

MAR + 2021

WYOMING RURAL ELECTRIC NEWS

WREN

14

THE YEAR THAT EVERYTHING CHANGED

WYOMING EDUCATORS LOOK BACK

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MARCH

ON THE COVER

14 | CENTERPIECE

The Year That Everything Changed

PHOTO BY SHERRY BLUEMEL

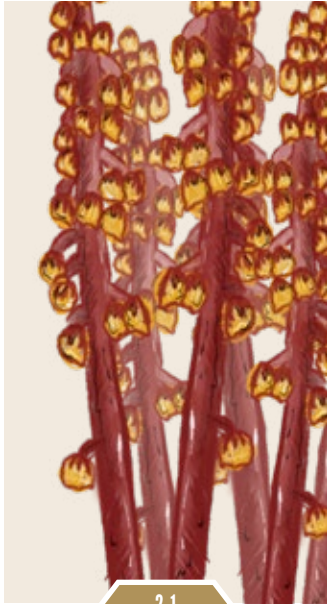
Cover photo: Mountain View Elementary School fourth grader Bentlee Aimone holds the door at the start of the school day on February 17.

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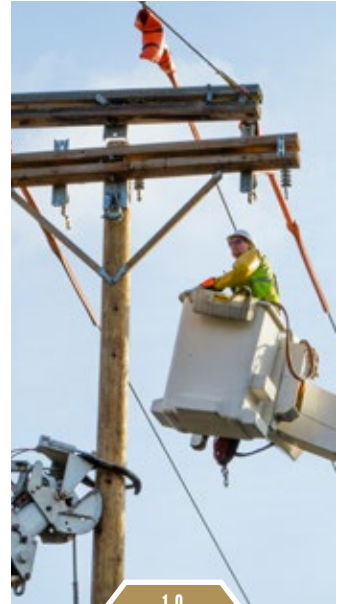
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The West ... Not Just Wyoming

First, I just have to say well done! This year's first issue of WREN magazine was by far my favorite, and that's all thanks to you. We received almost 100 submissions from 30 different co-op members: you all knocked it out of the park with the photo edition. Thank you and again, well done.

Every year I write about my family's annual RV trip to our country's national parks, and while I could use this column every month to write about all the great things we love about Wyoming, the theme again this year is Life out West. So, I thought I would broaden my focus and write about what binds us together in the West. No doubt there are plenty of differences among the people and places in the West. Those differences include cultures, demographics, politics and geology just to name a few. And unfortunately political views and lack of appreciation for different cultures have driven a wedge between many in the West.

But what I have loved and appreciated most over the past 10 years during my family's road trips—other than the experiences we have shared—is the fact that you can drive over Togwotee Pass, and when you first see the Tetons you think, “this is the most beautiful scene ever!” But then you drive down the West Coast and watch the sun set over the Pacific and think the same thing. You go down into the caves of Carlsbad Caverns National Park in New Mexico and then go to Great Basin National Park in Nevada and, within those caves, have two completely different experiences.

The sand dunes in the Red Desert offer a unique experience, but then go to the Great Sand Dunes National Park in Colorado and you'll experience something completely different. The geography out here is, in a weird way, very different and very

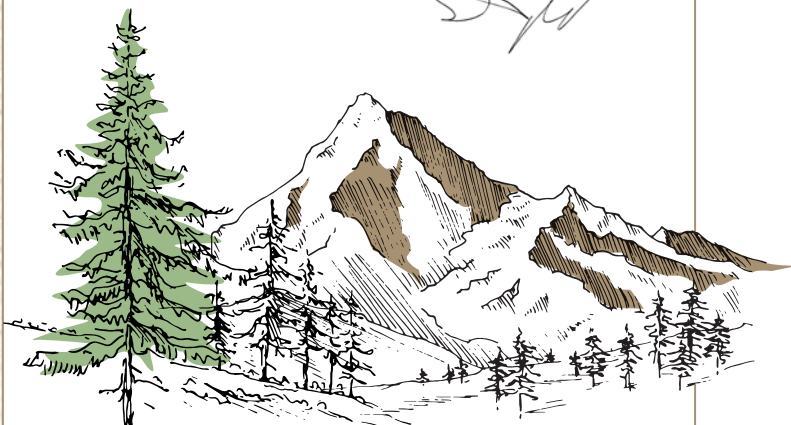


SHAWN TAYLOR
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

similar at the same time. The forests of Redwood National Park are vastly different than the mountains of Glacier National Park but my hope is that whenever you experience a different place in the West you have the same “take your breath away” moment.

As I wrote about last month, I was eager to move back to Wyoming because I missed the people, but I would be lying if I said I didn't miss the natural beauty of the West and being able to experience all that the West has to offer almost as much. Unfortunately, we are in a place in our country where there is more of an urban versus rural divide. While the metropolitan areas have their own charm and offerings, all you have to do is drive a few miles outside of the cities and witness everything we in the West have in common. And that's the beauty of the West.

It would be great if we all could focus on what binds us rather than what tears us apart, keeping the great words of Dr. Seuss at the forefront of our minds: “You're off to Great Places! Today is your day! Your Mountain is waiting so ... get on your way!”



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— Dusty Backer, Backer Bees

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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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CO-OP YOUTH

PHOTO BY KIM STEPHENS



HOMETOWN:
Burntfork

HIGH SCHOOL:
Mountain View High School

YEAR OF GRADUATION:
2020

COLLEGE:
Western Wyoming Community College

MAJOR STUDY INTEREST:
Nursing

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:

Bridger Valley Electric Association awarded Haily Stephens with a college scholarship in 2020. An outstanding high school athlete, she is now playing basketball for Western Wyoming College in Rock Springs.

Youth Tour and youth camps were canceled this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Your rural electric cooperative may be taking applications for next year. See the insert in the center of the magazine for contact information.

HAILY SUE STEPHENS

WREN: Tell us about your studies and interests.

HS: My favorite classes in high school and college have been biology classes. I love learning about life especially when it comes to the structure and function of animals and humans. That is why I have decided to major in nursing. I am in the process of finishing my certified nursing assistant training and I am excited to continue learning.

I am also interested in animals. I have always been that person that would try to pet a wild animal if I had the chance. My favorite hobbies are hunting, fishing and ranching.

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

HS: My hometown has influenced me in many ways. So many great people have supported me in school and in sports. The community was always willing to travel and cheer us on wherever we went. My friends know exactly what mistakes I have made and how they have made me stronger. They are always willing to pick me up when I want to give up. My family is the most incredible family there is. They are my backbone. They were always there to help me out when I really needed it. They knew how to make me smile and feel loved when I thought I failed. My mom is my biggest influence in my family because she pushed me in sports and in school to be the best me. She was always the one to stay late after practices with me. For that, I had the amazing opportunity to play basketball at the next level. I have no clue where I would be without any of these people in my life.

WREN: What are your plans for the future?

HS: My plans for the future are to finish out my basketball season at Western and graduate with my associate degree in nursing. I then plan on getting a job in a hospital and complete a bachelor's degree in nursing while working.



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WREA Annual Meeting Takes Place on Web

BY KELLY ETZEL DOUGLAS

The Wyoming Rural Electric Association's 80th annual meeting on February 4 wasn't in Cheyenne, or in any one place. The meeting took place entirely online and in just one day, with attendees appearing on camera from their own living rooms, offices or just a spot outside with the best connection.

The Wyoming Rural Electric Association (WREA) includes 11 rural electric utility cooperatives as well as three

generation and transmission cooperatives. The WREA is required by law to hold an annual meeting, an affair that usually includes two days of meetings and dinners, along with a reception for state legislators. But, like many planned events and regular WREA board meetings in the past year, attendees met virtually, following current state public health orders restricting indoor gatherings because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE STATE

More than one speaker at the meeting talked about their personal experience falling ill with COVID-19. Others reported working with limited staff when employees got sick, or working from home to keep from spreading the illness.

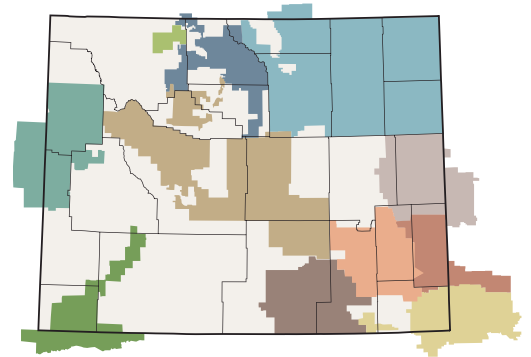
While five cooperatives usually conduct their annual meetings in March, four postponed their meetings. ● **Wheatland Rural Electric Association** announced plans for a drive-in annual meeting on March 17.

● **High Plains Power** board member Matthew Frericks reported that CEO Marlene Morss retired at the end of 2020, and the new CEO, Darick Eisenbraun, is in place and passionate about his new position. Eisenbraun was formerly chief financial officer at Butte Electric Cooperative in South Dakota.

Many of the WREA's cooperatives had positive changes to report.

● **Wheatland Rural Electric Association**, ● **Big Horn Rural Electric Association**, ● **High West Energy** and ● **Garland Light & Power** are all adding new members as people move into their area.

WREA UTILITY COOPERATIVES



● **Lower Valley Energy** President and CEO Jim Webb shared a story of giving during the meeting. Lower Valley members decided among themselves to pay off all of the cooperative's delinquent accounts, donating a total of \$35,000. Similar donations were made by and for members in ● **Big Horn Rural Electric Association**.

"It was amazing how much they donated," Webb said. "It was heartwarming."

IN OTHER BUSINESS

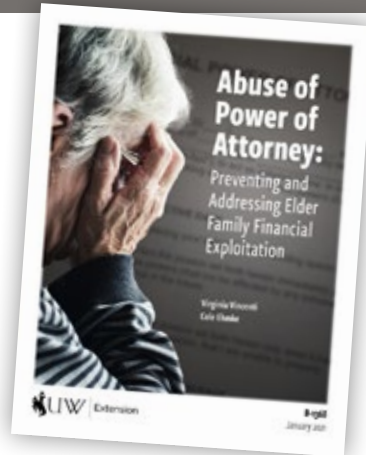
The WREA board of directors voted on nominees for the National Rural Electric Cooperatives Association (NRECA). The board voted to retain ● **PRECorp** board President Reuben Ritthaler as its representative to the NRECA board of directors. The board also appointed ● **Bridger Valley Electric Association** Network Manager Gregg Moretti to the NRECA's Cooperative Management and Employee Issues committee. Moretti was one of two applicants for the committee.

“At our first virtual board meeting in WREA history, Reuben Ritthaler introduced a new term, ‘it got 2020’d,’ board President Scott Smith said. “Going into 2021 we’re going to see a lot more challenges.”

DOWNLOAD

UW Extension's New **POWER OF ATTORNEY** Bulletin

A financial power of attorney is a potent estate planning tool, but it has the potential to be exploited. *Abuse of Power of Attorney: Preventing and Addressing Elder Family Financial Exploitation* provides best practices on setting up a document to avoid abuse, and guidance for responding when there is.



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body

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meaningful
connections

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when you
need it

put your
thoughts
on paper

be there for others



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LINEWORKER APPRECIATION DAY: APRIL 12

Your rural electric cooperative's lineworkers work day and night, in all kinds of weather, to keep the lights on. That's why we celebrate Lineworker Appreciation Day the second Monday in April. The Wyoming Rural Electric Association would like to thank all of our lineworkers for their service and commitment.

This line of
work is not
for the faint
of heart.



THANK YOU FOR SHARING YOUR THOUGHTS AND YOUR IDEAS!

“

I'm hard pressed to choose one section over another, but the well written ruminations of folks is informative as well as interesting.

“

LEARNED A LOT OVER THE YEARS ABOUT WYOMING BY READING WREN. I WISH UTAH HAD A MAGAZINE LIKE YOU.

“Thanks for voting guidance. Why it has gotten so complicated mystifies me. Your info is straight forward, factual and easy to accomplish!”

“

Rhonda Apodaca and Don Smith always write interesting news of what's going on in Platte Co!

– written by a Wheatland Rural Electric Association member

“

I WOULD LOVE TO HEAR ABOUT TROUBLESHOOTING POWER PROBLEMS. WHAT CAUSES OUTAGES?

“I have learned about many areas of Wyoming and all the people doing great things for their community.”

“We love WREN's stories. I fell in love with Wyoming because of WREN. Thanks to WREN for introducing me to so many new and fabulous things about Wyoming. Your publication is a real treat to find in our mail!”

“

Enjoy reading about WY projects and people. Important to keep up with what's affecting the industry.

“

I love seeing what's going on around WY and planning to visit during festival and event days.

“

More professional profiles and histories please. A clean energy section would be nice, wind, solar, etc.”

“One thing: Don't become radicalized left in your reporting! Don't cave – Be careful pushing the electric car/truck! It may be an alternative ... but ...”

WREN READER SURVEY RESULTS

During the last few months of 2020, we asked you, our readers, to tell us what you thought of WREN. We asked for your favorites and your not-so-favorites. The response was overwhelming! Nearly 200 surveys were returned to us, with ideas, opinions and topics that we take to heart.

READERS' FAVORITE WREN SECTIONS



READER-SUBMITTED
CONTENT



CREATIVE
ESSAYS



NEWS BRIEFS
ABOUT WYOMING



FEATURE
STORIES



PERSONALITY
PROFILES

Surveys Returned



195 TOTAL



134 MAILED IN



61 ONLINE

Age Range

65+

137
TWO READERS MADE
SURE WE KNEW THEY
WERE OVER 90!

64+

50
READERS 64
AND YOUNGER

Gender



128 FEMALE



62 MALE

Do You Subscribe to Other Printed Magazines?

128 YES

58 NO

Do You Have Access to wyomingrea.org?

123 YES (ONE READER WROTE, "SOMETIMES")

61 NO

Please note: some surveys were not completely filled in, therefore not all numbers add up to 195.

READERS' FAVORITE STORY TOPICS

Ranked highest to lowest:

1

Environment
and Wildlife

2

Farming and
Ranching

3

Personality
Profiles

4

Energy and
Cooperatives

5

Education

6

Tourism

7

Business



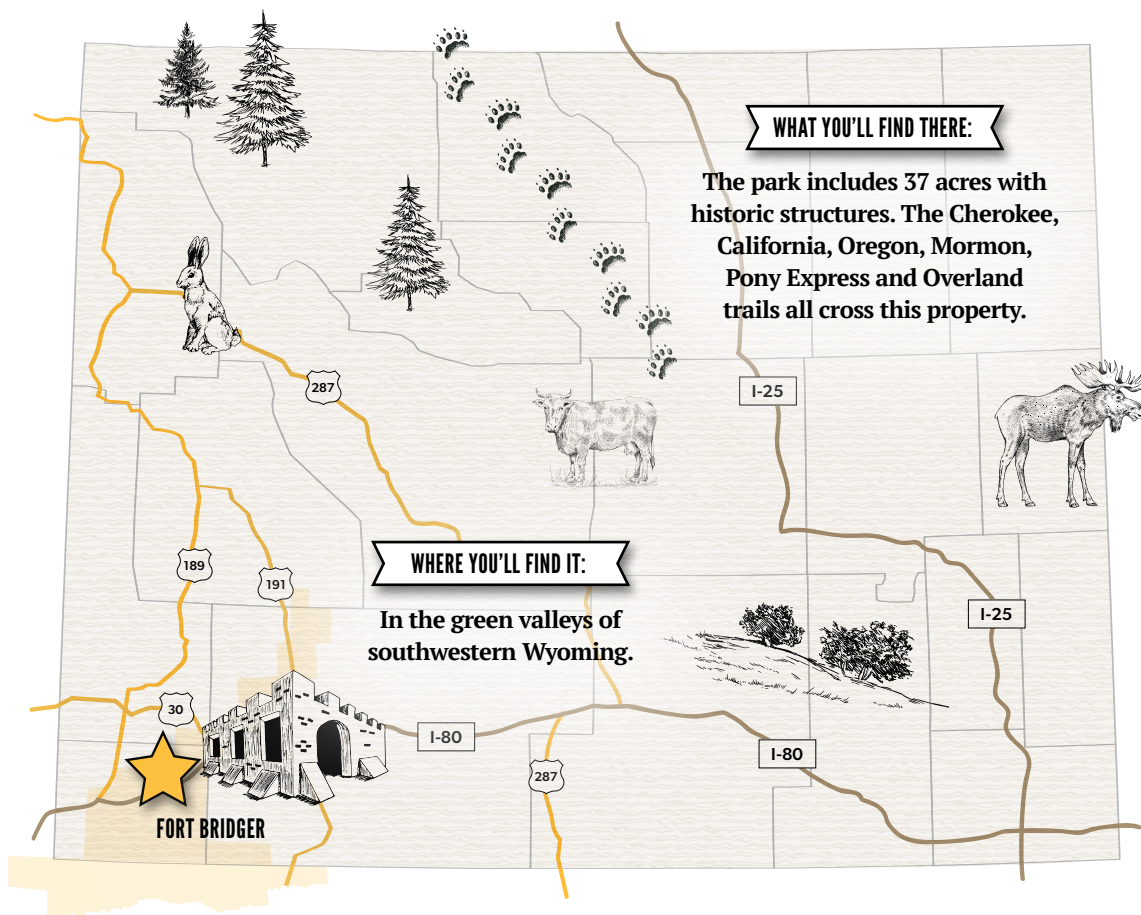
**THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO
PARTICIPATED IN THE SURVEY.**

If you would like to tell us what you think of WREN, you can still fill out the survey online at www.wyomingrea.org/wren-magazine/wren-reader-survey/, call 307-286-8140 or email wren@wyomingrea.org.

THIS MONTH:

FORT BRIDGER STATE HISTORIC SITE

BRIDGER VALLEY
RURAL ELECTRIC
COMPANY MEMBER



PHOTOS COURTESY OF FORT BRIDGER STATE HISTORIC SITE



WHY IT'S SPECIAL:

Fort Bridger was a site for trading and treaties in history. Now it hosts unique events including the Kids' Extreme in July, the Mountain Man Rendezvous in August and Christmas at the Fort in December.

State Suicide Prevention Line to Sync with National Number

FROM THE WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

The Wyoming Department of Health (WDH) has been selected to receive a grant to help prepare the state for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline's coming national 988 dialing code.

In July 2022, 988 will become the national three-digit dialing code for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, replacing the current phone number of 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

"We always tell people to call 911 if they or someone they know is in immediate danger of harming themselves," said Lindsay Martin, WDH injury and violence prevention program manager.

"Having a ready resource for people in crisis is vital. We know having someone to talk to about thoughts, feelings and options for support can help save lives and that's where the lifeline fits in."

Wyoming residents needing support should continue to call

1-800-273-TALK (8255) until July 2022 or text "WYO" to 741-741 for the Crisis Text Line.

Martin said WDH will work on strategic plans for the projected infrastructure needs, volume growth and access to the new 988 number. WDH, Central Wyoming Counseling Center's Lifeline Call Center and the Wyoming Lifeline Call Center will collaborate with state leadership, suicide prevention experts, people with lived experience and others.

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline's 988 State Planning Grant is being awarded through Vibrant Emotional Health, the nonprofit administrator of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.



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CENTERPIECE

THE YEAR THAT
**EVERYTHING
CHANGED**

BY ILENE OLSON

Schools were open as usual on March 12, 2020, but closed the next day. Since then, nothing has been the same.

Mountain View Elementary School students arrive at the school in February.

PHOTO BY SHERRY BLUEMEL

Wyoming Educators Look Back

Last year was already shaping up to be very different than anticipated for Melissa Clark of Mountain View, even before COVID-19 changed everything.

Clark found out she was pregnant on the first of March. She and her husband Matthew are both teachers in Uinta County School District No. 4, and they knew the arrival of their new baby in October—their fifth child—would alter their lives in big ways.

What they didn't know was that, in two weeks, much bigger changes would occur. On March 13, the COVID-19 pandemic prompted the closure of schools and most everything else across the United States. When school resumed a few weeks later, it was through distance learning only.

That meant that both Melissa and Matthew Clark needed to teach online from their home, while also supervising their own children's learning. They devised a strict schedule, with one of them helping their older children, Brennen, 9, and Dean, 7, with their schoolwork while the other provided instruction to their students online. Then the parents switched roles.

Their younger children, Seth and Rebecca, then ages 5 and 3, could not attend preschool during the latter part of the spring 2020 semester, so they needed supervision at home as well.

"It was very busy," Clark said.

Clark, who teaches music to kindergarteners, first and second graders, and band to middle- and high-schoolers, said she found it challenging at first to adapt her curriculum to online teaching.

"I hadn't done a whole lot of technology with my students," she said. "I kind of threw out the window the group practices and concerts and just focused on kids individually. I spent a lot of

CARING — For Little Ones

Life for working parents with infants and small children became much more complicated in March 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic prompted the closure of preschools and child care centers around the country.

"For a long time, I think we've known how fragile the child care and even the after-school systems are that families rely on," said Becca Steinhoff, director of Wyoming Kids First, based in Casper. "What happened with the pandemic was that a lot of the systems and the challenges were laid bare."

In the most difficult situations, "I think [some children] were left home alone," Steinhoff said. "Even in the context where an adult was present, we asked more of children of all ages than they were normally asked to contribute."

"Families have had to multitask in ways they never thought they could, or would, face," she said. "Our greatest support structures were just inaccessible for their well-being."

Steinhoff said she and her husband also experienced that stress while working at home and simultaneously caring for their then 5-year-old daughter and helping with her education.

"It's a lot," she said.

"This pandemic sort of exacerbated some of the conditions that existed before the pandemic," Steinhoff said.

Those include the fact that the cost of infant care in Wyoming exceeds \$10,000 per year—more than the annual cost of a college education in the state. And that cost often occurs at a time when young parents are in the early stages of their careers and earning low wages, Steinhoff said.

During the pandemic, child care centers also have experienced huge stresses. Most are operating at one-



third of capacity due to the pandemic. That means the centers' income—already low—was cut by one-third as well, she said.

At the same time, expenses increased due to additional guidelines and restrictions to reduce the likelihood of transmitting COVID-19. More cleaning and sanitizing is required, and centers must purchase disposable plates and utensils for snacks and meals. Before, children could share art supplies and toys; now each child must have their own, or the toys and supplies must be disinfected before the next child uses them, she said.

Pandemic-related financial issues for child care centers were partially addressed by funding from the December stimulus bill, which includes money for the Child Care Development Block Grant. In addition, there is a strong commitment from the state to support early childhood programs. About \$7 million in Cares Act program funding went to early childhood programs serving children from birth to 13 years of age, Steinhoff said.

She added that, as the pandemic eases and people start to look forward again, it will be necessary to have conversations about child care.

"We recognize that we have a lot to learn and that things will likely not be the same," Steinhoff said. "That's a powerful place to be. It puts us in a place to have a conversation about what we have learned, and ... really capture insights from individuals across our communities."





Melissa and Matthew Clark pose with their children, from left, Rebecca, Dean, Christian, Seth and Brennen. Both Melissa and Matthew are teachers in Uinta County School District No. 4 in Mountain View.

Students in Clark's classes also were happy to be back, especially in the beginning of the year. "But it was weird, too. They had to adjust to things being different," she said.

The classroom environment for music and band is the same, but the students are spaced 6 feet or more apart, she said.

Students need to wear masks in most classrooms, "but teachers and administrators are really good about finding ways to let kids have a break from their masks," Clark said.

So far this year, a couple of Clark's students tested positive for COVID-19, and several more were quarantined after exposure to the disease. While they are not able to attend in person, students can log into the classroom, where they will see and hear what is happening via a webcam in the room.

time listening to individual kids playing their instruments. I found some online programs for kids to be able to access music. I had kids record practice time for me and gave them specific assignments for them to play for me."

During the summer, the school district got the go-ahead to do summer school. Clark taught one or two middle school kids at a time, rather than having the band students practice together as they normally would.

"I actually liked doing the more individualized lessons that way, even though it took more time," she said.

When fall rolled around, the schools opened back up. "Things were a lot like normal—more normal than I thought they would be," Clark said.

Seth started kindergarten, joining his older brothers in elementary school, and Rebecca and the baby, Christian, now 4 months, go to child care.

Each morning, Clark reminded her children to grab their masks and their water bottles. The water bottles were necessary because water fountains in the schools had to be shut off.

"Every day, like a broken record: 'Get your mask and your water bottle,'" she said.

While the children normally would not want to wear masks, "my kids were just so ready to go back to school, they were more than willing to do that," she said.

“Teachers and administrators are really good about finding ways to let kids have a break from their masks.”



Mountain View Elementary School students play with social distancing at the school in February.



“Every day, like a broken record: ‘Get your mask and your water bottle.’”

PHOTOS BY SHERRY BLUEMEL



Mountain View Elementary School Teacher Marissa Cornelison uses a touchless kiosk to take a student's temperature before class begins in February. Many schools in Wyoming are taking students' temperatures as a way to screen for COVID-19.

A Mountain View Elementary School student takes his temperature before school in February.



PHOTOS BY SHERRY BLUEMEL



“Every teacher has a webcam, and most are utilizing that. You have to touch base more with the students,” Clark said.

The webcams are not new; teachers began using them long before COVID to post assignments and other things they could do online, she said.

For Clark, the biggest difference in teaching is the fact that there are more restrictions on performances. No inter-school band concerts and clinics for middle- or high-schoolers, no singing performances in elementary school.

“I keep thinking that I need to get ready for things, and there’s not as much to do,” she said.

Other adjustments at the K-8 school include staggered lunch times, with only two grades of students eating together at one time, and they must sit 6 feet or more apart. Tables are set up to convert the gym into an auxiliary lunch space each day, then taken down to open the space back up for gym classes and activities.

Custodians are working very hard, Clark said.

Her mother, Hope Bennett, is a custodian at the high school in nearby Lyman, where her job is more difficult and time-consuming these days.

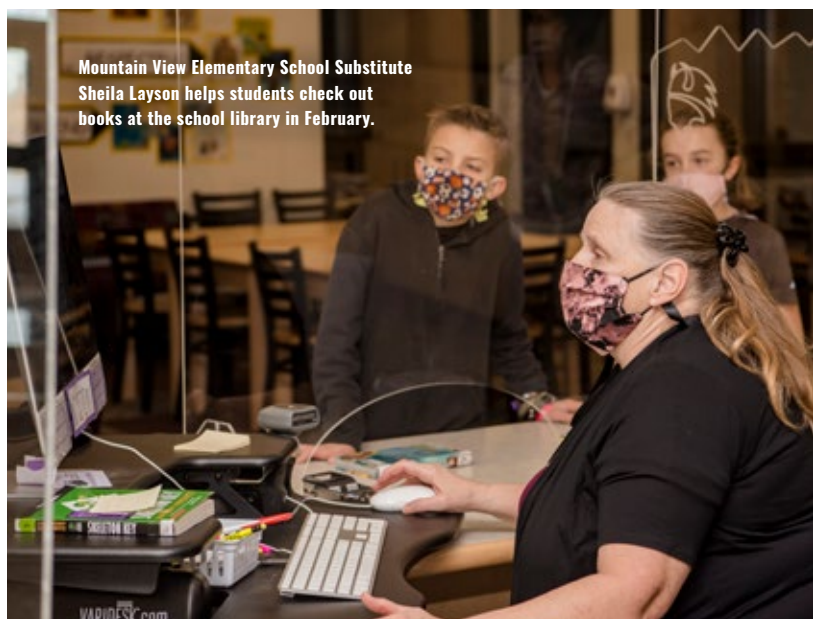
“We’ve always wiped off desks, counters, doorknobs, keyboards and computer mice,” Bennett said. “But now I take more time to make sure chairs, desks and stools in the science lab are clean and safe to touch.”

She also spaces the chairs at the tables in the commons area so they are at least 6 feet apart. But students often move them closer together.

“I feel a bit more responsibility to make sure the teachers and the students are safe and keep them healthy,” Bennett said. “But I am only partially responsible; they have to take precautions, too. I have to keep telling myself that, to keep from being overwhelmed.”

“Every teacher has a webcam, and most are utilizing that. You have to touch base more with the students.”

Mountain View Elementary School Substitute Sheila Layson helps students check out books at the school library in February.





Mountain View Elementary School students walk outside the school in February.

Keeping a Community Together

Jeff Newton, superintendent of Uinta County School District No. 4, described the district's teachers and employees as heroic, but they are stressed, he said.

"They're providing an amazing service to our communities, and they even put aside their own concerns to do that," he said.

Newton recalled that things closed down so suddenly in March that the high school girls' basketball team got only as far as Rawlins on its way to the state basketball championship, when the bus was called back.

"We had school one day, and the next day, we didn't," he said. "Really, our world was flipped upside down, and we're still trying to dig ourselves out of it."

Everyone had to scramble then to figure out how to offer an education to

students entirely online. The first step was to make sure the district had the necessary technology and adequate bandwidth.

"We were able to use some hotspots through our local wireless providers even as quickly as the next week after things shut down," Newton said.

The local rural electric cooperative helped get students online. Bridger Valley Electric Association's internet arm, Bridger Valley Extreme Access, teamed up with GT Nix Construction to provide free installation and two months of free internet service for families who needed internet service to complete the second semester of school in the spring of 2020. Students from Uinta County School Districts 4 and 6 (Mountain View and Lyman) benefitted.

Overall, the key to providing education online successfully was teamwork and constant communication between the district, teachers, parents and students, he said.

Uinta County School District No. 4 worked closely with the Wyoming Department of Health and the Uinta County public health officer and schools were able to reopen in the fall.

The district had purchased additional hot spots for use when students were unable to attend.

"Now, the challenge is keeping schools open," Newton said. But the solution is the same: teamwork and communication.

"Our kids have been amazing. They will do whatever it takes to stay in school," Newton said. "I'm sure none of them want to wear a mask, but they do it, because they realize that's the only way they can go to school."

Despite their own challenges and worries, teachers have stepped up to become heroes, Newton said.

Newton said. "It's just a good reminder of how important teachers are to our communities. In smaller towns, we are the hub of our communities."

Newton said he is impressed and pleased with what everyone has accomplished by working together.

"I'm glad I live in a community that comes together to solve problems. If we were divided, I don't know how we could do this." **W**

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

CHILI

PURPLE CHILI – DELISH!

- 1 CUP BLACK BEANS (DRY, NOT CANNED)
- 1/2 CUP PINTO BEANS (DRY, NOT CANNED)
- 1/4 CUP RICE
- 4 CUPS POTATOES (WASHED, PEELLED AND CHOPPED)
- 1/4 CUP MILK
- 1 CUP OF YOUR FAVORITE COOKED MEAT
(BEEF, CHICKEN, PORK, ELK, DEER, ANTELOPE)
- 1 TSP SALT
- 1 CAN (15 OZ) OF STOKES GREEN CHILI SAUCE
- 1 TBS GREEN CHILI SALSA

Soak beans overnight in pot of water. Pour off water the next morning and add the rice and potatoes. Pressure cook for 5 lbs of pressure for 30 minutes. When pressure cooker has completely cooled down, carefully remove the lid and add milk, meat, salt, green chili sauce and green chili salsa. Cook on stovetop on low heat for 1 hour. The black beans and the green salsa give the chili a purple look. Serve with warm cornbread.

ERIC ROBERTS ★ FARSON



C

GHOSTRIDER'S CHILI

- 1 ONION, CHOPPED
- 2 TBS OIL
- 1 CLOVE GARLIC, MINCED
- 1/4 CUP (OR MORE) JALAPENO OR POBLANO
CHILI PEPPERS, ROASTED AND CHOPPED
- 1 TSP CUMIN
- 1/4 TSP LEMON PEPPER
- SALT TO TASTE
- 1-1/4 TSP CAYENNE PEPPER
- 4 CUPS CHICKEN BROTH
- 4-1/2 CUPS SMALL NAVY BEANS,
SOAKED OVERNIGHT, DRAINED
- 5 CUPS PORK ROAST, COOKED, CHUNKED
- 1 APPLE, DICED
- 2-1/2 TBS LIME JUICE
- FRESH PEPPERCORNS TO TASTE
- SHREDDED MONTEREY JACK CHEESE

In a large pot, sauté onion in oil until tender, stir in garlic, roasted peppers, cumin, lemon pepper, salt and cayenne pepper. Cook and stir 2-3 minutes. Add chicken broth, beans, meat and apple. Cook until beans and meat are tender, 3-4 hours. Add lime juice and peppercorns. Add cheese and stir well.

MICKI HALL ★ SARATOGA

CROCK-POT CHILI

- 1 LB LEAN GROUND BEEF
- 1 BAY LEAF
- 1 SMALL ONION, CUT UP
- 1 TSP WORCESTERSHIRE SAUCE
- 1 TSP SALT
- 1 (16 OZ) CAN DICED TOMATOES
- 1-2 TSP CHILI POWDER
- 2 CANS KIDNEY BEANS OR CHILI BEANS

Combine all ingredients in the slow cooker. Cover and cook on low for 8 hours or on high for 2-3 hours. I do not brown the meat if it is lean. This can be doubled easily and more spices or other ingredients may be added to taste.

Remove bay leaf. Serve with crackers, Fritos, cheese, etc. Serves 6-7.

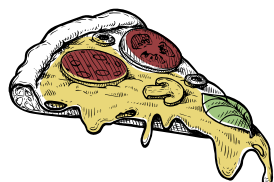
AMANDA KAUFMANN ★ BUFFALO

CHILI – ROASTER FULL

- 10 LBS HAMBURGER, COOKED AND DRAINED
- 10 PACKETS CHILI SEASONING
- 5 (28 OZ) CANS TOMATOES
- 4 (26 OZ) CANS KIDNEY BEANS
- 2 (12 OZ) CANS CHILI BEANS

Mix all together in roaster pan and heat and cook for several hours. Great for a crowd or party.

JEANIE SCHLAUTMANN ★ GILLETTE



MAY:
PIZZA

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A RECIPE

Send complete recipe by **APRIL 15!**

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LITTLE WYOMING

Meet the

PINEDROPS

01

Pterospona andromedea

Pinedrops is a strange plant—2 to 3 feet tall, reddish brown in color, lurking in the understory of conifer forests. Its leaves are small and pinkish in color; the main purpose of the stem is to support the numerous, pale, balloon-shaped flowers.

This is definitely not your textbook example of a plant: it is not green, does not have large leaves to gather sunlight for the production of sugars (photosynthesis), and should you choose to dig one up (please don't) you would not find typical roots. Instead, pinedrops has a ball of stubby rootlets covered by a fungus, named *Rhizopogon*, from which it is extracting sugars for its nutrition.

02

Nutrient Scavenger

This most unusual plant is a mycoheterotroph, meaning that it gets its nutrition (troph) from a different (hetero) organism, in this case a fungus (myco). (Organisms that make their own food are called autotrophs; green plants are the best known examples.) However, fungi, too are heterotrophs, and must get their nutrition from a source outside themselves. *Rhizopogon* has a direct connection to the roots of pine trees—it exchanges essential nutrients scavenged from the soil for sugars produced in the tree's needles, an exchange that benefits both the pine tree and *Rhizopogon*.

03

Sugar Thief?

Pinedrops first appears to be a thief—it takes sugar from *Rhizopogon* and seems to give nothing in return. It uses the sugars to fuel its own growth, flowering and seed production. But nothing in nature is simple. Recent research at the University of Wyoming has found a fourth character in the pinedrops-*Rhizopogon*-pine tree story, a community of bacteria capable of converting atmospheric nitrogen into forms that can be used by living organisms. Because of the pinedrops there is more nitrogen, an essential but limited nutrient, in the forest. That nitrogen, transported through *Rhizopogon*, enhances the growth of trees, fungi, pinedrops and all the creatures that rely on them for sustenance.



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Into the Wilderness

BY DR. MEGAN BEAVERS

If I ever find myself with some free time, I tend to gravitate towards the mountains. Summer days off are often time spent on horseback with a group of girlfriends on a trail ride. We load up in the morning, ride until lunch, eat and ride back. Lots of laughs, stories and ideas shared along the way; a perfect way to separate myself from veterinary medicine. My friends know my job is stressful and they are always able to avoid the subject in conversation. A few summers ago, a group of us took off on a beautiful ride up to a high mountain lake. Like any other trip, a few of us had a firearm. Mostly for our own protection against predators of the wilderness and to please our husbands.

The weather was gorgeous and most of our horses behaved, which always makes for a good day. We made it to the lake in a timely fashion and were able to enjoy a simple lunch while our hobbled horses enjoyed some fresh mountain grass and the dogs bounced in and out of the cool mountain water. We continued with more conversation and more laughs, and a quick cat nap for some. As the sun migrated through the afternoon sky, we knew it was time to head back to the trailhead.

On our way back we saw a gentleman standing near the trail. He appeared to be on the phone and pacing back and forth. In the shade of some pine trees stood a line of mules grazing. In the sun stood a big paint horse. We continued our ride and came closer and closer to the man. He began to walk closer to us. As a group of women

alone in the wilderness, it was a bit unsettling to see. We started whispering to each other to have our guns ready and to just ride past him. As we got closer, he continued to walk closer to our trail.

The man with the red beard and sweat-stained cowboy hat approached closer and closer. We all reluctantly waved and said hello and tried to ride on. Then he asked, "Do any of you have a firearm?" That was the last thing we expected to hear, especially with our minds already abuzz.

A friend responded with, "Yes, how can we help you?" He then answered that he thought his horse had broken its leg and needed to put it down. My brain switched back to veterinarian mode and I exclaimed that I happened to be a vet and I can look at his horse. I jumped off my steed, handed the reins to one friend and handed my weapon to another friend, who followed us back to the injured horse.



Beavers and her friends stopped by a lake for lunch during their ride in the Wind River Range.

The big paint mare wasn't standing quietly now with all the new commotion that our horses brought. In her attempt to move I could see the pain in her eyes as her back right leg didn't help support her weight at all. There was a clear large swelling just above her knee. I felt as gently as I could, but I still felt the crunch of a broken bone. As I spoke more to the man, I found out this was his lead mare. He led a pack string of mules in to drop gear and supplies for U.S. Forest Service crew members that were cleaning up trails. The mare had gotten spooked while being tied. She then pulled back so hard that she flipped over and slammed herself down on a boulder when the lead rope broke. As we were approaching his location, he had been in contact with his boss by way of satellite phone, trying to decide what to do.

I know it was the right thing to do, but I just wasn't able to do it in this circumstance.

We were 15 miles of tough mountain country away from the horse trailer then another 60 miles from any vet clinic and another 200 miles from the nearest equine surgery referral center. To ask a horse to try and navigate that walk and trailer ride with a shattered femur would be cruel. He called back to his boss and said that she wouldn't believe who happened to be riding by. They discussed the horse amongst themselves and it was determined the

best course of things was to humanely end her suffering. I had only fired my gun at targets, which I wasn't the most successful in hitting. I know it was the right thing to do, but I just wasn't able to do it in this circumstance. The gentleman agreed that he could pull the trigger.

I petted the mare's sweat covered forehead and told her it would be ok. I drew two intersecting lines between her eyes and told him this is

where. I handed my pistol over to the gentleman and walked away with my fingers in my ears. The shot rang loudly through the meadow and into the peaks overlooking us above. I turned around and ran back to the horse. I was able to confirm that she had passed quickly and humanely.

We sat and visited a bit longer about the situation. The horse was near a trail, and the Forest Service has a way of disposing of horses that meet an untimely end in the wilderness. That would happen later. The gentleman was headed to the same trailhead as we were, so we invited him to hike out with us. As he led his string of mules, he chatted with us just like one of the girls. The trip down the mountain was quick and easy, from which we parted ways from our new company.

Sometimes it seems like I can never escape veterinary medicine, even in the middle of the Wyoming wilderness. Thankfully I had a set of friends prepared to jump right in to help and have my back. It's a story we recall often, and add it to the list of reasons to carry a firearm in the backcountry. And thankfully, we haven't had to relive that experience. **W**

Dr. Megan Beavers is a veterinarian in Farson.

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50TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

SNOW CHI MINH TRAIL

The History Of Interstate 80
Between Laramie And
Walcott Junction

JOHN RICHARD WAGGENER

DESCRIPTION BY THE AUTHOR

During the Vietnam War, the Ho Chi Minh Trail was cut through the perilous mountain terrain by North Vietnamese to run supplies, ammunition and soldiers to reach South Vietnam. Similarly, a stretch of highway along the Interstate 80 corridor was constructed in rugged mountainous areas, which has not been popular over the years, especially during brutal Wyoming winters.

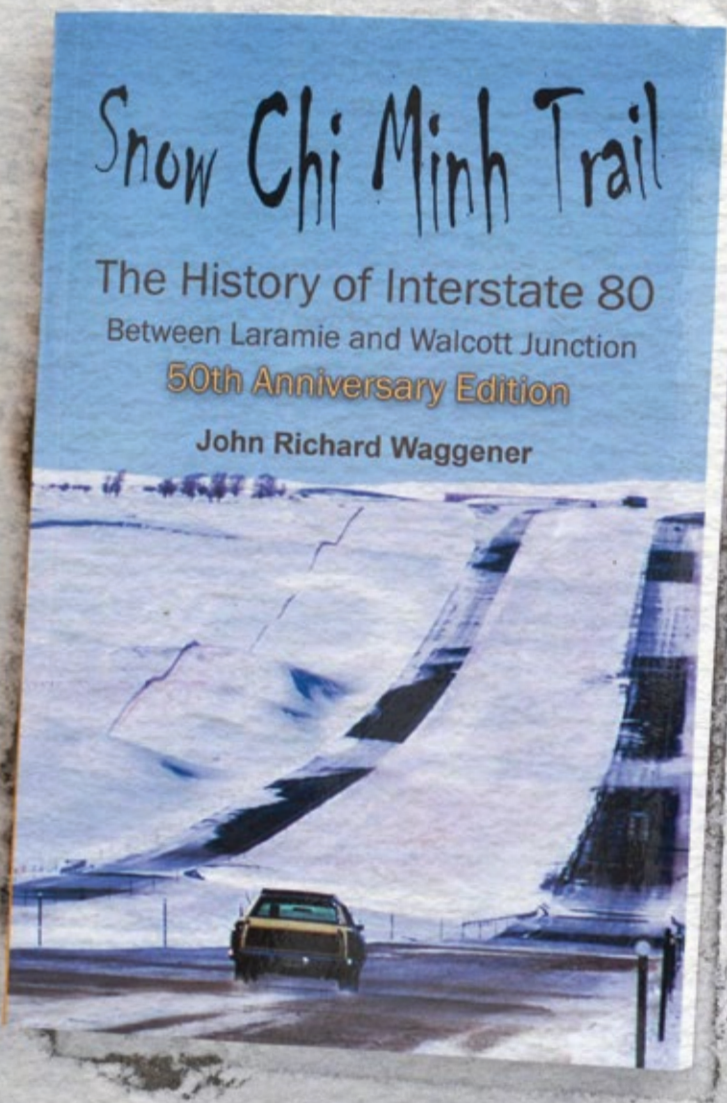
This 50th anniversary edition of "Snow Chi Minh Trail" celebrates the opening of the 77-mile section of I-80 between Laramie and Walcott Junction. Dedicated during a ribbon cutting ceremony at the Arlington exit, the road officially opened on the morning of Saturday, October 3, 1970. This special edition includes updates, additional historical information, additional maps and photographs made available to the author after the release of the second revised edition in 2018.

ORDERING INFORMATION:

2020 | 348p. | \$29.95 paperback
ISBN: 978-0-9842055-8-5

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Instrumental Search

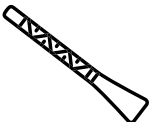
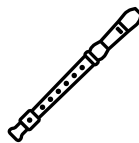
BY DIXIE LIRA

The band students are performing a number for their classmates this morning. Their teacher arrived early to begin setup and found her classroom in a disastrous state. She only has 8 minutes before the bell rings and the audience starts filing in, can you help her find the instruments below?

LOST THE RHYTHM? FIND THE ANSWERS ON PAGE 33.

EXTRA CREDIT: NAME THAT INSTRUMENT

Many of the instruments below are popular in school classrooms. Maybe you remember playing them, but can you remember their names?



No Place He'd Rather Be

BY ILENE OLSON

'I'M A LIFER,' SAYS BRIDGER VALLEY ELECTRIC APPRENTICE

Blace Martin is working the job of his dreams. He's outside in some of the most beautiful country he knows, and he gets to work in a different location nearly every day. His job is challenging and rewarding, and he can't imagine doing anything else.

Martin, an apprentice lineman for Bridger Valley Electric Association, credits a mentor for his decision to go into an electrical career field.

"He's one of my best friends, and he was an electrician. He works at one of the trona mines out here, and he's very successful. Seeing what he's accomplished kind of pushed me in that direction," Martin said.



Blace Martin is an apprentice lineman for Bridger Valley Electric Association.

Martin said he also liked the fact that working as an electrician didn't require a college education.

"Teachers pushed it, but I knew college wasn't for me," he said. "I took college for a semester, and I took a lot of electrical classes. Then I found a job, and they sent me to line school. From there, I knew that's what I wanted to be, and that's what I wanted to do."

Martin grew up in Robertson in Uinta County, on a ranch where his mother's family ran a small cow-and-calf operation. He moved to Texas to take his first electrical job, and that was where he attended line school as well.

"I stayed with that company, but ultimately I wanted to work with a co-op,"

he said. The one that always came to mind was Bridger Valley Electric Association, which serves the Robertson, Mountain View and Lyman area where he grew up.

"I didn't want to travel around anymore. It was local, and I thought it would be a better deal for me," he said. So, Martin moved back home to his family's ranch in 2019 and became an apprentice with Bridger Valley Electric, and he's never looked back. He began his four-year lineman apprenticeship a year and a half ago, and will work

another two and a half years before he becomes a journeyman lineman.

Bridger Valley Electric Association was organized in 1938. It serves members in portions of Uinta, Lincoln, Sweetwater and Sublette counties in Wyoming, as well as areas of Daggett and Summit counties in Utah.

BVEA has 28 full-time employees, including eight lineworkers. The co-op serves 6,780 meters and maintains 1,452 miles of line.

Martin said he likes the fact that BVEA covers such a large area, because he gets to work in so many different places.

"I definitely like being outside and being in different locations every day," he said.

He likes the rural jobs the best, "when we get to do work on the system, on remote locations, the places that are hard to get to—the ones you kind of struggle doing," he said. "Usually, the scenery is pretty amazing."

He also works in residential areas, where he helps put in new service lines and repair aging ones.

While he hasn't found anything he doesn't like to do, he said, "my least favorite is tree trimming, and we do a lot of it" to clear electrical lines.

Martin said he knew when he took the job that he'd be called out at times in the middle of the night during a cold, blustery storm, or during a blisteringly hot summer day, but that's OK.

"By getting hired, I would be responsible to help our neighbors in any situation and any circumstance,"

he said. "I take pride in what we do. I personally want to get them on [electrical service] and get them re-energized as quickly as possible."

He finds it easier to be out in the cold in the winter than in the summer heat.

"You can always put on more layers, but you can't take more off," he said.

Martin, now 25, and his wife, Annamarie, have a 2-year-old daughter, Haizley. They like living on the ranch, where Martin also enjoys working with horses, roping and all aspects of ranch work.

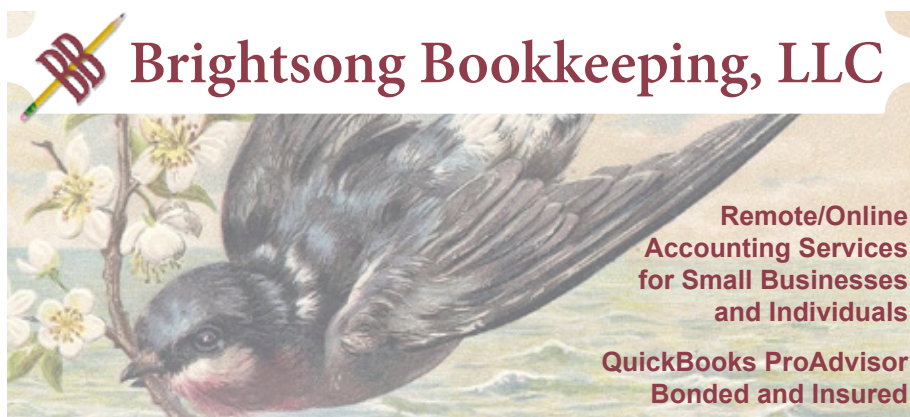
"I'm able to do all the things that I love," and his job with BVEA provides a good living for his family, he said.

"I'm a lifer now," he declared. "I'm very appreciative of the co-op lifestyle."

Everyone that works for this company, they're so awesome to work for, work with, and work under. It's just a good work environment and a good place to be.

"I'm very appreciative of that, because there's not a lot of jobs like that. We build each other up, not tear each other down." **W**

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



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Life out West

Finding a Homestead in Wyoming

BY DAVID AND NANCY ZIMMERER ★ LINGLE

PHOTOS COURTESY OF DAVID AND NANCY ZIMMERER

To begin with, Joseph Ferd Zimmerer was born November 6, 1894 in Dayton, Oregon. Ferd grew up in Lexington, Nebraska. He enlisted in the Army at Lexington in 1917, during World War I. Ferd returned to Lexington after the war. He read about the drawings for land in Torrington, Wyoming.

Ferd and Marion saved original documents from this time, allowing us to write about the land drawings in detail.

War veterans were given a 60-day preferential right in which to apply for any lands, including those on reclamation projects that were to be offered for entry. This included the

public lands under the Fort Laramie Reclamation Project. Entries were filed on a particular parcel of land, which was numbered and filed at the county courthouse in Torrington.

On January 15, 1920, The Bureau of Reclamation announced that a land drawing for 80 units of irrigated land would take place at Torrington on February 28, 1920. For this drawing, Ferd Zimmerer had to register by number. The numbers were to be put in a sealed envelope, placed in a churn and mixed up. The first number drawn for each unit was to be the successful applicant for that unit and had the right to file on the land or unit. Ferd had to show a certified copy of his honorable discharge. He was footloose and fancy-free so he decided to enter the drawing—he was a winner! It was a homestead near Veteran, Wyoming. On June 6, 1927, it was his lucky day and he felt very fortunate. It was called Farm Unit C which contained 120 acres on the Cherry Creek lateral. Ferd was required to live on this land for three years, minus each year that he spent in the military. Seven months of each year had to be spent on his land,



Ferd Zimmerer and his sister, Almeda Blackman (Zimmerer) Anthony, pose for a photo in Lexington, Nebraska in 1898.



Marion Linville took this photo of her friends at the University of Wyoming in Laramie.

improvements made and half of the land had to be plowed. So Ferd moved to Wyoming and farmed this land.

Marion Perle Linville was born in Ute, Iowa. When she was four years old, her family moved to Sumner, Nebraska. She graduated from Sumner High School. Then she continued her education at Kearney State College and graduated from the University of Wyoming. Next she taught in Nebraska and later in Yoder, Wyoming. Marion moved to Yoder to teach high school Latin, algebra and other math classes. She also had the duty of the girls high school basketball coach. Ferd met this young school teacher, Marion, fell in love and they were united in marriage

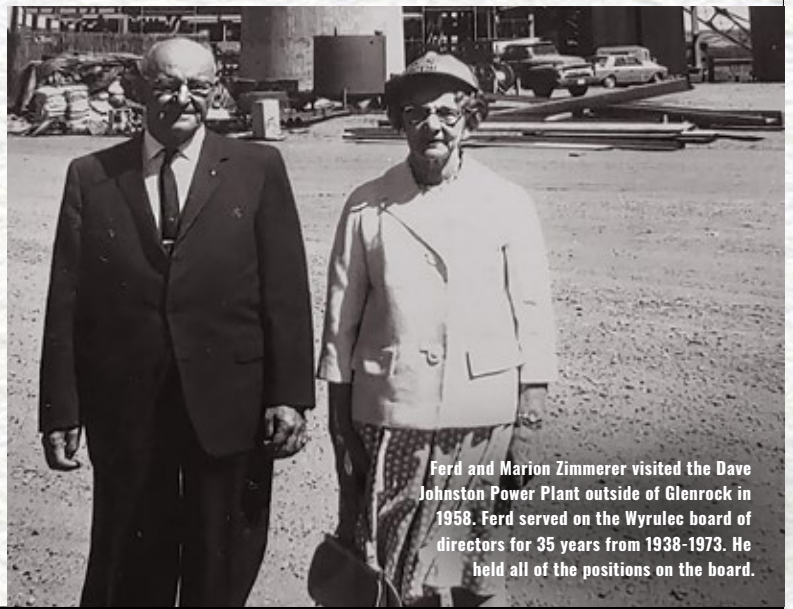
on July 11, 1928 at Lexington, Nebraska. From there, they bought a homestead seven miles southeast of Huntley, Wyoming where they farmed and raised cattle. By 1945, they saved enough money to buy stock in the Farmers State Bank at Jay Em, Wyoming. When the bank was moved to Torrington, the name was changed to First National Bank. Both Ferd and Marion were active in the Presbyterian Church, on the First National Bank of board of directors and on the Huntley High School board. **Ferd served on the Wyrulec board of directors for 35 years from 1938 through 1973.** In addition, he served 27 years on the Goshen County Weed and Pest Control board.

to accomplish a legacy of success. The couple faced hardships, disappointments and difficult situations, but they had strength and faith to go on. As a result, the ownership of land, a teaching position, camping, hiking, hunting and fishing opportunities brought them from Nebraska to Wyoming. In other words, they were willing to take a risk and leave the security of family, friends and familiar surroundings. In conclusion, they found home sweet home and brought their heritage to Wyoming. Five generations later, the Zimmerer family still live in Wyoming. We are proud Wyomingites. Janet Reisig, Bruce, David and Don Zimmerer are the grandchildren of Ferd and Marion Zimmerer. Ferd and Marion Zimmerer made a difference in our lives because of their encouraging words, understanding and suggestions. Our grandparents were a blessing in our lives.



Opal Falk, left, and Marion Linville in front of the place where they lived when they taught school in Yoder. Marion later married Ferd Zimmerer.

Ferd and Marion came to Wyoming by themselves. They were adventurous, courageous and determined



Ferd and Marion Zimmerer visited the Dave Johnston Power Plant outside of Glenrock in 1958. Ferd served on the Wyrulec board of directors for 35 years from 1938-1973. He held all of the positions on the board.

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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01



02



03



05

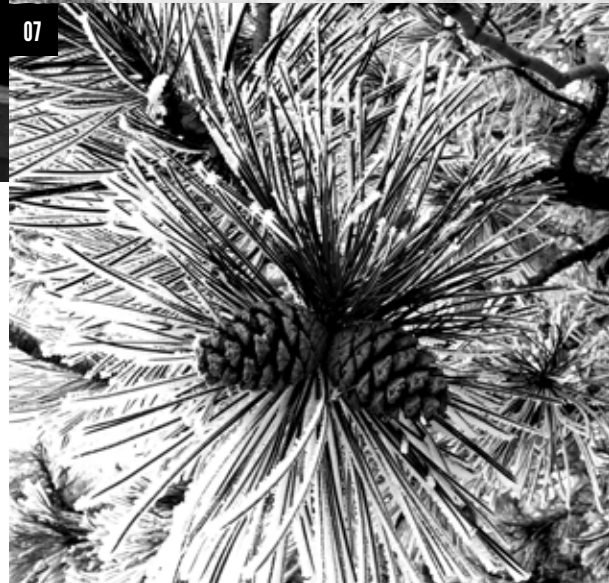
- 01** | Light at the end of the tunnel,
Marcia Walker, Powell
- 02** | Bypass canal along Laramie River,
James Alsop, Laramie
- 03** | Clouds and Uinta Mountains,
Butch Moretti, Lyman
- 04** | Wyoming wild horses,
Lacy Boyles, Lyman
- 05** | Catwalk,
Amy Payton, Buffalo
- 06** | Out of the basket,
Kara Badura, Riverton
- 07** | Nature's old-time beauty,
Sandy Pokorney, Gillette



06



04



07

JUST PICTURE IT

THIS MONTH:

BLACK & WHITE

MAY (DUE APR 15):

TRANSPORTATION



08



09



10



11

08 | Mystic,
Sandra Price, Wheatland

09 | Axel,
Lori Archer, Gillette

10 | Sammy in the Sinks,
Tristan Gabel, Lander

11 | Enjoying fireworks,
Judy Cramer, Thermopolis

12 | Happy Birthday!
Saralynn Brandt, Rozet

13 | Social distancing on Jackson Lake,
Barb Ridgway, Aladdin

14 | Memories of times gone by,
Rhonda Schmeltzer, Worland



12



13



14



15



16



17

15 | Seven super sledders,
Amber Greer, Hyattville

16 | Storm,
Charles Dirks, Buffalo

17 | Southeast Wyoming windmill,
Elgin Cook, Burlington

18 | Broken down corral fence,
Carole Martinez, Kaycee

19 | Starlight,
Jan Barnett, Greybull

20 | Dinnertime in Deaver,
Vicki Olson, Powell

18



19

20

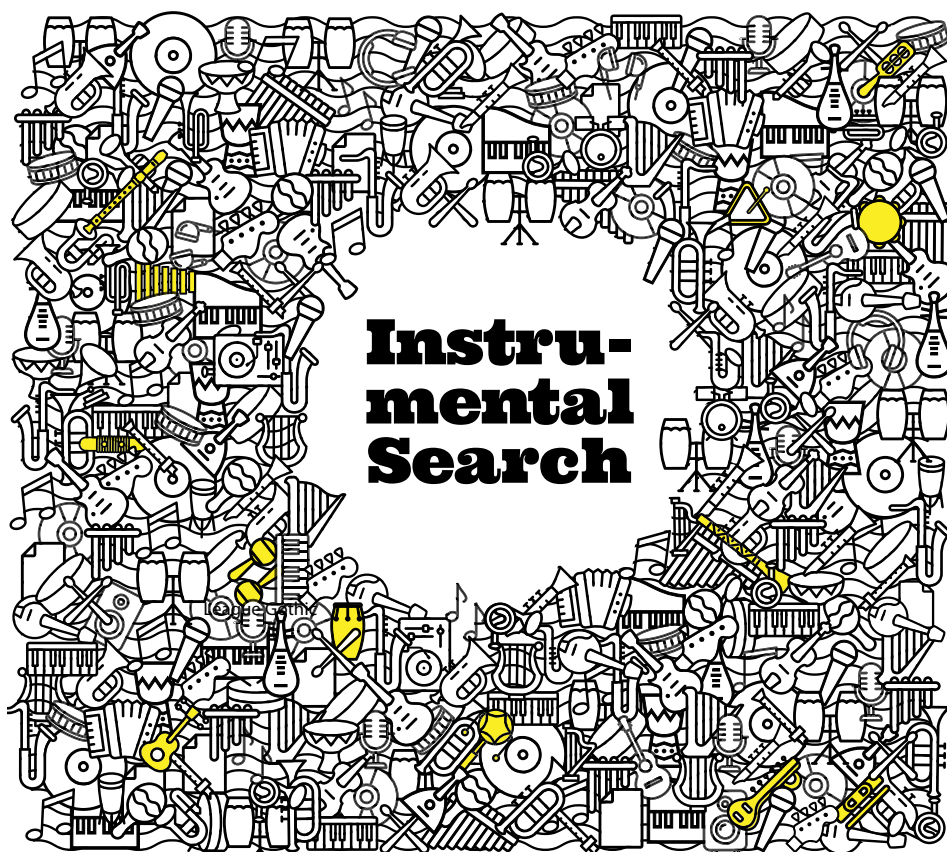


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Instrumental Search



Conga



Jingle sistrum



Maracas



Pellet drum



Claves

SCORING:

9-13:

First chair

5-8:

Needs practice

1-4:

Missed class

PUZZLE ON PAGE 25



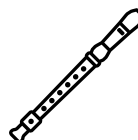
Xylophone



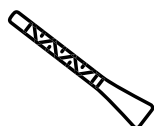
Ukelele



Sitar



Recorder



Didgeridoo



Triangle



Tambourine



Guiro

DON'T LET WINTER WEATHER STOP YOU IN YOUR TRACKS.

Sign up today for the Wyoming Travel Authorization Program (W-TAP). The program permits motorists to drive on sections of closed roads when authorities judge it is safe to do so.

VISIT [HTTPS://WYOROAD.INFO/](https://wyoroad.info/) AND CLICK ON THE W-TAP LOGO



Wills, Trusts & Probate

Land Use

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Attorneys At Law

WHAT'S HAPPENING REGIONAL MAP



01 | SOUTHEAST



CHUGWATER ONGOING

Live Music: Buffet closed, music venue open for Thursday night jam session and weekend performances. Apr 2 Justin Beasley, Apr 3 Travis & Colby Geile, Apr 9 Thin Smoke, Apr 10 Will Rogers, Apr 16 Rick Flohr, Apr 17 Brian Collins. Stampede Saloon & Eatery, info 307-422-3200, stampedefun@aol.com.



DOUGLAS APRIL 16-22

Platte River Photography Show: Grand opening 5-7p Apr 16, show 11a-6p Apr 17-22. Entries accepted until Apr 10, entry fee, cash prizes for winners. 206 N. 6th St, info 307-358-2000.

GUERNSEY FOURTH SUNDAYS

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

MEDICINE BOW FOURTH TUESDAYS **Bingo:** 7p, Community Hall, info 307-760-8402.

SARATOGA ONGOING **Saratoga Museum:** Tue-Sat 10a-2p info 307-326-5511, saratoga-museum.com.

02 | NORTHEAST

GILLETTE

ONGOING

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

HULETT

ONGOING

Hulett Museum and Art Gallery: 8a-4p Mon-Fri, free, info 307-467-5292.

MOORCROFT

ONGOING

Senior Center Events: Coffee and rolls 9a Wed. Toenail clinic 9a fourth Thu, dinner 6p fourth Thu, info 307-756-9550.

NEWCASTLE

FRIDAYS

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

SHERIDAN

APRIL 20, 21

Banff Mountain Film Festival: 6:30p, WYO Performing Arts & Education Center, info 307-672-9084, wyotheater.com.

APRIL 29

National Theatre Live, Cyrano De Bergerac: 6:30p, WYO Performing Arts & Education Center, \$16, \$10 students, info 307-672-9084, wyotheater.com.

SUNDANCE

APRIL 3, 10, 17

Wellness Blood Draw: 7-10a, Sundance School Central Office, 122 Hwy 585, info 307-283-3501.



APRIL 3, 10, 17

Fundraising Breakfast: To benefit Sundance Senior Citizen Center, 7-10:30a, 220 N 2nd St, info 307-283-1711.

FEATURED EVENT



SWIFT FOX ECOLOGY, DISTRIBUTION AND TRENDS IN WYOMING

APRIL 22 ★ 7P

Beginning in 2010, the Wyoming Game and Fish Department (WGF) started using remote cameras to monitor swift foxes throughout the state. Join WGF Nongame Mammal Biologist Nichole Bjornlie to learn more about swift fox ecology, history in Wyoming and recent work conducted by WGF on this charismatic species.

Free, info 307-455-2284.

VIRTUAL PRESENTATION AT DUBOIS MUSEUM

NORTHWEST

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

UPTON

APRIL 3

Easter Egg Hunt: 1p Upton City Park, info, 307-468-2372.

APRIL 14

Chicken and Noodles Dinner: Fundraiser for and at Upton Senior Center, 5-7p, \$8, \$5 children, info 307-468-2587 or 307-468-9262.

03 | NORTHWEST

DUBOIS

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.



ONGOING

Library Activities: Storytime (birth-5) 10:30a Fri; **Lego Duplo Club** for toddlers and preschoolers 11a Fri; **Book Fair** second Sat; **Lego Club** (grades K-5) 3:30p April 21. Dubois Public Library, info 307-455-2992.

ONGOING

Guided Bighorn Sheep Tour: Make a reservation today for a tour with optional hiking and bag lunches. Binoculars and transportation included. National Bighorn Sheep Center, 10 Bighorn Lane. Group rates available, info 307-455-3429, Bighorn.org.

LANDER

APRIL 16

Lander Art Center Member's Show: Featuring all new work by local area artists. Meet the artists 4-6p, show on display during center hours starting Apr 17. Lander Art Center, free, info 307-332-5772, landerartcenter.com.



APRIL 24

Sheep Shearing Day: Explore the history of the sheep industry in Wind River Country. Witness sheep shearing, pet sheep, make crafts from sheep's wool, buy products made from sheep's wool and lots more. 1-3p, Pioneer Museum, free, info 307-332-3339.

ONGOING

Native Americans of Wyoming's Wind River Country: Paintings by Joseph Scheuerle include members of the Shoshone and Arapaho from the Wind River Reservation. On loan by the Montana Historical Society. On display through the fall of 2021. Pioneer Museum, info 307-332-3339, fremontcountymuseums.com/the-lander-museum.

RIVERTON

APRIL 7

Seed Starting with the Riverton Garden Club: Join the Riverton Garden Club as they discuss the basics of planning a garden, starting seeds and caring for plants. 6p, Riverton Museum, free, info 307-856-2665.

APRIL 17

Seed Starting for Children: Join the Riverton Garden Club for activities to help your knowledge of plants and plant care grow! All ages welcome. 2-4p, Riverton Museum, \$5, reservations encouraged, info 307-856-2665.

WEDNESDAYS

Library Events: PreK Tales & Tunes (age 3-5) 10:30a, **Starlight Storytime** (birth-5) 5:30p, **Toddler Move & Groove** (birth-2) 10:30a. Riverton Branch Library, free, info 307-856-3556 ext 2140.

WEDNESDAYS

Acoustic Music Jam: Join in or listen as musicians and dancers perform. 6:30-8:30p, Holiday Inn Convention Center, free, info 307-856-8100.



Send complete information by
APRIL 15!

We are updating the event dates for the What's Happening section. Please send events occurring in June.

Also, 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] 286-8140

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

💻 wyomingrea.org/wren-submissions



SHOSHONI

APRIL 17

Ice Races at Boysen State Park: Adult and youth motorcycle races when lake ice conditions permit. There will be concessions but no warming hut, leashed dogs ok. Registration 8-9:30a, races end 3p. Directions: From Hwy. 26 /789 turn north on Bass Lake Road, turn right on Loop One Road to Fremont Bay. State Park day-use fees: \$4 per resident vehicle, or \$6 non-resident vehicle. Pay station on Loop One Road. Info 307-851-6291, worra.org.

04 | SOUTHWEST

MOUNTAIN VIEW

SECOND WEDNESDAYS

Chamber of Commerce Community Luncheon: For business owners and individuals alike. \$15/plate, noon, Mountain View Town Hall, RSVP bvchamber@bvca.net, 307-787-6378.



ONGOING

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



No Stomach for Flying

Early on in my career at Carbon Power & Light (CP&L), a rural electric cooperative headquartered in Saratoga, I worked as a journeyman lineman on the Saratoga crew. A considerable amount of CP&L's service area encompasses the Sierra Madre and Medicine Bow mountain ranges. During the winter months with their extreme snow and weather conditions, maintaining the power lines in these areas is difficult at best.

One of the worst sections of power line at that time was a single phase overhead line that originated near the town of Encampment and wound its way southwest and up through the national forest, along the Continental Divide and ending up at Hog Park Reservoir. Prior to the recent widening of the right of way for this power line due to the bark beetle infestation, the original right of way consisted of a 30-foot cleared space through the timber. During the winter months it always seemed like Mother Nature took great pleasure in having a

few of her tallest pine trees fall across the right of way, in the most difficult terrain, and tear down the power line conductors.

I can still remember on several winter days, the groan that went around the table in the lineman's break room,

where we gathered to get our work assignments for the day, when the foreman would announce, "Hog Park is out of power." Now, snowmobiles were popular at this time, but the snowmobiles

of that period were not the powder snow-eating machines of today. During this period CP&L utilized a vintage tracked vehicle which we called the "Sno Cat" (actually it was called a lot of other not-

so-endearing names as well, which I won't mention) to access these snowbound areas. The Sno Cat's claim to fame was its perverse propensity to find new ways to break down and leave the two-man crew stranded. As one of the younger linemen on the line crew at that time, I'd had the good fortune (a.k.a. misfortune) to be selected as one of the two-man crew that would venture into the mountains to locate and repair the damaged power line. We'd load the Sno Cat up with our climbing tools, miscellaneous items for line repair, chainsaws, snowshoes, extra



**I was feverishly
thinking of the one and
only other experience
I'd had in a small plane**

warm clothes and a larger than normal lunch (because if—*when*—you broke down, you might be there for a while).

At one point a decision was made, that prior to the Sno Cat venturing out and patrolling miles of difficult terrain to locate the problem, we'd secure the services of a pilot and small plane from the Saratoga airport, to fly the power line route up through the mountains to pinpoint the location of the damaged power line and radio its location back to the ground crew who was waiting to embark on their adventure in the "trustworthy" Sno Cat. On one particular morning, I was selected to be the one who would accompany the pilot during the scouting flight. Initially I was relieved that on that day I wouldn't have to face another Sno Cat odyssey, but as I pulled into the airport parking lot I was feverishly

thinking of the one and only other experience I'd had in a small plane and of the growing dread associated with the fact I'd eaten a large breakfast that morning. The pilot, whom we will call Harvey, motioned me over to the plane, noted my anxiety and asked if I'd ever flown in a small plane before. Upon my answer of "once" I noted the grin on Harvey's face grow a little bit.

About that time another young man showed up and Harvey introduced him to me as someone who was interested in taking flying lessons and since the plane was a four-seater, would I mind if the future pilot rode along? I agreed, thinking to myself, "what could one more witness to me getting sick on the plane possibly hurt?"

Soon we were in the air and making our way out of the Platte River Valley and over the foothills of the Sierra Madre range where we started to pick up a little turbulence. At this juncture Harvey announced that the plane's speed was such that we would have to drop the landing gear to get some drag and slow the plane down in order to be better able to patrol the power line route. None of this made me nervous of course, especially when I saw Harvey's grin grow a little more.

At first Harvey cocked the plane at an angle where he could see the power line route out of his side of the plane, as the route changed he'd quickly announce, "on your side" and he'd tilt the plane my way so I could see. Just below me the power line and the pines were a blur as we made our way up the mountain. As we topped out Harvey asked through his ever-growing grin, "See anything?"

Not wanting to admit I'd had my eyes closed most of the time I managed to mumble out a faint, "I'm not sure,"

which Harvey answered by sharply banking the plane and dive bombing again down the canyon saying, "Well let's look at it again ... on your side!" This process continued as we worked our way along the mountains, over the power line route and it wasn't long after a few of those "your sides," that I began wishing that I'd not eaten breakfast, or dinner the night before or anything at all that week!

Between the turbulence and the "your sides" I was sure that my early morning eggs and bacon were drawing straws to see who got out first. Finally, and thankfully on one of those "your side" rolls I noted a large pine tree that had fallen onto the power line. After radioing the location to the Sno Cat crew below we began to make our way out of the mountains and into the calmer air over the valley. At this juncture I managed to glance back at our passenger who I'd almost forgot was with us and noted that his watery and slightly bulging eyes complimented his pale green skin color. I looked over at Harvey and he looked at me and yup you guessed it ... he just grinned.

I'm not sure if the future pilot ever took any flying lessons after that ... especially from Harvey. As for me the next time I heard the foreman utter the words, "Hog Park is out of power," I was tossing my gear in the back of the Sno Cat! **W**

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

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

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

Gone With the Wind Collector Memorabilia
Plates, Dolls, Music Boxes, Figurines, Christmas Ornaments, Jewelry, and more. Price negotiable. 307-689-6406.

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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 75 years. Herren Bros., Box 187, Harrison NE. 1-308-668-2582.

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.

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

MOSS ROCK—Wyoming Moss Rock. We will buy your moss rock. All types, colors, and sizes are considered; the more moss the better, the more unusual the better. Call Gina for details, 307-761-1838.

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

10 | MISCELLANEOUS

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, 1-888-211-1715.

Tour our goat farm! Goat milk cheese, lotion, soap and lip balm available. Call for details at (307) 467-5852 or email goatgonewild@gmail.com. Hulett, WY.

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To me, it's the best sleep chair I've ever had."**

— J. Fitzgerald, VA

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Genuine Italian Leather
(and new Chestnut color)



Pictured: Italian Leather chair
chestnut color. Chestnut color
also available in Duralux™ fabric

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SPARK YOUR CHILD'S IMAGINATION WITH

SENSORY PLAY



Sensory activities engage brain development by stimulating the senses. Engaging in sensory play can encourage your kid to create stronger connections to the sensory information in his environment, learn what's useful, and filter out what's not.

With this homemade guitar, you can make sensational music together. Rubber bands of different sizes will make different sounds, and they'll sound differently whether they're plucked or strummed. You'll also be able to feel their vibrations, and they will feel differently, depending on how you play with them. And what happens if you tap on the tissue box? There are even more feelings and sounds to explore!

1

SUPPLIES:

Empty tissue box

Rubber bands
(different widths if you have them)

Markers and stickers
for decorating

2

DIRECTIONS:

Decorate your "guitar."

Place the rubber band "strings" so they go over the opening in the box.

Pluck and strum the strings, and sing along! Dancing is always encouraged, too.

★ For more sensory activities to do with your kids, visit wyqualitycounts.org/wren ★

THIS MONTH'S ACTIVITY

MINDFULNESS GLITTER JARS!



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