and the intriguing story of how U.S. military personnel, prisoners and residents — in spite of their differences — collaborated to cope with the challenges of life in a POW camp.

DESCRIPTION BY THE HISTORY PRESS

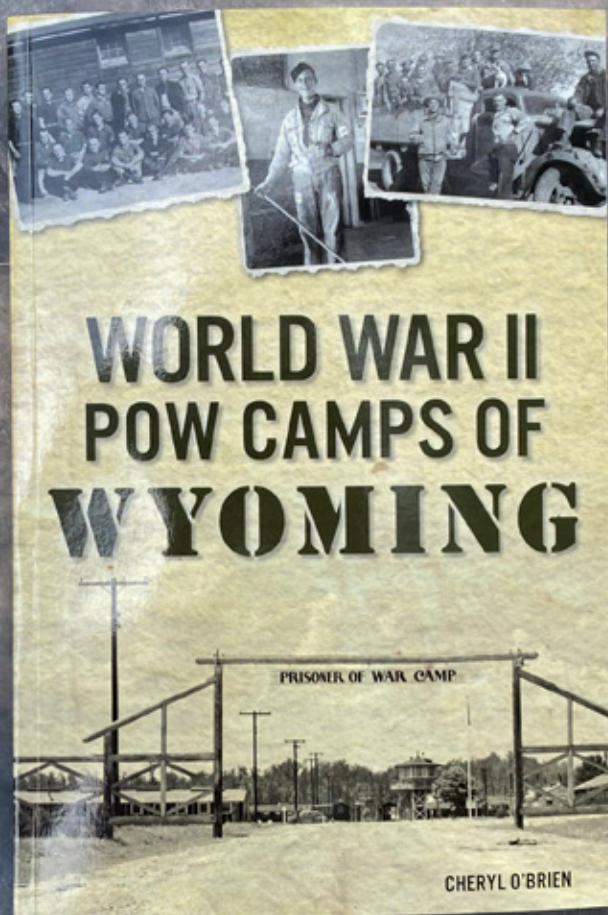
## ORDERING INFORMATION:

2019 | 158p. | \$21.99 paperback

ISBN: 9781467143820

Publisher: The History Press

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OUR JUNE  
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# Pop(corn) Culture Quiz

BY KENDRA SPANJER

2020 may be the first summer in recent memory without a blockbuster film—a commercially successful and culturally popular movie.

Instead of going to the theater, why not grab your favorite candy, a tub of popcorn, and the best spot on the couch and watch an oldie-but-goodie!

In a time when everyone is staying closer to home, the movie characters featured on these 12 famous movie posters stayed home too. Can you still correctly identify each box office hit without them?



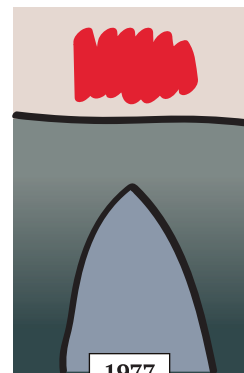
1981



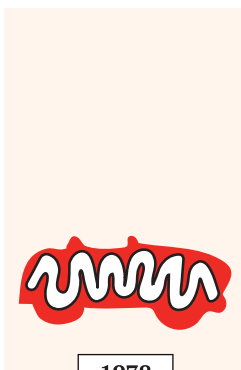
1994



2012



1977



1978



1984



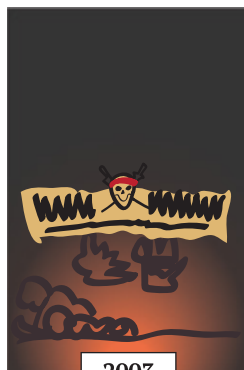
2008



1982



1986



2003



1993



1996

ANSWERS ON PAGE 35



# Turning to Our Roots

BY GINA SIGEL

**I don't know about your house, but the early months of COVID-19 turned our family on its head. The world came to a screeching halt. Suddenly, I was homeschooling kiddos (via computer, with sometimes spotty internet) in three different grade levels. I was also trying to work full time, keep those homeschooled students fed and bathed and, since we were home all the time, stay on top of the housework.**

In March and April the weather was dicey so going outside was often not an option. And there were no friends to play with. The kids were going crazy and fighting with each other and underneath all of it was a sense of profound loneliness and anxiety. We were looking for comfort and something to anchor us during these difficult times and animals seemed like the perfect solution.

We weren't the only ones with this idea. Everywhere I look there are folks with new puppies, a bandwagon we have not jumped on ourselves. But it's more than that. My friends in Laramie got their daughter a goat to celebrate her accomplishment of being the top-

performing student in her class before schools shut down. They walk him on a leash with the dogs, which brings joy to everyone who sees them, and they are building a climbing fortress in the backyard. Another family I work with had been planning a move to some land outside of town but with the coronavirus it took on a new urgency. Their proud kids recently gave me a tour of the property and all the new animals they have; they put on cowboy hats and plastic-bag shoe covers for the tour. Being in charge of ducks and chickens and goats offered an opportunity for normalcy and teaching, outside of the online learning modules. These animals provide companionship and routine during a time when both were lacking. And I would say that these families fared better than most, due to those animals.



In Wyoming we could argue that we've had it lucky. Seasoned ranchers might not have noticed much difference in the daily grind. With wide-open spaces we are used to social distancing. Animals don't care about homeschool and when you have nowhere to go, calving season is less complicated. No soccer

practice means the kids get their chores done with a little less negotiating and without friends to play with they may suddenly have had a greater interest in the sheep and the pigs. I'm not saying every rancher is friends with all of his or her cattle but I bet they have a nickname for at least one or two of them (off the record). Life is a little simpler. And the Wyoming way of life takes on a newfound interest.

**Animals don't  
care about  
homeschool  
and when you  
have nowhere  
to go, calving  
season is less  
complicated.**

Agriculture is used to the impact of factors beyond its control on a global scale. Mother Nature does not adhere to a "time of uncertainty." The changing of the seasons is not "unprecedented." We know exactly when the crops need to be

planted and when they need to be harvested, and the gestation of bred cattle and sheep and pigs does not change. The sun rises and sets each day. Ranchers and farmers play the long game. This crisis has been no exception. With shutdowns around the country, the supply chain has been disrupted to be sure. Ask ranchers about getting their animals scheduled for butchering and they will share the woes of meat processing facilities being closed due

to COVID-19. With restaurants and schools closed, commercial consumption of food has decreased. And that has been heartbreaking for some farmers and commodities. But agriculture is adaptable.

I trust the process. I trust that we will find a way through the global pandemic and things will go back to normal, albeit the "new normal" that everyone talks about. But for the wheat and the hay, for the cattle and sheep and the chickens, it is exactly how it's always been. And maybe there is some comfort in that. We can turn to our agricultural roots not only for food and sustainability but also for comfort and companionship; if not in the relationships with the animals, at the very least the consistency of the routines. In these uncertain times, that much is certain. **W**

**Originally from Laramie, Gina Sigel draws inspiration from five generations of agriculture to tell the stories of rural living.**

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# PEANUTS

## PRYNCESS PJ'S PEANUT-ALMOND BRITTLE

1 CUP GRANULATED SUGAR  
1/2 CUP + 2 TBS LIGHT CORN SYRUP  
1 CUP ROASTED SALTED PEANUTS  
1/4 CUP COARSELY CHOPPED  
ROASTED SALTED ALMONDS

1-1/2 TSP BUTTER  
1 TSP VANILLA EXTRACT  
1/2 TSP ALMOND EXTRACT  
1 TSP BAKING SODA  
1 BUTTERED COOKIE SHEET

In a glass 2 quart casserole or mixing bowl, stir the corn syrup and granulated sugar together and microwave for 3-1/2 minutes. Stir in the peanuts and almonds and microwave for 3 more minutes until light brown. Add the butter and vanilla and almond extract to the mixture and stir until well combined. Microwave for an additional 1-1/2 minutes.

You will need to work quickly for the next step, so be sure to have your buttered cookie sheet ready to go. Add the baking soda to the mixture and gently stir until light and foamy. Quickly pour the foamy mixture onto the greased cookie sheet, gently rotate the pan to spread the mixture around until it is about 1/2 inch thick. Work quickly, because it will begin hardening very fast. Do NOT use a spoon to spread the mixture around.

Let the brittle cool for at least 45 minutes, it is ready when it is hard and smooth to the touch. When cooled, break the candy into small pieces and store in an airtight container.

This was my mother's favorite recipe.

BETSY JENSEN ★ POWELL

## SALTED NUT ROLL CANDY

Heat over low heat until melted:

1 STICK MARGARINE  
1 (12 OZ) PACKAGE PEANUT BUTTER CHIPS  
1 CAN (14 OZ) SWEETENED CONDENSED MILK

Remove from heat and stir in:

2 CUPS MINIATURE MARSHMALLOWS  
1 CUP SALTED PEANUTS

More marshmallows and nuts may be used. Spread in a greased 9x13 pan and refrigerate. Cut into squares and enjoy!

MARILYN M. NORMAN ★ CHEYENNE

## EASY GLUTEN FREE PEANUT BUTTER COOKIES

1 CUP PEANUT BUTTER  
1 CUP SUGAR  
1 EGG

Mix ingredients, roll into balls and bake at 350 degrees for 10-12 minutes. Cookies will be slightly browned around the edges when they are done. The sugar can be reduced to 1/2 cup. Makes 1-3 dozen small cookies.

PAMELA FOSTER ★ SUNDANCE

P



OCTOBER:  
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A RECIPE

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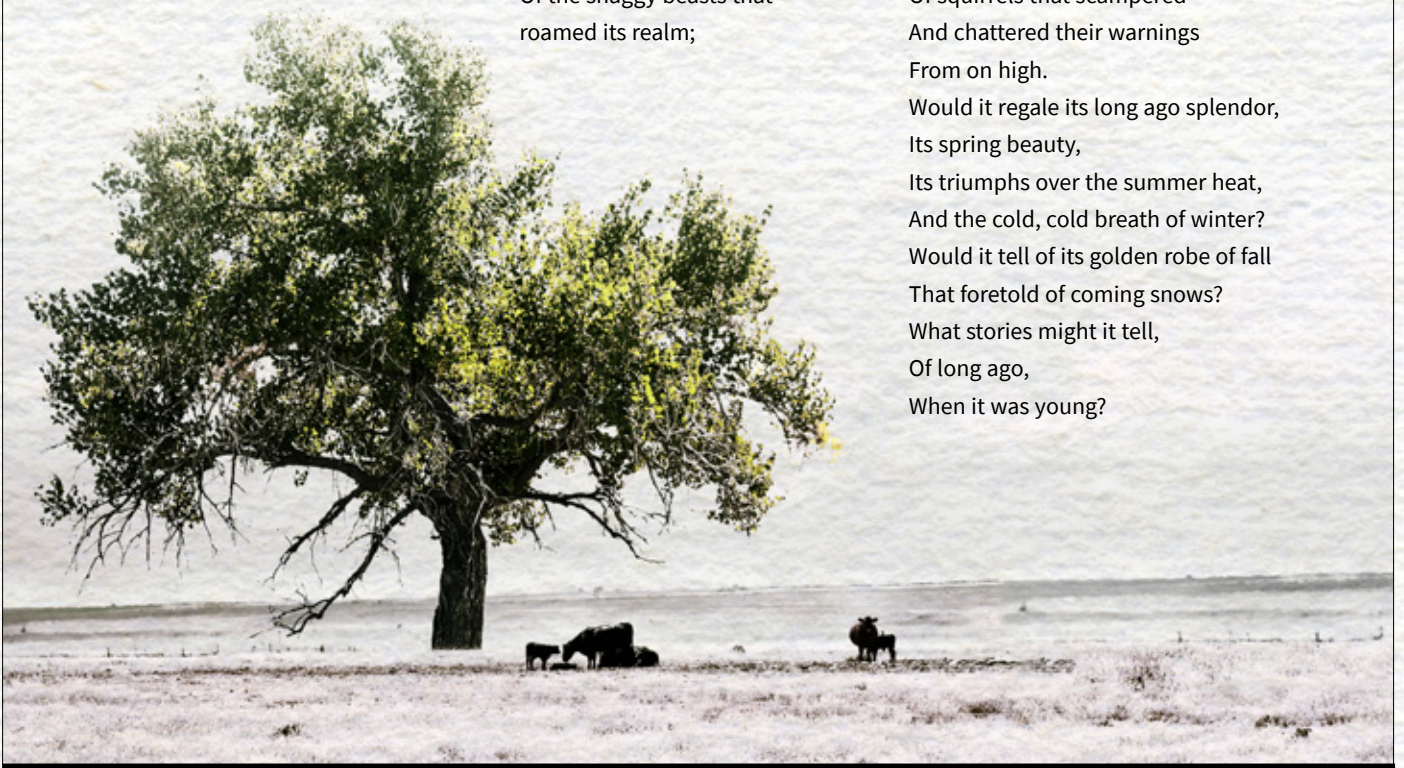


# The Old Cottonwood Tree

LAMAR TAYLOR ★ BUFFALO

The old cottonwood tree,  
Gnarled and twisted,  
Its crooked branches  
Grasping for the sky,  
Grey and lifeless,  
Or so it seems,  
'Til spring breathes new life  
Into its old prairie soul,  
Crowning it with laurels of green.  
What tales could it tell,  
What mysteries reveal  
Of long, long ago,  
Of the shaggy beasts that  
roamed its realm;

Of the First People,  
warmed by the fire of its wood;  
Of the soldiers who tethered their mounts  
To its branches;  
Of cattle that grazed at its feet;  
Of the cowboys, long in the saddle,  
Who leaned in against its strength  
For respite from their toils;  
Of eagles and robins,  
Hawks searching for prey,  
And owls that  
Called through the night;  
Of squirrels that scampered  
And chattered their warnings  
From on high.  
Would it regale its long ago splendor,  
Its spring beauty,  
Its triumphs over the summer heat,  
And the cold, cold breath of winter?  
Would it tell of its golden robe of fall  
That foretold of coming snows?  
What stories might it tell,  
Of long ago,  
When it was young?



We share a selection of WREN readers' creative writing (poems, limericks, haiku, short verse, and prose) every issue as space and content allow. To be considered for publication, please include the author's consent to be submitted, his or her mailing address, and confirmation that the work has not been published elsewhere. If you would like us to return your work, include a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

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A PIECE

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# WHAT'S HAPPENING REGIONAL MAP



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

## FEATURED EVENT



## COMMUNITY AVIATION DAY AND FLY-IN

DUBOIS MUNICIPAL AIRPORT ★ AUG 22

**6:30-7:30a** Tethered hot air balloon rides.

**7-9a** Kiwanis Flying Flapjacks breakfast  
\$5, \$3 ages 8 and under.

**7-10a** Fly-in and personal, hobby and  
service aircraft on display.

**8a-3p** Educational and informational  
booths, concessions and children's  
activities.

INFO 307-455-2557 • CATHYGROVES@MSN.COM

NORTHWEST

## 01 | SOUTHEAST

### CHUG WATER

SEPTEMBER 4-5

**Acoustic Jam Session:** Labor Day Weekend event includes Wyoming Western Music Association. Bring a chair, the event may be outside. Stampede Saloon & Eatery, info 307-422-3200, stampededefun@aol.com.

### ENCAMPMENT

ONGOING

**Grand Encampment Museum:** Main Gallery and GEM store open Tue-Sat 10a-4p, info 307-327-5308.

### MEDICINE BOW

FOURTH TUESDAYS

**Bingo:** 7p, Community Hall, info 307-710-4045.

### SARATOGA

AUGUST 29

**Trek:** Dick Perue will lead a walk around the east part of the valley and give the history of Frazier Place, sawmill and Saratoga Lake. Meet at Saratoga Museum 8a. Info 307-326-5511, saratoga-museum.com.

SEPTEMBER 5

**What is Joe Doing Now? Trivia**

**Contest:** Joe Pickett returns for seventh annual event. Call for details on which books to read. \$400 cash pot for the winning table. Fun for all. info 307-326-5511, saratoga-museum.com.

### TORRINGTON

SEPTEMBER 19

**Cruise Night:** Cruise 6-10p at 21st and East A, poker run 7-8:30p. Info 307-532-3879.

SEPTEMBER 17

**Third Thursday on Main Street:**

Live music, food, drinks, crafts and shopping downtown. 4-6p, Main Street, info 307-532-3879.

## 02 | NORTHEAST

### GILLETTE

AUGUST 20-21

**Artist in Residence:** Local resident and leatherworker Matt Avery will be at the Rockpile Museum all day to share the art of saddle making with visitors. 8a-5p, Rockpile Museum, free, info 307-682-5723 or rockpile@vcn.com.



AUGUST 24

**The Governor Lady:** Actress Kay Sebring-Roberts Kuhlmann will portray the nation's first elected woman governor Nellie Tayloe Ross. 7p, Rockpile Museum, free, info 307-682-5723, rockpile@vcn.com.

### THROUGH DECEMBER

**Campbell County Women in World**

**War II:** Nearly 350,000 American women served in uniform during the war. 9a-5p Mon-Sat, Campbell County Rockpile Museum, free, info 307-682-5723, abeenken@ccgov.net.

### 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.

### NEWCASTLE

FRIDAYS

**Bingo:** 7:30p, VFW Hall, free.

SECOND & FOURTH WEDNESDAYS

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

### PINE HAVEN

SEPTEMBER 5

**Pine Haven Days:** Parade, picnic, fish fry and other events. 10a-9p, Pine Haven Rd, info 307-756-9807.



## SHERIDAN

## SEPTEMBER 16 – OCTOBER 11

**Koltiska's Pumpkin Patch:** Pick your own pumpkin. 3-6:30p Wed-Fri, 11a-6:30p Sat-Sun, 120 Cat Creek Rd, info Facebook, 307-737-2272.

## UPTON

## AUGUST 22

**Wyoming State Youth Hunter Education Challenge:**

7:30a, Upton Outdoor Gun Range, \$10, info 307-281-9980.

## AUGUST 28-29

**Gun Show:** 9a-5p, Upton Community Center, \$5 ages 12 and over, info 307-281-9980.

## MONDAYS &amp; THURSDAYS

**Zumba:** 4p, Senior Center, \$5, info 307-391-0223.

## TUESDAYS &amp; THURSDAYS

**Indoor Archery:** 12-8:30p, 2741 N. Hwy 116, \$5, info 307-468-2506.

## 03 | NORTHWEST

## ARAPAHOE

## SEPTEMBER 4-6

**Northern Arapaho Powwow:**

Wyoming's oldest powwow. 6p Fri, 10a Sat-Sun. Left Hand Ditch Road near the Sharp Nose Road intersection. Tentative dates, please confirm in advance 307-332-8548.

## DUBOIS

## AUGUST 22

**Fall Kamikaze Golf Tournament:**

Antelope Hills Golf Course, 126 Clubhouse Drive. Info 307-455-2888, duboiswyomingchamber.org.

## SEPTEMBER 11-19

**Susan Kathleen Black Artists Rendezvous & Workshops:**

Classes held inside and around scenic Dubois. 20 Stalnaker St, info 307-455-2687, headwaters@wyoming.com, skbworkshop.com/dubois-workshop-info.

## WEDNESDAYS

**KOA Outdoor Western Concert:**

Packin' the Mail will play under the campground pavilion. 7-9p,

225 W. Welty St., free, info 307-455-2238, dubois@koa.com.

## THIRD WEDNESDAYS

**Wyoming Health Fairs Monthly Wellness Screen/Blood Draw:**

7-10a, Dubois Medical Clinic, appointments encouraged, info 307-455-2516, whf.as.me/dubois.

## LANDER

## SEPTEMBER 3

**Tim McCoy:** Talk will focus on silent movie star Tim McCoy's colorful life and clips of his movie "End of the Trail" will be shown. 7p, Pioneer Museum, free, info 307-332-3339.

## SEPTEMBER 12

**Louis Lake Lodge Adventure Trek:**

Learn the history of the Loop Road, the water projects and the lodge and have lunch at the lodge. 10a, Pioneer Museum, \$10 reservations required, info 307-332-3339.

## SATURDAYS

**Farmers' Market:** Fresh produce, meats, dairy, baked goods, homemade crafts and live music. 9-11:30a, Lander City Park, info facebook.com/landervalleymarket.

## RIVERTON

## AUGUST 29

**How to Use a Map and a Compass:**

Kids learn the basics of navigation with a topographic map and a compass, then head out on a treasure hunt. 2p, Riverton Museum, \$4 per participant, info 307-856-2665.

## SEPTEMBER 12

**Uranium District Trek:** Explore the area's most important uranium areas during all day trek. Transportation will be provided. 8a, Riverton Museum, \$50, space limited, info 307-856-2665.

## WEDNESDAYS

**Farmers' Market:** Area producers offer a variety of seasonal vegetables, pickled and preserved foods, raw milk and cheese, eggs, kombucha, baked delicacies, handcrafted art items and more. 5-7p, City Park, info 307-851-4931.



Send complete information for the October issue's events by

**SEPTEMBER 10!**

Please remember that events from the 20th of October to the 20th of November are included in the October 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](http://wyomingrea.org/news).

## QUESTIONS &amp; SUBMISSIONS:

✉ [wren@wyomingrea.org](mailto:wren@wyomingrea.org)

☎ [307] 772-1968

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

💻 [wyomingrea.org/wren-submissions](http://wyomingrea.org/wren-submissions)

## SHOSHONI

## SEPTEMBER 5-6

**Labor Day Rodeos:** Ranch rodeo 5p Sat, Public Labor Day rodeo 6:30p Sun. Art Shanley Memorial Arena, 250 S. Maple Street, \$8, info 307-262-6094, Facebook.

## SOUTH PASS CITY

## WEEKENDS TO SEPTEMBER 6

**Carissa Gold Mine Mill Tour:**

See the pits & shafts where miners labored. 125 South Pass Main St. \$5, \$3 WY residents, under 18 free. No kids under 8. Reservations only, 307-332-3684, info@southpasscity.com, southpasscity.com/tours.

## 04 | SOUTHWEST

## EVANSTON

## THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30

**Suffrage Wyoming:** Traveling Wyoming State Museum exhibit traces the history and impact of women's suffrage in Wyoming. Uinta County Library, info 307-783-0484.

## FORT BRIDGER

## CANCELED

**Mountain Man Rendezvous:**

Fort Bridger State Historic Site.

## TUESDAYS

**Bingo:** 6p, American Legion Hall, info 307-780-5489.

## MOUNTAIN VIEW

## ONGOING

**Community Classes:** Fitness, computer, workforce and kids' classes are available. Valley Learning Center, times and prices vary. Info valleylearningcenter.coursetorm.com or 307-782-6401.

## ROCK SPRINGS

## AUGUST 21

**Concert in the Park:** Nowhere Fast will play, 7p, Bunning Park, free, info 307-352-1500.





01

**01** | Beauty versus beast,  
Kylee Schultz, Lyman

02



**02** | Mountain bluebird,  
Anson Meagher, Wright

03



**03** | Social distancing is hard,  
Barbara Toomer, Lyman

JUST PICTURE IT

THIS MONTH:

**QUARANTINE**

OCT (DUE SEP 10):

**WIND**

NOV (DUE OCT 10):

**PARADES**







04



05



06

- 04 | Lyle and Foxy being buddies,  
Paul Oedekoven, Gillette
- 05 | Social distancing Wyoming style,  
Dick Fleming, Cheyenne
- 06 | Hopeful art by Tessa Bybee, Cheyenne
- 07 | Social distancing on the Sweetwater,  
Dawn Peil, Thermopolis
- 08 | Our Hawaiian vacation during quarantine,  
Jim and Val Huegerich, Laramie
- 09 | Quarantine entertainment,  
Paul Oedekoven, Gillette



07



08



09





10



11



12

**10** | Mask-arading, Marilyn M. Norman, Cheyenne

**11** | Cooling their toes off, Paul Oedekoven, Gillette

**12** | A quarantine morning walk, Janice Kennah, Fort Bridger

**13** | High School Seniors' Cruise Night at Riverton, Angie Erickson, Meeteetse

**14** | Quarantined mount, Sandy Pokorney, Gillette

**15** | Masks for the whole family, Marcia Walker, Powell



13



14



15



✉ [wren@wyomingrea.org](mailto:wren@wyomingrea.org)  
 ✉ 214 W. Lincolnway Ste. 21C Cheyenne, WY 82001  
 🖨 [wyomingrea.org/wren-submissions](http://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.

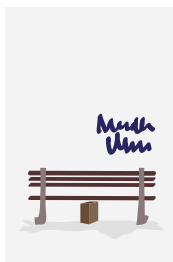


POP(CORN) CULTURE QUIZ

PUZZLE ON PAGE 25



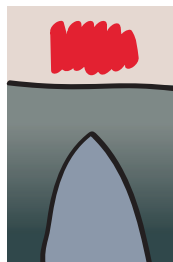
Raiders of the  
Lost Ark



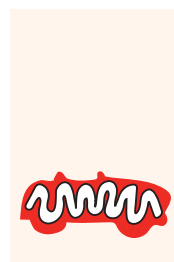
Forrest Gump



Avengers



Jaws



Grease



Ghostbusters



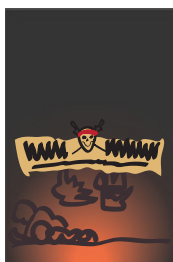
The Dark Knight



E.T.



Top Gun



Pirates of the  
Caribbean, The Curse  
of the Black Pearl



Jurassic Park



Independence Day

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**Wear a helmet.**  
**Wear bright  
clothing.**

**Bike smart.  
Be seen, be safe.**

# Going the Social Distance with Dad

BY CHUCK LARSEN

**At the age of 91 my Dad continues to be an active and vibrant part of his community. He still lives in his own house, caring for his own needs.**

Although somewhat slower (much to my relief) he still drives himself wherever he needs to go. To say that he is “independent” would be putting it mildly ... so to speak. He is surrounded by a multitude of friends and family who look in on him and ensure that he is included in the happenings of the community, which is a blessing for me since I live several hours and too many miles from him.

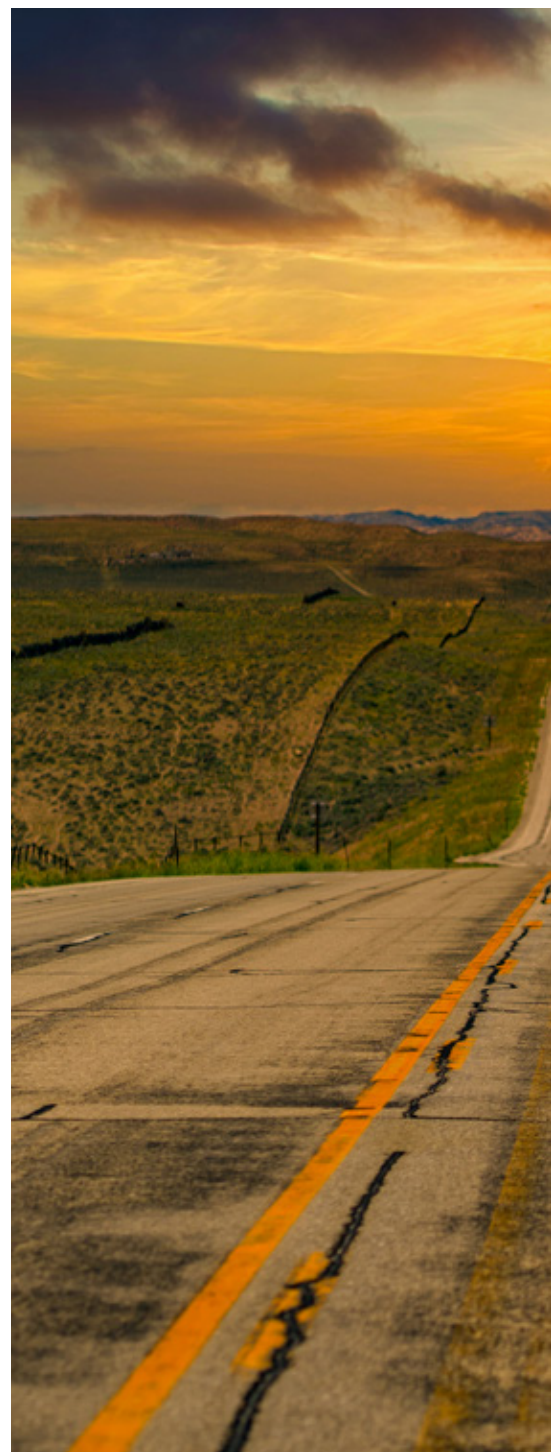
Each evening I call him and we recap our day's events. Listening to him summarize his day's accomplishments and his planned agenda for the following day, you would be hard pressed to believe he is 91 years old. A considerable amount of those evening calls center around the people he visited with that day. Like what he heard at coffee with his buddies that morning, who had called him on the phone or a conversation he had across the fence with a neighbor. Dad is a very social person to say the least, so when the COVID-19 pandemic made its way into our lives I was concerned how he would handle it. After some consideration and planning of my own, I made the decision to go spend a few days with him. I figured we could spend time around his house, I could help him catch up on some of the projects he may need my help with and together we could practice our “social distancing.”

Things went pretty good for a few days, but soon we were running out of projects to work on and our venture into the art of “social distancing” was starting to wear pretty thin. At that point I suggested that we go for a drive. We could stay in the vehicle and away from the public ...

and we could get out of the house! So, off we went with me behind the wheel and my fatherly co-pilot/navigator in the passenger seat beside me. Driving the backroads of the area I was raised in, I thought I knew and could remember all I needed to know about the homeland that I had left some 49 years ago. But as I drove, my co-pilot/navigator, now turned tour guide, began to recount a treasure trove of memories associated with his life in that community. As I listened I was reminded that except for a stint in the Army, Dad had spent his entire 91 years in the place he called home. As we traveled he'd point out certain features and then delve into his bank of memories and add the appropriate narrative.

“Right here, there used to be a grove of trees and a little farm, it's where my cousin Kenny was born.”

Along a short stretch of worn black top he pointed to a grove of aged cottonwood trees, “Over there is where your great grandpa and grandma Larsen used to live ... all that is left now is that old wooden granary and windmill.” He paused, carefully collecting his thoughts, “I had to walk by their farm every morning on my way to school. One morning Grandpa Larsen came out and met me and ended up scolding me for not having my coat buttoned up on such a cold morning. Shortly after getting to the schoolhouse my Dad came and got me, it was because Grandpa Larsen, after talking to me, had walked back and passed away in the middle of the farmyard ... that was a sad day for me.”





A little farther down that same stretch of highway his gaze shifted to the northwest, “Over there, just above the east bank of the Vermillion River is where we lived until I was 14. All the buildings are gone now, there’s no sign that there was even a farm there anymore. I loved living by that river and with all the neighbor kids I fished and swam every chance I got ... it was there that one of the older neighbor boys saved me from drowning.”

We soon found ourselves traveling down a new stretch of gravel, “I once rode my pony Lindy down this road and into town where they were having a big celebration for some reason. I remember they had an airplane there and for a fee you could have a ride in that plane. Oh how I’d wished I could take a ride but I didn’t have any money. I guess I got caught up in all the excitement of the day and it got pretty dark on my ride home. I was thinking that Mom and Dad would be worried and upset with me but they weren’t ... things were different back then.”

Soon we found ourselves traveling roads that were more familiar to me, roads that were the pathways of my own youth, and roads that led to the farm I was raised on. Dad sat silent as we approached the old home place and when he finally spoke there was a hint of sadness in this voice, “All that’s left of the original buildings is the old shop, they’ve torn the old house and barn down and moved in a newer house ... it all looks different now, so many farmsteads have changed or are completely gone.” He paused, “We had a lot of good times there and it was a good place to raise you kids ... yah so many memories.”

A half mile down the road we turned left which brought us to an old iron bridge that spanned the creek. He smiled, “I remember when you and the Christensen kids were diving off the bridge when there was high water and I warned you that there was a barbed wire fence across the creek close to where you were diving in and you said ... ‘we know we found it!’”

We sat there in the middle of the bridge for a while and shared many of the memories we had of that special place ... a place that was encompassed in what I thought at that time was my whole world. We were

both silent when we drove on, both of us reminiscing days gone by.

A little farther down that same road we passed another farmstead that was my grandparents’ place when I was growing

up, “I was 14 when the folks bought this farm and moved us away from the Vermillion River place. We had to drive our cattle all the way here and it took us quite a while.”


Having worked in the rural electric association program for many years I questioned him on when Grandpa and Grandma had gotten electricity. He thought for a moment, “It was 1950 and it was when I was away in the Army. When they installed electrical wiring in the house, I remember hearing that my mom and dad had argued about how many electrical outlets to put in each room. Your grandpa thought they only needed one outlet per room but grandma thought they needed more.” Laughing he said, “I guess she won the argument more or less because, they ended up with a grand total of two in each room. Electricity sure changed our lives but, then again when you think about it, I have seen so many changes in my life.”

We soon found ourselves pulling into the driveway back at Dad’s house in town. When I switched off the ignition we shared a brief moment of mutual quiet and then Dad broke that silence, “I sure appreciate you driving me around and I’m sorry if I bored you with all my stories, but that’s about all I have anymore, my memories and my stories.” I assured him that his memories and those of my own were a part of me that I hold close and that deep down they define who I am as a person.

If the good Lord sees fit to allow me to reach the age of 91, I hope that I have the opportunity to drive down the back roads of my life and share with my children a special memory; an afternoon spent “social distancing” with Dad. **W**

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**Chuck Larsen managed Saratoga-based Carbon Power and Light for 23 years. He now lives in Hulett with his wife, Linda.**



**But as I drove, my co-pilot/navigator, now turned tour guide, began to recount a treasure trove of memories associated with his life in that community.**

CATEGORIES

01. EQUIPMENT
02. FOR SALE
03. HORSES
04. LIVESTOCK
05. POULTRY
06. REAL ESTATE
07. WANTED
08. CRAFTS
09. OPPORTUNITIES
10. MISCELLANEOUS
11. BUSINESS CONSULTING
12. FOR RENT
13. HELP WANTED
14. DOGS
15. EMPLOYMENT SOUGHT
16. BUILDING SUPPLIES
17. TRAVEL & RECREATION
18. HEALTH
19. PERSONAL
20. FREE

## 02 | FOR SALE

**2 Marley storage heaters, like new.** \$100.  
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**Lynettesstockdogs.com, 3 males, 1 female pups for sale.** Black/white, black/tan/white, best suited to be cow dogs. \$200. Ten Sleep, WY. 307-272-5509.

**New & Used Coal Stokers, parts, service & advice.**  
Available for most makes. Thanks. 307-754-3757.

**Pre-inoculated Alfalfa seeds for sale.** Ranger, Vernema, Perry, Surpass, Wrangler and TV Blend. \$3.25/lb. Call Richard at 307-856-5748 or 307-851-9830.

**Shaver Outdoor Wood Boiler Furnace.** Aermotor Windmills and parts, cylinders, pipe, rod, submersible pumps, motors, control boxes, Hastings 12 ga. bottomless stock tanks and more. In business for more than 74 years. Herren Bros., Box 187, Harrison NE. 1-308-668-2582.

**Surplus Equipment New and Used:** Generators, air heaters, engine driven pumps, (all sizes), solar pumps, 3" and 4" polypipe, etc. A variety of types and sizes available. Call for pricing and details: Premier PowerPlants & Pumps, Farson, WY 307-273- 9591.

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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](http://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](mailto:wandlerfrontier@gmail.com) or daughter Briana Brewer 307-660-2402 [bbrewer@frontierauto.net](mailto:bbrewer@frontierauto.net).

**Do you have a roll of the old wire tie hay baler wire to sell?** Call Nancy, evenings, at 307-758-4370.

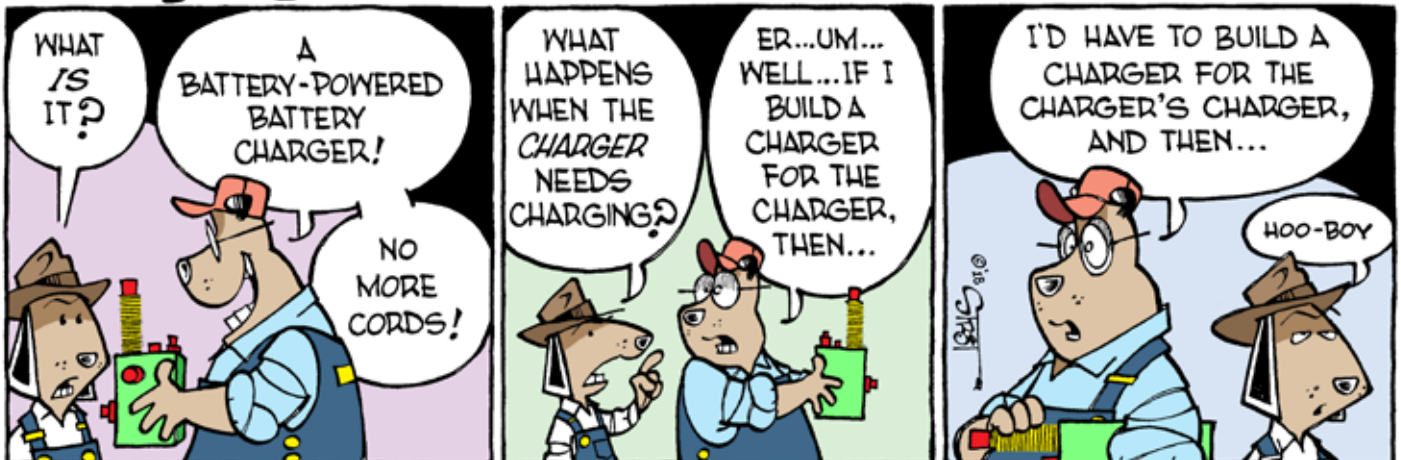
**Want to purchase minerals & other oil/gas interests.** Send details to: PO Box 13557, Denver, CO 80201.

**We Pay Cash For Mineral & Oil/Gas Interests** producing & non-producing. 800-733-8122.

## 20 | FREE

**Soon Church/Government uniting,** suppressing "Religious Liberty" enforcing "National Sunday Law." Be Informed! Needing Mailing address. TSBM, PO Box 374, Ellijay, GA 30540, [thebiblesaystruth@yahoo.com](mailto:thebiblesaystruth@yahoo.com), 1-888-211-1715.

# Murphy





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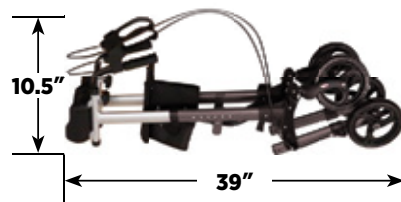


It's a cruel fact of life, as we age, gravity takes over. Our muscles droop, our bodies sag and the weight of the world seems to be planted squarely on our shoulders. We dread taking a fall, so we find ourselves walking less and less—and that only makes matters worse.

Well, cheer up! There's finally a product designed to enable us all to walk properly and stay on the go. It's called the Perfect Walker™, and it can truly change your life.

Traditional rollators and walkers simply aren't designed well. They require you to hunch over and shuffle your feet when you walk. This puts pressure on your back, your neck, your wrists and your hands. Over time, this makes walking uncomfortable and can result in a variety of health issues. That's all changed with the Perfect Walker™. Its upright design and padded elbow rests enable you to

distribute your weight across your arms and shoulders, not your hands and wrists. Helps reduce back, neck and wrist pain and discomfort. Its unique frame gives you plenty of room to step, and the oversized wheels help you glide across the floor. The height can be easily adjusted with the push of a button to fit anyone from 5' to over 6'. Once you've reached your destination you can use the hand brakes to gently slow down, and there's even a handy seat with a storage compartment. Its sleek, lightweight design makes it easy to use indoors and out and it folds up for portability and storage.



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for more information visit **www.ThePerfectWalker.com**

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## ENCOURAGE THEIR CURIOSITY

Nature is good for the mind. In kids, it builds confidence, promotes creativity and imagination, and stimulates their senses. A fun way to engage kids in their outside world is to start a collection! It can be rocks, shells, flowers that you might press, or anything your kids find interesting. Having a collection can give your kids motivation to search and therefore spend more time outside! And if they get really interested in what they're collecting, you can read books together about rocks or shells or flowers, and look up interesting facts about the things they find. Help your kids get started with their own egg carton collection box.

1

### SUPPLIES:

Egg Carton  
Markers or Paint

#### Optional

Stickers  
Glue  
Decorations

2

### DIRECTIONS:

Have your kids decorate their egg cartons any way they choose.

Help your kids write their names on the outside of their egg carton.

Go outside, find fun things to collect, and store them in the egg carton's different compartments!

★ For more nature-themed activities to do with your kids, visit [wyqualitycounts.org/wren](http://wyqualitycounts.org/wren) ★



THIS MONTH'S ACTIVITY





NATURE BADGES & BRACELETS!



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       |