



▶ FAMILIAR FACES Otto & Tiny Ahlgrim

By JOCELYN ROWLEY
Editorial@lhvc.com

That's a wrap

Arlene "Tiny" Ahlgrim (née Obrecht) can recall with perfect clarity the day in the late 1950s when the dashing 18-year old Otto Ahlgrim showed up at her family's north Longmont farm to ask her out to the movies. She was helping her father tend to the cows, and, dressed in overalls and boots, definitely not in a state to go out on the town. But Ahlgrim was, and his stylish outfit struck an incongruous note in the Obrecht's muddy barn.

"He had on a white shirt, white pants, and white shoes," said Tiny, then a student at Mead High school, which closed in 1961 and reopened in 2009. "You don't just go into a cow pen looking like that,

but he had a pack of cigarettes rolled up in his sleeve."

While Otto looked "pretty good" in Tiny's estimation, he came off poorly in her protective father's. The Obrecht patriarch denied permission for the date, and then used some off-color language to express his suspicion of the young man's intentions.

"I asked 'Dad, why don't you like Otto?,' and my dad said 'He's got the same d*** look on his face that I had with your mother'."

Ahlgrim was willing to be patient for the captivating brunette he first met at Longmont's Roll-a-Rena, so he kept going back to the Obrecht farm and "nearly broke my neck, trying to get close to her." Finally, after a couple of years and some chaperoned dates, Tiny's father consented to the match, and the two lovebirds have been more

or less inseparable ever since.

"We just love and enjoy each other so much," Tiny said. "We enjoy spending time together on trips, working together, and all the things like that."

Now, more than six decades later, Tiny and Otto Ahlgrim are preparing to ease into retirement together. On Feb. 26, they completed their final route as carriers for the Left Hand Valley Courier, a part-time job they've held since the paper's inception in 1997.

"Otto and Tiny are an institution with the Courier," managing editor and co-owner Biff Warren said. "For 23 years they delivered the newspaper, and were the face of the paper to so many people on their route. They have been simply indispensable, covering other routes as well when needed."

Continued on Page 8



Photo by Vicki Maurer

Otto and Tiny Ahlgrim are retiring after 23 years of delivering the Left Hand Valley Courier.

Local author presents book and message of kindness at Inkberry



Courtesy Photo

Murphy the three-legged dog served as inspiration for Niwot-based author Michelle Pendergrass' new book "Some dogs are different," which seeks to demystify physical challenges and celebrate differences.

By HANNAH STEWART
Editorial@lhvc.com

Confused faces and the question "What's wrong with your dog?" follow Michelle Pendergrass and her three-legged pooch Murphy seemingly wherever they go.

In 2014, after breaking his leg another time, Pendergrass and her family decided to alleviate his pain and amputate Murphy's leg. "He won't be the same," veterinarians told them, and the vet was right--Murphy was faster than ever and found a new passion for life. Even so, fielding the constant questions about Murphy and his missing limb was tiring.

Continued on Page 4

24th annual Soup, Soup and More community dinner

By ABBY SCOTT
Editorial@lhvc.com

In the midst of a busy life, it's tempting to overlook the need for good conversation and a home-cooked meal. We spend time speeding through the work and school week just to make it to the weekend. We savor quick moments shared with family and friends, but downtime never really lasts long before the next errand, chore, or to-do list item calls our names. In this modern society, we grow isolated in our comforts, choosing to pass time connecting through screens instead of face to face. We forget that true connection is found in unplugging and powering down, in looking up instead

of looking through, in sharing laughter and love and a good bowl of soup.

This weekend, Niwot and Gunbarrel residents have the chance to reconnect once again with our vibrant, diverse community. For the past 23 years, the Niwot United Methodist Church has opened its doors to area residents for an evening of delicious food and great conversation by hosting its Soup, Soup and More community dinner.

Saturday, March 7 from 4 - 7 p.m., the highly-anticipated dinner will once again draw a crowd. One of the dinner's organizers, Janet Gates, said, "Part of the fun is that you have

Continued on Page 7

Community Calendar

Niwot United Methodist Church 7405 Lookout Rd (Gunbarrel)
303-530-0241 www.niwotumc.org

Soup, Soup & More! Saturday, March 7, 4-7:00 pm

All you can eat buffet of soups,
chowders, bread, salad, desserts.

Admission is free, donations are welcome.

Proceeds go to Boulder Attention Homes

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FIRST FRIDAY ART WALK
Niwot's March First Friday Art Walk takes place on 2nd Avenue and in Cottonwood Square on Friday, March 7, from 6 to 9 p.m. with live music on the streets.

ALZHEIMER'S SUPPORT GROUP
Alzheimer's Association Dementia Caregiver Support Group meets on the first Wednesday of each month from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the Niwot United Methodist Church (7405 Lookout Road). This free service is for family members and friends who care for and care about people with Alzheimer's Disease and other forms of dementia.

SOUP FUNDRAISER
Niwot United Methodist Church (7405 Lookout Road) is holding the 23rd annual Soup, Soup and More fundraiser on Saturday, March 7, from 4 to 7 p.m. Come enjoy your fill of homemade soup, stew, chili, or chowder and make a donation for a good cause. Proceeds will benefit Boulder Attention Homes, an organization for youth experiencing homelessness.

SAND CREEK MASSACRE SITE VISIT
The Niwot United Methodist Church, in conjunction with Cottonwood Square, the Niwot Community Association, the Niwot Business Association, the Rotary Club of Niwot, the Niwot Cultural Arts Association, the Left Hand Grange, and the Niwot Historical Society, are sponsoring a trip to the site where Chief Niwot was mortally wounded in 1864. Registrants for the day trip, scheduled for April 25 (8 a.m. to 6 p.m.), have filled one bus, and reservations for a second bus are now being taken. Register by making a check for \$30 payable to the Niwot UMC, and providing an email and telephone number. Registrations can be mailed to Biff Warren at P.O. Box 610, Niwot, CO 80544 or dropped off at the law office of Warren, Carlson & Moore, LLP, in Cottonwood Square.

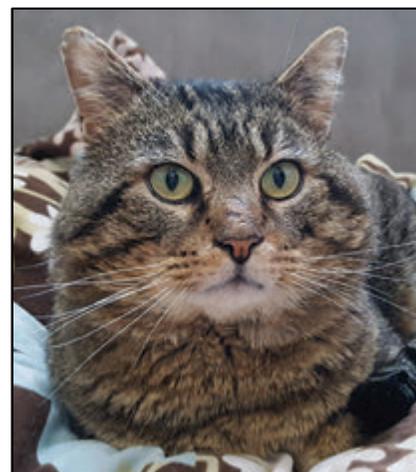
4-H CARNIVAL
The 2020 Boulder County 4-H Carnival will be held Saturday, March 14, from 11 a.m.-6 p.m. at the Exhibit Building, Boulder County Fairgrounds. This year's theme is Candyland and more than 20 4-H clubs from Boulder County will

be on hand, hosting carnival games and selling food. There will also be a silent auction.

OUR CENTER FUNDRAISER
The 17th Annual Empty Bowls fundraiser for the Our Center food program is Saturday, March 14, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Rocky Mountain Christian Church in Niwot (9447 Niwot Rd.) Doors open at 10:30 for bowl selection and auction. Tickets are \$20 in advance or \$25 at the door. For more information or to volunteer, visit www.ourcenter.org/emptybowls/.

PARENT EDUCATION EVENT
Boulder Country Day School (4820 Nautilus Court N, Boulder) is hosting "Lessons in Executive Function through Movement," a presentation by Brandon Slade on March 19, from 6:30 - 8 p.m. Slade is the founder and president of Stride Learning, and a former BVSD special education teacher. Admission is free. For more information and to register, visit bouldercountryday.org/programs/parent-education-series.

COMMUNITY PET SPOTLIGHT



This very sweet and gentle four-year-old boy will make a delightful companion. Tag Along gets along well with other kitties as well as dogs and loves quiet time with his favorite people. Come in for a visit with this handsome boy today. **Tag Along is available for adoption at the Longmont Humane Society.**

We would love to feature your pets in our spotlight. Please email your photos and captions Editorial@lhvc.com.

Stamp out the winter doldrums with the Shop Niwot Love Niwot Passport



File Photo

Fill your Shop Niwot Love Niwot Passport in participating businesses in Niwot's Cottonwood Square to earn a chance for some "great Niwot prizes."

By ABBY SCOTT
Editorial@lhvc.com

A big part of Niwot's charm lies in its unique retail and dining options, which consistently deliver an experience unlike any other in Boulder County. An oasis amidst the large neighboring cities of Boulder and Longmont, Niwot provides a tranquil haven for visitors who want to slow down and enjoy some retail or gourmet therapy at a relaxed pace. To help spread the word about the town's special offerings, and just in time for spring, the Niwot Business Association has launched the Shop Niwot Love Niwot Passport event, an incentive program that rewards shoppers and diners for spending money in the local restaurants and shops. Starting Feb. 29, patrons can pick up a free passport and start collecting stamps to earn a shot at some "great Niwot prizes."

"I hope that the passport will really encourage people to shop and dine in Niwot and to really discover or rediscover just how much our downtown has to offer," Catherine McHale, Niwot Economic Development Director said, explaining the intent behind the new promotion. "We have great restaurants of all types, groceries, gifts, jewelry, homewares, apparel, etc. We hope that people will use the passport

to make the most of all of our stores and restaurants, and have the chance to win great prizes while they do!"

Passports are available at any of the 31 participating businesses, which include Inberry Books, Niwot Tavern, and Lefty's Gourmet Pizza, to name a few. Each passport contains 10 spaces, and patrons get a stamp for every \$10 they spend on food or retail purchases (services are not eligible).

Fill up the five dining and five retail slots, then drop your full shopping passport off at Osmosis Gallery or

Niwot Market. Completed passports will then be entered into a drawing for one of 12 prizes, ranging from \$200 vouchers to various Niwot businesses, to gift baskets, antique crystals from Wise Buys antiques, and jewelry from Little Bird. Bootstrap Brewing, Niwot Jewelry, Niwot Tavern, Fly Away Home, and Lucky Pie have all contributed various monetary gift cards to the raffle. The raffle will be held during the first week of May, and winners will be notified by May 10.

Once a passport is filled up, shoppers can pick up another to fill up as they continue to make retail purchases. There's no limit to how many passports shoppers can fill up so shop till you drop with this fun booklet. Earn an extra entry by making a purchase of \$100 or more at any of the participating retailers. This hefty purchase earns passport holders an "Extra Niwot Love" sticker and increases their odds to win prizes in the raffle. All completed passports are due by April 30 and winners will be notified by May 10.

The passport program is sponsored by the NBA and the Niwot Local Improve-

ment District (LID). For more information and a complete list of participating business-

es, visit www.niwot.com/passport.



File Photo

More than 30 businesses are participating in the Shop Niwot Love Niwot Passport event, which rewards patrons for shopping or dining at local establishments.

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PENDERGRASS

Continued from Page 1

"It's sad, but even adults, we need to learn that everybody's got a difference," said Pendergrass. She explained that she and her family have learned so much from their beloved pup--that being different doesn't mean the end of the world. She argues that many times, differences are superficial, and instead wants to advocate for inclusion.

The idea for spreading this message in book form came to

her during her son's soccer game. She brought Murphy along with her and was asked about his leg. This time, it clicked, so, combining her life-long love of dogs and her appreciation for writing, she decided to write a book about Murphy and other special dogs she knew.

"I goofed around trying to draw the pictures and used this website called storyjumper, which is for kids to write books," Pendergrass explained. With the help of her kids' preschool teacher, a graphic designer, and a local publisher, about a year after that

inspirational game, Pendergrass had her book and was ready to share it with the community.

She's very grateful for the positive reception she's had for Some Dogs are Different, "I've been in tears many mornings reading messages from people [who like the book]." In fact, it was community members' love of the book that lead to Pendergrass presenting at Inkberry Books on Sunday.

Pendergrass does all the shipping for her story, and one day while in the Niwot Post Office, she met Gene Hayworth who enthusiastically invited her to do a reading.

"It [the reading] was great, it was full, and Murphy came with--that's my favorite part of reading, to have kids see Murphy." The event was attended by about 50 local residents who were attentive to her story; afterward,

they were able to receive a signed copy of the book with a paw print stamp of the three-legged dog Murphy, and added, "Lets celebrate our differences because we all belong."

In the future, Pendergrass hopes to write more books that explore other life topics, while still using dogs as the way to discuss them. As she puts it, Some Dogs are Different and books like it are great tools for harder conversations, especially with kids, and using dogs to demonstrate it makes it easier to confront.

"If we can teach kids [about differences] at a younger age, future generations will be a little more accepting," said Pendergrass. "Thank you [to the community] for being so accepting of the book."

You can keep up to date with Pendergrass, Murphy and his friends at [somedogsaredifferent.com](https://www.somedogsaredifferent.com) or follow them on Instagram at [@some_dogs_are_different](https://www.instagram.com/some_dogs_are_different).



Photo by Karen Copperberg

Niwot-based author Michelle Pendergrass with Murphy, the three-legged inspiration for her children's book "Some dogs are different," which seeks to demystify physical challenges and celebrate differences.

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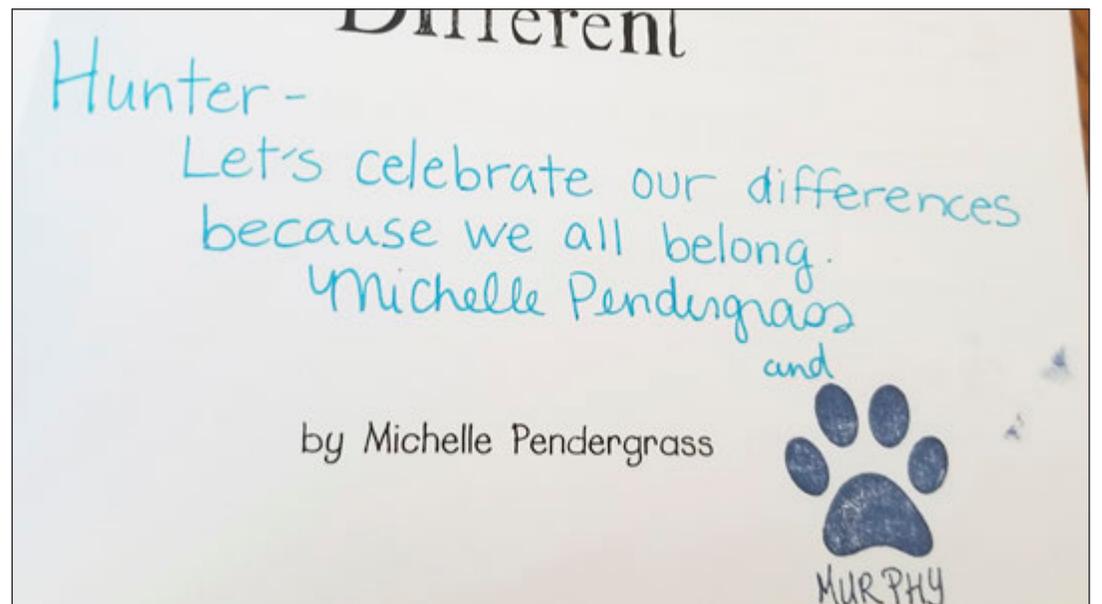


Photo by Karen Copperberg

Murphy and Pendergrass signed copies of her book following her talk at Inkberry Books on March 1. handicapped dogs.

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Photo by Karen Copperberg

Flanked by sons Henry and Sam, along with husband Drew and dog Murphy, local author Michelle Pendergrass, read from her children's book, Some Dogs are Different, at Inkberry books on Sunday March 1. The rapt audience of about 50 locals were in for a treat while she shared her stories of different handicapped dogs.

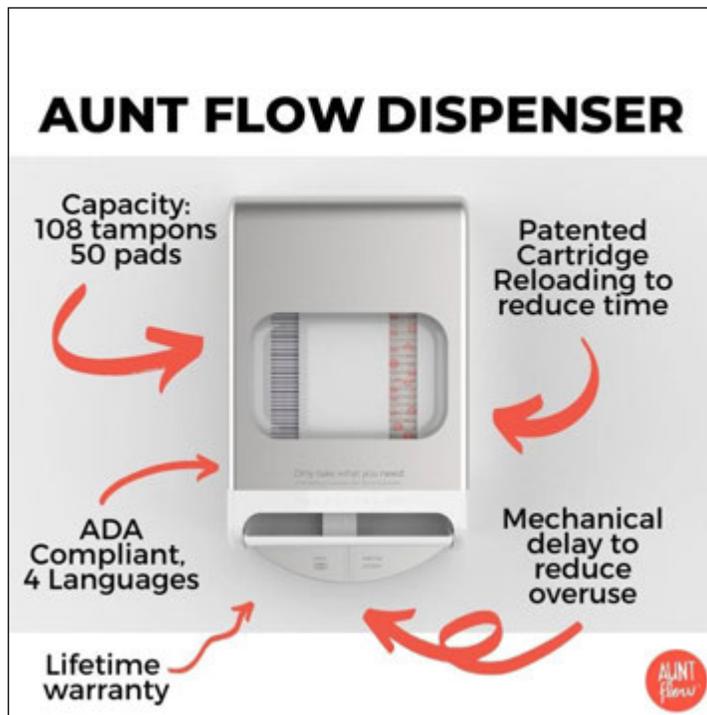
Free feminine products debated at local schools

By HANNAH STEWART
Editorial@lhvc.com

On Feb. 26, Scotland made global history by passing the Period Products (Free Provision) Scotland Bill, officially making tampons and sanitary pads freely available to women in public places. There was no parliamentary opposition to this historic act, making it a “milestone moment for normalising menstruation in Scotland and sending out that real signal to people in this country about how seriously parliament takes gender equality,” according to its creator, Monica Lennon.

In the United States, where an average woman is estimated to spend \$6,360 on feminine products in her lifetime between the ages of 12-52, institutional support like Scotland’s is more of a dream than reality. Even though many local public spaces offer free feminine products in the restrooms—the Pepsi Center, the University of Colorado Boulder, and others—that isn’t the case in the St. Vrain Valley School District, and a number of teachers and students are upset about the lack of accessibility.

To some degree, having these products is personal responsibility, and as any girl will tell you, she has her preferences. But, just about every woman has been caught off guard at some point in her life, and, in those moments, quick access to these products is critical. Ease of access is arguably even more crucial to middle and high school-aged girls, as a surprise menstrual cycle can mean



Courtesy Photo

“A lot of people assume there are products available, but girls have to jump through unnecessary hoops to take care of a human bodily function,” said Niwot teacher Cassandra Longo. NHS wants to be a leader in equity, and show support for female students. One way students and faculty believe they can provide that is by increasing access to feminine products on campus.

anything from an embarrassing incident, to having to miss class, or even leaving school. In a survey of 100 randomly selected female Niwot High students, 98% of them reported that a lack of menstrual products had resulted in an adverse event during school hours.

This is not to say that there aren’t any free menstrual products available in schools. A number of female teachers said that they keep a few on hand for students, and there are some available in the health office of most schools too. Johnny Terrell, the executive director of student services for SVVSD said, “We believe in ac-

cessibility to products, but upon request.”

But “upon request” can pose challenges as well—there are times when the health office is closed, or it’s on the opposite side of the building, causing a delay and increasing the risk of a negative outcome for the student. One NHS teacher, who asked that her name be withheld, described an incident where a student was caught off guard during a test, but the classroom teacher would not allow her to go to the restroom. After explaining the situation and its urgency, she was finally allowed to leave, but she had to walk through the whole school to get to the administrative

offices.

Upon arrival, she found the health office closed, and a male administrator was the only person with a key—at this point, the student unfortunately bled through her pants and had to call a parent to pick her up. Not only is this story embarrassing, but it’s a reality for many female students. To help prevent situations like this, there has been a recent push at Niwot High School to install free tampon and pad dispensers in the bathrooms.

With their installation, teachers hope to improve the overall learning environment for their students. Said Cassandra Longo, a literacy teacher, “We are frustrated and feel that it’s a discrimination issue against women. We don’t require students to go to the nurse to get toilet paper, it seems discriminatory to me to [block access to girls] for bodily functions. It’s something students want, and not just at this school.”

Furthermore, a lack of easy access affects more than just a student’s potential social standing or sense of self. A lack of access to these products can affect a student’s ability to learn. In 2017, a pilot program to provide free products in New York City schools showed a 2.4% attendance increase after one month alone.

The frustration around this issue does not come merely from a lack of access, it also comes from a lack of communication about the topic.

“I just wish there would be more transparency and a willingness to have a real conversation about it, but it seems like we just keep being pushed aside,”

said NHS math teacher Michelle Rickley.

There have been a variety of conflicting claims as to why there are no free products in schools. Some reports indicate that the district vetoed installation, while others say that the district approved installation, but individual schools are blocking access, whether over concerns about costs, or additional burden on custodial staff. As for the SVVSD, Terrell said that there were also concerns about students misusing products and that tampons in particular are a parent-student decision.

While all these concerns may have some validity to them, students and teachers have found potential solutions for them. Student council, for example, volunteered to take initiative for the machines. Additionally, the machines in question provide both tampons and sanitary pads, but they also have a time release mechanism, so that over-consumption is limited.

Students and teachers interviewed cited equity as their main concern—they want NHS to be a leader in protecting their students’ rights, and those of women more broadly. They maintain that school support, even in forms such as access to sanitary products, is crucial. The support of this initiative appears to be widespread and inclusive: even male teachers and students support it.

One student said, “As a male, it doesn’t affect me but anything we can do to somewhat help them [our female students] is really important in the end and I support it.”

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Spring brings new things



Photo by Ivan Kmit @123rf.com

“Spring is nearing, and gardeners are getting ready.”

By Carol O'Meara
Colorado State University Extension
Boulder County

A crocus is trying to bloom in a friend's yard, despite frigid days and snow squalls. She's enchanted by the little plant's effort and, like any gardener at this time of year, is watching its progress with excitement. She's not alone in her countdown to spring; many

gardeners are pouncing on the slightest signs of green.

We haven't broken out pom-poms and megaphones to strut and cheer on the flowers we see quite yet – that would just rile up the neighborhood dogs and cause our community to contemplate tranquilizer darts. But the temptation to encourage our gardens to awaken is like an itch under the skin.

Spring is nearing, and gardeners are getting ready. Our community has many approaches to growing and caring for the land, with no two gardens looking alike. Some are tiny, pocket-sized oases of green while others are large enough to be farms.

To meet the needs of as many growing systems as possible, we're bringing changes to this column space by expanding the voices contributing their knowledge and wisdom to our

community. Our Colorado State University office is staffed by incredibly talented people who, together, have a lot of knowledge we can share. I'll be sharing it with three colleagues who look at using and conserving our land from different perspectives.

Sharon Bokan, our Small Acreage Coordinator, is a wealth of information on bigger areas, homesteading topics, small livestock and wildlife. Deryn Davidson is our Horticulture Agent with a talent for Landscape Architecture, pollinator issues, and native plants. Adrian Card, our Agriculture Agent, brings expertise in farm issues and growing crops for market in Boulder County. Together, we'll mix up many topics around growing locally and wise use of your land.

Take advantage of Davidson's landscape design savvy by signing up for her Pet Friendly Landscapes class, offered Sat-



Storyblocks

The CSU Extension Boulder County is adding new topics to its monthly column, including small livestock and growing crops for market.

urday, April 4, 9 a.m. to noon at the Boulder County Parks and Open Space headquarters building (5201 St. Vrain Rd., Longmont) Design, plant choices, and discussion of mulches will round out this class on making

a space for both you and your furry friend. Cost for the class is \$25; register online at <https://csuextension-gardening-series.eventbrite.com/>.

For more information on Small Acreage, wildlife, or pasture management, visit Bokan's page at boulder.extension.colostate.edu/natural-resources-wildlife-rural-properties-pasture/. You'll find a wealth of information on issues related to managing small acreage, plus preparing for or recovering from natural disasters. And if you're running a farm, Card's website can help you find links to resources and information on business management, water issues, or managing weeds (boulder.extension.colostate.edu/agriculture/).

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NUMC SOUP

Continued from Page 2

all different soups to choose from. Even if you've been in years past, there's something new in addition to the classic recipes."

The Soup, Soup and More community dinner will provide approximately 20 tasty, warm soups, prepared by

church members. Guests are invited to attend the free event and sample as many soups as they'd like, or take a few bowls of their favorite recipes home. In addition to hearty bowls of broth, salad, dessert, and drinks will also be served. For those looking to recreate some of their favorite recipes, purchase the Soup, Soup and More cookbook, created by the NUMC Women's Group.

Last year's Soup, Soup, and

More was held in the midst of a snow storm and attendees still braved the weather to partake in this lively, welcoming event. Donations are welcome and all proceeds from the event will benefit Boulder Attention Homes. Last year, donations

from the Soup, Soup, and More dinner helped the nonprofit organization complete a 40-unit apartment building for home insecure youth. Boulder Attention Homes continues to assist the county's homeless youth through its many programs.

While the event is soup-centric, it's about so much more than a warm bowl of Carrot Ginger. It's about connecting with community members, and swapping stories and laughter, over a savory bowl of homemade soup.



Courtesy Photo

The Soup, Soup, and More fundraising dinner is coming up at Niwot United Methodist Church

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FAMILIAR FACES

Continued from Page 1

And always with a smile." That's because they so much to smile about, as Otto and Tiny will gladly tell you. The closely supervised romance that blossomed between the teenagers on that north Longmont farm matured into a peaceful, happy marriage, mostly spent in a mid-century ranch in Southmoor Park, purchased in 1966. The Ahlgrims raised two children—Vicki, who has earned laurels of her own around these parts, and Todd, who now lives in Texline, Texas. They are also close to their four grandchildren—Alex, Kirsten, Alan, and Zachariah—and maintain close ties with extended family, whom they see often. Over the years, the pair has also traveled widely, volunteered for a number of worthy causes, and cultivated a sizable social circle of friends, many of whom they have known since their earliest days together.

"It's been a wonderful life," Tiny said.

"Yes, we've been blessed," Otto added. "Very blessed."

The Ahlgrims admitted that their new lives of lei-

sure may take some getting used to, but they are looking forward to spending their golden years off the clock. Both spent most of their lives working, when they weren't taking care of their kid or grandkids. Otto, who is nearly 81, spent most of his career as a security officer at the Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant in Arvada. In May 1969, he was one of the first responders on the scene of a major fire in the plutonium processing facility, an event he still has difficulty talking about without becoming emotional.

"One of my best friends and I went in there together. We looked at each other and I told him, 'We've got to have God on our side.' Neither one of us thought we were going to come out of that building.

"There were 33 of us who fought that fire that night," he continued. "If we hadn't contained it to that building, Arvada, Westminster, and Broomfield would not be here today. It would have been our Chernobyl."

Otto retired from Rocky Flats after 31 years of service, but not before the plant was raided by officials from the FBI and Department of Energy over unsafe working conditions and violations of

environmental laws. Otto has since developed a myriad of health problems linked to his time there, most worryingly, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), which requires oxygen therapy. He has also been plagued by repeated bouts of skin cancer and degenerating joints. He eventually filed suit with the Department of Labor, and has had Tiny declared his full-time caretaker.

"We were lied to so much about working out there," he said, a hint of bitterness in his voice. "And a lot of us are paying for it now."

Tiny, who recently turned 79, has held a wide range of jobs, including seven years as a bus driver for St. Vrain Valley schools and a stint as a clerk for Longmont Police Department. On special occasions, she decorated fanciful cakes for friends and family, a skill she picked up by watching her grandmother. Eventually word got around about the "Longmont Cake Lady," and before she knew it, Tiny's artful confections were in high demand at events even outside her home state.

"We went to Las Vegas with one," she said, recalling adventures with Otto as they delivered cakes to weddings far and wide. "We went

to Nebraska several times; we've been to Kansas."

Tiny's cake decorating career spanned nearly 40 years, and served as a lucrative outlet for her creative temperament. Over the years, her client list included well-known Colorado politicians, athletes and entertainers, and a portfolio of her elaborate creations fills up more than five photo albums.

Through it all, Otto and Tiny have had each other. Their enduring love story is at the heart of everything that has come since—the family, the careers, the trove of treasured memories. Both will tell you that it hasn't been perfect, but their obvious esteem and admiration for one another makes you think they came pretty close.

"I like to give her roses," Otto said. "A white one, a yellow one, and a red one. The white is for the love I have for her, red is the passion I have in my heart for her, and yellow is the sunshine she brings into my life every day."

The "secret" to their success isn't very secret, according to the pair. Part of it is spiritual, Otto said, and the two faithful Lutherans take their vow to "love, honor, and obey" seriously. But mostly it's just basic manners,

according to Tiny.

"Respect each other. If you get into an argument, walk away and think about it. If you stay there, you're going to say things you don't want to say."

And thoughtful gestures, no matter how small, also go a long way.

"I still open the car door for her," Otto said. "Sometimes, I can hardly walk, I still make sure the door's open. And I go in the house first, because I don't want anything to happen to her. To me, that's just part of the respect I have for her."

The pair doesn't have many grand plans for their retirement. There are still a few destinations to cross off their travel bucket list, including Otto's home state of Indiana, and a long list of hobbies—painting and drawing for Tiny, and reading and woodworking for Otto. If anything else comes their way, they have each other, and they haven't needed much more than that for the past 63 years.

"I'm not going to make any life changes except to stay with him," Tiny said.

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CSP Youth Academy helps train the next generation of troopers



BY TROOPER GARY CUTLER
Special to the Courier

public in various areas.

One way we do this is working with Colorado's youth. Once a year for one week in July, the Colorado State Patrol allows teens who are at least 16 years old from across the state a chance to see how State Troopers are trained at our academy in Golden.

The goal of the CSP Youth Academy is to assist in the development of future leaders for Colorado through team exercises and individual achievement. It is a week-long adventure for the 45 teens who are accepted. Some of the academy requirements include that they must be a junior or senior in the fall of 2020, write an essay, have two letters of recommendation, and complete an interview with troopers.

During the week of activities, they are constantly

supervised by State Troopers and mentored in various areas that will help them in life or whatever career they decide to follow. The youth stay at our academy, eat at our facilities, and gain friendships with other youth from across the state.

While in the youth academy, teens will have an enjoyable, fun-filled week and get to experience a long list of activities. Some of the activities include defensive driving on our state patrol track, firearms safety, self-defense tactics, traffic stops, building searches, team building, and

ethics in law enforcement, just to name a few. At the end of the week there is also a special field trip for the participants. Past years have included visits to the Broncos football facilities, and Rockies games.

The Youth Academy is not just for teens interested in law enforcement. The week-long class will help them in their future endeavors. It will also be an experience they will remember for the rest of their lives. If they want to continue with a career as a trooper, well, we won't complain. We have had several of

our Youth Academy participants become State Troopers, and we couldn't be prouder.

The academy is free of charge. It is paid for by private donors. For more information contact Captain Lawrence Hilton at 303-273-1882, your local Colorado State Patrol Office, or visit our website: colorado.gov/pacific/csp/youth-academy

This year's youth academy is July 19-25. Applications are due by March 22.

As always, safe travels!

Once again, it's time to look towards the youth of Colorado where we give them an experience of a lifetime. The mission of a Colorado State Patrol Trooper is not just enforcing the laws on the state's highways, and interstates. We are also very involved in educating the

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Niwot Elementary hosts Mwebaza Foundation Book and Art Sale



File Photo

Niwot Elementary School is selling gently used books as well as original artwork to help Mwebaza Infant Primary School, in Kyengera, Uganda.

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By ABIGAIL SCOTT
Editorial@lhvc.com

Stop by Niwot Elementary School on March 4 and shop the 12th annual Children's Book and Art Sale. Each year, the elementary school hosts various fundraisers to benefit partner schools of local non-profit, The Mwebaza Foundation.

Over a decade ago, Niwot Elementary partnered with Mwebaza Infant Primary School, in Kyengera, Uganda to participate in a cultural exchange. Since then, the foundation has added six additional partner schools in Uganda and Colorado, respectively. Students are given the chance to think up, organize, and execute fundraisers in which proceeds go directly to improve conditions at the partner schools.

Executive Director at The Mwebaza Foundation, Devaki Douillard, explained what she loves about this annual event, "My favorite part of the Children's Book and Art



File Photo

Previous fundraising efforts by Niwot Elementary School have helped bring a new school and equipment to Mwebaza Infant Primary School, in Kyengera, Uganda.

Sale is that it promotes reading and provides an opportunity for children, school wide, to participate in supporting their partner school by using their creativity to make art pieces!"

Once again, Niwot Elementary students are hosting

a book and art sale, in which the students created and donated their artwork. They've also gathered hundreds of gently-used children's books and plan to sell these as well. The sale takes place on March 4, from 3:30 - 5:30 pm.

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A new twist on an old classic comes to the NHS stage

By JOCELYN ROWLEY
 Editorial@lhvc.com

You know they're creepy, kooky, mysterious, and spooky, but perhaps you didn't know that the Victorian-inspired Addams Family has been a part of American pop culture for more than eight decades. In 1938, cartoonist Charles Addams created a satirical version of upper class 20th century family life for *The New Yorker*, giving us the enduring characters Gomez, Morticia, Wednesday, Pugsley, Uncle Fester and Lurch.

The family has been with us ever since, most famously as a 1960s sitcom, featuring a theme song that is instantly recognizable more than 50 years later. Now the "altogether ooky" clan is headed for the Niwot High stage, with some new characters and tendency to break into song now and then.

"NHS theatre decided to stage the Addams Family Musical because it is a hilarious show with incredible music and iconic characters," NHS drama teacher and theatre artistic director Kathryn Colabroy-Foulke wrote



Courtesy Photo

Senior Rumi Natanzi and Jazz Mueller portray iconic parents Morticia and Gomez Addams in Niwot High's production of *The Addams Family Musical*, running from March 5-8 in the NHS auditorium.

in an email interview. "There really is no family quite like The Addams Family."

The musical version finds the

Addams faced with a thorny problem—daughter Wednesday has fallen in love with a "normal" boy, and his family

is coming to dinner. Hilarity ensues when Uncle Fester—the story's narrator—enlists some help from a few dearly departed family members.

"The Ancestors are an integral part of the show and each represents an era of the Addams Family history—the Conquistador, The Flapper, The Baroque era, a cowgirl," Colabroy-Foulke wrote. "They have some amazing dance scenes and work the entire show to see 'Love Triumph' for all the characters."

However, Colabroy-Foulke warned that youngsters might find some of the Addams' macabre humor unsettling and it isn't necessarily a show for all audiences.

"They joke about death and torture. There is the use of weapons in the show and some adult humor. Most families have heard of the Addams Family and may still choose to bring their young children and that is fine. We thought it best to supply the PG rating to advise parents to consider the nature of the Addams humor when thinking of bringing young children to the show."

According to Colabroy-Foul-

ke, NHS theatre students were "over the moon" to put their spin on these timeless characters. NHS stage veteran Rumi Natanzi stars as Morticia, the stylish family matriarch, and Jazz Mueller is her husband, the dashing Gomez. Senior Tatum Hughes and sophomore Madeline Stapp share the role of Wednesday, and another NHS theatre veteran, Benjamin Bicknell, is Uncle Fester. Junior Grable Howie stars as Wednesday's new love interest, Lucas, and is also one of the production's five student directors.

The set, designed by Colabroy-Foulke and NHS technical director Jason Watkins, honors the family in their many iterations over the years.

"The aim was to honor what we recognize and love about the Addams Family while offering our own artistic spin on things," she wrote.

Behind the scenes, seniors Sage Arnold and Sophia Bloch are the student technical directors, and Alex West and Kai Feltier are the stage managers. The department also welcomed

Continued on Page 12

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Order in the court at Niwot Elementary



Courtesy Photo

Defense attorneys, portrayed here by Sam Viswanath and Myles Ferrera, are often a misunderstood part of the justice system, but were an important part of the proceedings during Niwot Elementary's mock trial on Feb. 20.



Courtesy Photo

On Feb. 20, Niwot Elementary gifted and talented students held a mock trial. Students were assigned several roles, including defense attorney, prosecuting attorney, and reporter, while staff members served as staff officers and advisors.



Courtesy Photo

Student prosecutors Cameron Leigh and Skyler Henderson review their notes during Niwot Elementary's mock trial, staged by Mrs. LeDoux's gifted and talented class on Feb. 20.



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ADDAMS

Continued from Page 10

choreographer Claire Steeno and costume designer Christina Piquette as newcomers to the crew this season.

"We are exceptionally proud of this production," Colabroy-Foulke wrote. "We have a rocking live band with professionals mentoring our talented NHS student musicians, incredible dances and acting, hand-made costumes and an amazing set. You don't want to miss it."

The Addams Family runs from March 5 through March 8 at Niwot High. Shows start at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, with a 3 p.m. matinee on Sunday. Tickets are \$12, but \$5 for NHS students with ID on opening night. For more information, visit nhs.svusd.org.



Courtesy Photo

Senior Rumi Natanzi takes the NHS stage for one last time as Morticia Addams in the Addams Family Musical, running from March 5-8.



SPORTS

Niwot High skiers rock 2020 state skiing championships



Courtesy Photo

Niwot students Cielle Burnett, Jack Vincent and Emily Creek competed for Nederland High at the state championship.

By **PATTIE LOGAN**
Editorial@lhvc.com

Thirteenth place in giant slalom at State was music to the ears of freshman skier Jack Vincent, who posted a combined time of 2:18:63. He and two other Niwot High students were at Beaver Creek Feb. 27 and 28 for State slalom and giant slalom races.

Vincent uses a music analogy to describe the two different types of racing. "Slalom, you can think of it like a country-rock song. It's a little bit faster pace," said Vincent. "Then GS is more like an opera. It's slow. You have to keep control through a whole course."

Under bright blue skies, the Niwot racers belted out a strong La Boheme, but skipped a couple of beats of their country guitar licks. Junior Emily Creek came in seventh in GS with a combined time of 2:14:56.

"I skied probably the best GS I skied all season," said Creek. "I felt pretty good

about it." She said the competition was stiffer than in previous years. Creek won the slalom title as a freshman in 2018. She said more club skiers are now joining their high school teams. "A lot of kids think it's fun to ski for a varsity sport. Instead of saying I never did high school sports, you have the letter and the pin," said Creek, who had a strong overall season, making the All-State team.

Creek and Vincent also qualified for slalom, but they never found their groove. Both had good first runs before Vincent straddled a gate and did a 360 on his second run, and Creek missed a gate and fell. "I'm glad I went for it on the second run. You kind of let yourself have a limit with your technique and sometimes you don't know where it is," said Creek, who said she pushed that technique to the max.

Vincent says he's working on getting more confident in slalom. "Slalom is a little bit different [than GS]," he said. "It's less of a symphony, just a quick-beat kind of course.



Photo by David Lijla

Niwot freshman Jack Vincent as he passes a gate during the CHSAA state ski championships on Feb. 26 at Beaver Creek.

You really have to go into like, I'm going to keep going and just finish." As a freshman and a third-generation ski racer, Vincent expects to have a lot more chances to strike the right chord.

The same holds true for

the third Niwot racer, freshman Cielle Burnett, who said she was just happy to be at State. She qualified for GS the week before, exceeding her expectations for her first year of high school competition. Burnett came in 88th with a

combined time of 2:40:47. "I got one of the last places, but I didn't care," said Burnett. "I'm a freshman. I still have time to get better."

Continued on Page 14



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STUDENT-ATHLETE OF THE MONTH

Cooper Sheldon

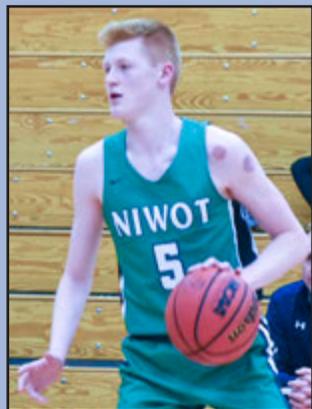
By JOCELYN ROWLEY
Editorial@lhvc.com

A lot of students play basketball in high school, but few inhabit the sport the way Niwot's Cooper Sheldon does. The six-foot, four-inch senior became a serious student of the game after taking it up in middle school, and even now dedicates at least part of every day to training or studying film. It's evident on the court, where the veteran point guard commands the Cougars' offense, and often gets the best out of his teammates. It's also evident off the court, where he serves as the team's emotional leader, and his singular drive to win helps fire up the team between games.

Sheldon recently accepted an offer from Doane College in Crete, Nebraska, and is preparing to play the game he loves at the next level. As he winds up his career with Niwot basketball, he reflected on the lessons he learned during his time with the tumultuous program and what they might bring as he looks ahead to the future.

"At the end of the day, basketball is just who I am," Sheldon said. "I think it's taught me a lot about hard work; it's taught me about leadership; there's just so many aspects. You have to be disciplined. As you get older in life, you have to have certain traits that I think basketball can teach you."

In Sheldon's first two seasons with the Niwot varsity, the Cougars went 9-37, including a 1-22 mark his sophomore year. Niwot basketball seemed to turn a corner in 2019-20 under first-year head coach Clay Wittrock, and there's no question that Sheldon was instrumental in that. As captain, he led the team in scoring and assists, helping to deliver its first winning record (13-11) since 2015, and first playoff berth since 2017.



Courtesy Photo

Niwot senior Cooper Sheldon's name is often confused with that of nerdy Big Bang Theory character Sheldon Cooper, but their basketball styles are nothing alike.

Sheldon hesitated to take much credit for the turnaround, though, instead pointing to his fellow seniors (Kyle Reeves, Austin Rathburn, Jarrett Noterman, Noah Pena, and Milo Ostwald) who single-mindedly rallied to save their high school careers from infamy.

"The seniors, we had a goal in mind, and maybe we didn't achieve everything, but I think we went out and got what we wanted," he said. "This year, we were just together as a team. In the past few years—and this isn't against anyone—I wouldn't say we weren't a team at times, but this year it felt like we were always here together."

For Wittrock, Sheldon has been indispensable this season, both on the floor and in the locker room. With his "high basketball IQ," the point guard has helped ease the longtime assistant coach into his new role at the helm, and made what could have been an awkward transition "fun" for both the players and coaching staff.

"To have someone who came in with such a desire to be successful this year and also that emotional piece and having the

mental side of the game has been crucial," Wittrock said. "A lot of times, Coop and I, we talk about basketball on a level I don't necessarily get to with the other guys. It's neat to see some of the guys are now learning that, and coming along. He's been a mentor to them too."

On the court, Sheldon has been the leader the sometimes inconsistent squad often needed, Wittrock said.

"We go a lot of the way Coop goes. He's such a competitor, and he gets guys up. And there's times when guys need that fire, and he brings so much competitive energy that he's able to do that. On the floor, he's able to talk his teammates through things that they may be struggling with, and it's crucial that he has the respect of his teammates that way."

For Sheldon, assuming the captain's role this season for Niwot has been thorny at times, but ultimately proved one his most gratifying accomplishments.

"You have to hold everyone accountable, but you have to hold yourself accountable first. If you want to be tough on your teammates, you have to make sure you have the right to say it, because you're doing what you're supposed to on the court. They're not going to listen to you if you're not doing it."

On the student side of things, Sheldon has particularly enjoyed "learning a lot about the body" in his IB sports science and nutrition class with Mrs. Agho. At Doane, he plans to study sports broadcasting or training or "something in the sports field." He would also like to continue his basketball career beyond even the collegiate level, "but if that doesn't work out, then I plan to stay around the game and coach and teach others about the great game of basketball."

SKIERS

Continued from Page 13

Burnett alternated between the slopes and the pool most of the season. She said it wasn't as hard as it sounds. Swimming practice counts for a ski practice and visa versa, meaning she didn't have to make all the practices for both sports. "I feel like they help each other," she said. "You don't get burnt out or annoyed with always going to one thing. It's always switched up." She's planning to do both sports again next year.

Creek and Vincent aren't done skiing this season. They're both on club teams that race into May. But they love the high school experience. "High school was less stressful and more laid back and fun. You get to enjoy the hill a little bit more," said Vincent.

All three skiers said one of the best things about the season was the support and friendships they developed with one

another and their larger team. The Niwot students are a little team within a team. They ski for a different NHS, Nederland, which fields the team and provides the mountain.

Creek, who is 16, or one of the parents drove the skiers up to Eldora in the afternoon for practices a couple days a week. Of course, there was music in the car. Blasting. Vincent says he likes classic rock, but Creek describes it differently. "Jack tries to play weird Sponge Bob music. I'm always telling him no. I get to know what they like to listen to, what a freshman boy listens to," she said, admitting she really enjoyed becoming friends with the younger classmen. "They're cool freshmen."

The Nederland boys ski team came in seventh overall at State and the girls were 10th. Aspen won both titles. The drive is a little easier for them, but it may not be quite as much fun.



Photo by David Lijla

Niwot junior Emily Creek competed in the giant slalom in the 2020 CHSAA state ski championships on Feb. 26 at Beaver Creek.

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Niwot makes early exit from basketball playoffs



Photo by Jocelyn Rowley

Members Niwot boys basketball team set up on defense against Air Academy during their first round matchup in Class 4A basketball playoffs on Feb. 26. From left Austin Rathburn (12), Cooper Sheldon (5), and Noah Peña.

By JOCELYN ROWLEY
Editorial@lhvc.com

Senior point guard Cooper Sheldon was philosophical following Niwot's three-point loss to Air Academy Kadets in the first round of the Class 4A basketball playoffs on Feb. 26. A questionable judgment by the referees in the final seconds of the game cost the Cougars another shot at the net, and, with it, a chance to tie up the score and go to overtime. Instead, the clock ticked away to 0:00 with the score at 53-50 favoring the Kadets, and as their jubilant fans crowded the court, the Niwot players headed to the visitor's locker

room to get ready for the final bus ride of the season.

"Sometimes the dice don't roll your way, and you can't win them all," Sheldon said afterwards. "There's only one team that comes out victorious... We got ourselves in a tough spot, and we had to fight our way out of it. Maybe if we hadn't gotten ourselves in that scenario, the game could have ended up differently."

The "tough spot" was a seven-point deficit near the end of the fourth quarter, which seemed gaping at that point in the game. Scoring hadn't come easily to either team all night, and Air Academy was jealously guarding the lead it had pains-

takingly built as the game went on. But Niwot mounted yet another comeback, and were down by three with just a few seconds to go. Then came a curious lack of whistle after Sheldon went to the ground taking the ball up court. As stunned supporters looked on in disbelief, the game ended and Niwot lost its chance to finish what it started.

"I'm always of the mind that you want to go down fighting, and you play as it's called," Niwot head coach Clayton Wittrock said following the stinging defeat. "And I'm just so proud of how those boys kept fighting, and adjusting, and just playing ball. They gave themselves a chance at the end, and that's all you can ever ask of these guys."

That chance was hard won, and the Cougars faced some obstacles heading into their first playoff appearance since 2017—notably, the absence of starter Kyle Reeves, one of the team's leading scorers, who was recovering from an illness. He was replaced in the lineup by senior Noah Pena, who has been hampered by a leg injury since mid-season. But if any of that bothered the Cougars, it wasn't evident in the opening minutes. An early three-pointer from Sheldon set off an 8-2 scoring run for Niwot, and an energetic defen-

sive performance from senior Milo Ostwald seemed to put momentum firmly behind the Cougars.

Unfortunately, momentum had other ideas, and Niwot's lead evaporated quickly, thanks to an 8-2 run the opposite way, tying the game at 10-10 to end the first quarter. Then momentum abandoned both teams, and with it, their ability to score. Managing just

12 points between them, Niwot and Air Academy headed into the break at 16-16.

The coaches must have delivered similar half-time talks to their players, as scoring picked up almost immediately in the third quarter. Peña (6) and senior Austin Rathburn (5) combined for 11 points,

Continued on Page 16



Photo by Jocelyn Rowley

Senior Milo Ostwald's (11) aggressive defense helped keep the score close during Niwot's game against Air Academy in the first round of the Class 4A state playoffs on Feb. 26.

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BASKETBALL

Continued from Page 15

and Sheldon and senior Jarrett Noterman also chipped in. However, Air Academy held a slight edge for most of the frame, and was up 36-31 heading in to the final eight minutes. The Kadets couldn't seem to fend off the Cougars for long, though, and, thanks to their captain Sheldon, Niwot kept finding its way back into the game.

"The fourth quarter was where you saw the Cooper we've depended on all season," Wittrock said. "I know that's going to make this loss hard for him, because really he did his best to put this team on his shoulders in the fourth quarter, and everybody played off of him with high-energy, and you saw other guys making plays, and that was huge for us. We were just one play short." Niwot went 20-for-37 (54%) from the floor, well above its season average of 39%. Sheldon ended the night with 10

points, bringing his team-leading season total to 295, good for eighth overall in the Northern League. Rathburn led the Cougars with 15 points, followed by Noterman with seven, and junior forward Rowan Granat, who came off the bench to score six for Niwot in the final quarter.

"I think everybody did their job," Wittrock said. "I think our confidence and our focus was there. We just didn't have enough fall through the net, and we had a couple that could have bounced either way, and just didn't bounce in."

With the loss, Niwot finished the year at 13-11, the first winning record since 2014-15. Wittrock was quick to credit the Cougars' seniors for the successful season, even if it might take them a few days to call it that.

"I told them before the game that this is a one-game season, but this one game doesn't define our season," he said. "We would have liked to move on, but I think that as they get a little bit of distance from tonight, they're going to see how much of a positive impact they had, as far as the work we're doing for the culture and philosophy



Photo by Jocelyn Rowley

Senior Austin Rathburn led Niwot in scoring with 15 points against Air Academy in the first round of the Class 4A state playoffs on Feb. 26.

of this program, and building a foundation."

Sheldon agreed with Wittrock's assessment, and, fighting to keep emotion out of his voice, Sheldon said he was "very proud" of his teammates and their growth throughout the year, even if it didn't end the way they'd hoped.

"A lot of people just know them for what they do on the floor, but they're great friends. They push me and each other every day to get better. They're not

just basketball players, they're great humans, too."

(2/26) — Air Academy 53, Niwot 50	
Cougars (13-11, 8-6)	10 6
15 19 — 50	
Kadets (13-11, 8-6)	10 6
20 17 — 53	
Austin Rathburn 6 (3-6) 15, Cooper	
Sheldon 4 (1-1) 10, J. Noterman 3 (0-0) 7,	
Rowan Granat 2 (2-2) 6, Noah Pena 2 (0-0) 6,	
Milo Ostwald 2 (0-1) 4, Dev Muduktore 1 (0-0) 2, Team	
totals 20 (6-10) 50	

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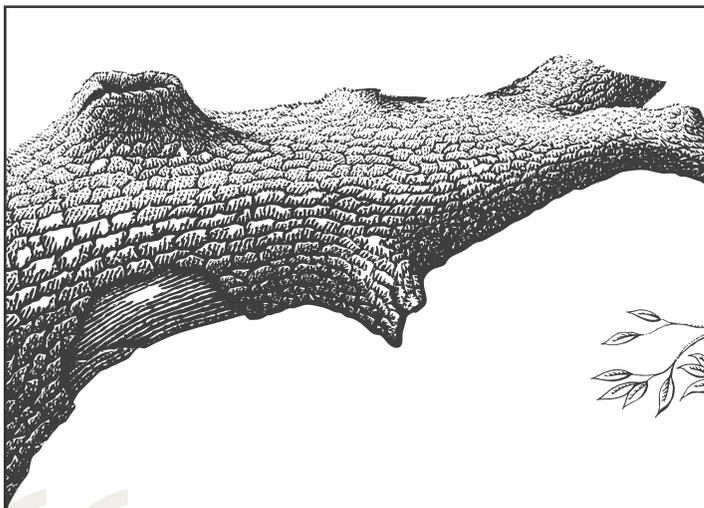
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Photo by Quinn Gossett

Senior captain Sheldon Cooper (5) directed the Cougars' offense during their game against Air Academy in the first round of the Class 4A state playoffs on Feb. 26.