



Niwot enchants community with upcoming holiday event

By HANNAH STEWART
Editorial@lhvc.com

Cities and towns across the country and world ring in the yuletide season in numerous ways: parades of lights, tree lighting ceremonies, holiday craft bazaars, and more. Niwot will be joining in on this practice with the annual tradition, Enchanted Evening.

Scheduled for Friday, Nov. 29, the community will come together to celebrate the holidays--there will be musical groups throughout Old Town and Cottonwood Square; local crafters; an ice sculpture demonstration; holiday window contest voting; and of course Santa will be at



Photo by Chuck Klueber

Santa coming to town is always a good time for all.

the Grange, among other activities.

"I hope that they [the community] really feel enfranchised and that it's an important place to be," said

Leigh Suskin who is helping organize the event this year. She discussed how she was honored to assist Linda and Chuck Klueber, the main event organizers. This will be her second year helping with Enchanted Evening.

So, not only is this celebration intended to recognize the holidays, it's an opportunity to come together as a community to connect. As Suskin puts it, holiday events like these are a holistic approach to creating opportunities for the community to embrace each other and acknowledge everyone for their hard work throughout the year.

Continued on Page 4

New Boulder County Administrator position announced

By VICKY DORVEE
Editorial@lhvc.com

As of Jan. 14, 2020, the Board of the Boulder County Commissioners will be slotting in a new staff member between themselves and many county departments. The new county administrator role will be filled by Jana Petersen, the current head of Boulder County's Administrative Services Department.

In a letter addressed to Boulder County employees dated Nov. 6, the three-member board of the Boulder County Commissioners stated, "After much discussion over the past year with our leadership staff and with the help of a team of organizational consultants, we have decided to move forward with an organizational change

for Boulder County that will shift our county government structure in a direction that allows for more efficient management and continuity of day-to-day operations -- while giving us, the County Commissioners, more time to engage directly with the community."

The county administrator will assume everyday operational management responsibilities allowing the commissioners to focus their time and effort on working with the public and additional involvement with county programs and initiatives. It will also give the board more bandwidth to maintain and build relationships with municipal, regional, and state partners. The commissioners cited that it was

Continued on Page 6

Spirit Elk reappears



Photo by Vicky Dorvee

After a two-month absence, the female elk has returned to the Schultz Family Farm on Hwy. 287 and Oxford Rd. Sometimes she's in the field with Calvin and Chester, the oxen, and other times she hops in with the chickens, goats, sheep or pigs. This is the third guest stay for what farmer Glen Schultz calls the Spirit Elk. He credits the work done on regenerating the farm soil for her love of the land. She comes and goes as she pleases and she partakes of feed available to the oxen. What's different about this visit is her behavior in defining her place in the pecking order of the farm animals and she's not as skittish about humans being nearby. "I'm able to get closer, but I want to keep a distance too. I don't ever want to get to where I'm petting her," Schultz said. To watch videos and learn more about Schultz Family Farm, visit <https://www.facebook.com/schultzfamilyfarms/>

Niwot's Enchanted Evening PUBLIC NOTICE **Niwot's Holiday Parade**

Friday, Nov 29
6:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Saturday, Dec 7
11:00 am - 1:00 pm

6:15 PM - TREE LIGHTING
Santa at the Grange
6:30 pm to 9:00 pm

11:00 AM - PARADE
Santa at the Grange
11:30 am to 1:00 pm

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Community Calendar

CLIMATE CHANGE PRESENTATION

The community is invited to attend the Climate Reality Project presentation of 24 Hours of Reality Presentation: Truth in Action, a global conversation on the truth of the climate crisis and how we can solve it. Around the world, for one full 24-hour period, Climate Reality leader volunteers trained by former Vice President Al Gore will hold public presentations and conversations on our changing climate. Your local event will be held from 6 to 7 p.m., Wednesday, Nov. 20, at the Left Hand Valley Grange. 195 2nd Ave., Niwot.

TWIN PEAKS OPEN HOUSE

Twin Peaks Charter Academy (340 S. Sunset St., Longmont) is hosting an Open House/Enrollment Night on Wednesday, Nov. 20. The evening is broken up by grade level: 5:30 - PREK, 6:00 - Elementary, 6:30 - Middle School, 7:30 - High School. Twin Peaks Charter Academy is a public PreK-12th grade tuition free charter school.

ENCHANTED EVENING

Niwot kicks off the holiday season on Nov. 29 with the Enchanted Evening celebration in Cottonwood Square and Old Town from 6 to 9 p.m., featuring musicians, a tree lighting ceremony, and a visit from Santa. Local businesses are also holding a window decorating contest. For more information, visit niwot.com/events/enchanted-evening.

NIWOT HOLIDAY PARADE
The annual Niwot Holiday Parade will be held on Saturday, Dec. 7 at 11 a.m. Santa is once again this year's Grand Marshal, and will visit with children at the Grange following the parade until 1 p.m.

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Correction

Last week, there was an error in the piece titled "Look-out Alliance urges the time

to act is now". We stated that COGCC was accepting public commentary for Crestone CDP,

however, this is not the case. Public comment is on hold at this time.

COMMUNITY PET SPOTLIGHT

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Meet Missy, a "well-behaved" two-year old cat who lives in Gunbarrel with companion Mabel Stewart. Writes Mable: "She is curious, and always needs to be apprised of what I'm reading or writing. She is easily distracted though; here, a sound outdoors draws her attention before I can capture a snapshot of her facing the camera. We're just enjoying a lazy afternoon in Gunbarrel. She's an indoor cat but has lots of open-aired windows to keep abreast of what the squirrels, birds, and butterflies are up to. A cute mannerism of hers is to pause, with one paw poised in air—"what to do next?" So many choices!"

"It is impossible for a lover of cats to banish these alert, gentle, and discriminating friends, who give us just enough of their regard and complaisance to make us hunger for more."

— Agnes Repplier

We look forward to seeing your pets in our spotlight. Please email your photos and captions Editorial@lhvc.com



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Gunbarrel Dental Center practitioners earn prestigious awards



Courtesy photo

Drs. Gerald Savory DDS and Rachel Barone DDS accepted the honors they earned from the Academy of General Dentistry at the AGD national meeting earlier this year. Dr. Savory completed his Mastership Award and Dr. Barone completed her Fellowship Award.

By VICKY DORVEE
Editorial@lhvc.com

Following hundreds of hours of continuing education and hands-on courses, and successfully passing rigorous exams, Gunbarrel's Dr. Gerald Savory, DDS, was awarded his Mastership Award and the new owner of the dental practice, Dr. Rachel Barone, DDS, was awarded her Fellowship Award by the Academy of General Dentistry (AGD). Dr. Savory is the founder of Gunbarrel Dental Center.

Less than 2% of general dentists in the United States and Canada have the distinction of earning a Mastership Award and only 6% are Fellows of the AGD.

The AGD is a professional association of more than 40,000

general dentists committed to providing high quality dental care and oral health education to the public. Founded in 1952, the AGD is the largest association for general dentists in the world.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, an estimated 110,400 dental practitioners are general dentists, defined as primary care providers for patients of all ages who are responsible for the

diagnosis, treatment, and ongoing management of oral health needs.

To earn a Master of the Academy of General Dentistry

Continued on Page 7

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ENCHANTED

Continued from Page 1

It's important to note just how much work has gone into this event. The Niwot Business

Association and the Local Improvement Districts have both contributed to its organization. But so have a number of other smaller businesses in the community, as evidenced by the entertainment provided by the Niwot Community Semi-Marching Free Grange Band and all those who are participating in the holiday window decorating contest. All this intra-community cooperation demonstrates Niwotians' shared pride and passion for the town and ultimately is what makes Enchanted Evening such a special event.

"The beauty is in the simplicity, it's not over the top, it's really just focused on coming together and connecting," Suskin said. She expressed the hope that the small-town community approach resonates with residents, allowing them to feel supported.

While Enchanted Evening is a favorite part of the holiday season, it is just the beginning of Niwot's holiday related celebrations this year. There will also be the annual parade and a craft fair later in December. Each of these events are special opportunities for the community to interact, recognize, and support each other. The holiday parade will be held on Saturday, Dec. 7 and the fair on Dec. 14, so be sure to come back to celebrate more holiday spirit!



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6:00 pm - 9:00 pm

6:15 PM - TREE LIGHTING

Santa at the Grange
6:30 pm to 9:00 pm

Sponsored by:
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Niwot's Holiday Parade

Saturday, Dec 7
11:00 am - 1:00 pm

11:00 AM - PARADE

Santa at the Grange
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Death investigation in Niwot



Photo by Mary Wolbach Lopert

On Nov. 12, Boulder County Sheriff officers and Mountain View Fire Protection personnel were called to investigate a death at Countryside Condominiums, located off of Countryside Drive just south of Cottonwood Square in Niwot. Personnel responding to the scene found a deceased male in a car, later identified as Niwot resident Kelcey Clarke, 51. The Boulder County Coroner later performed an autopsy, but the cause and manner of death have not yet been released.

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BOCO

Continued from Page 1

common for a county the size of Boulder's to enlist a county administrator in its ranks.

The commissioners honed their candidate search in on existing department heads

with solid institutional knowledge, a commitment to the county's vision and values, and experience working with the county and its "diverse communities."

"The position is a natural fit for Jana, who currently serves as Administrative Services Director for Boulder

County and has worked in local government administration for both Boulder County and the City of Boulder since 1996," the commissioners' letter reads. "She has a thorough knowledge of county operations, heartfelt investment in the county's vision and values, and a deep un-

derstanding of how our organization meets community needs."

Petersen has a master's degree in public administration from CU-Denver and has held the position of director of Boulder County's Administrative Services Department since 2010. She has worked for Boulder County since 1999, first as the media information officer and later as the director of public affairs. From 2005 to 2010, she was the administrative deputy to the commissioners.

Commencing the new position in 2020 was deemed best, because it will give the commissioners sufficient time to transition Peterson into the role before the terms of commissioners Elise Jones and Deb Gardner, who are term limited, expire in 2021.

In addition to Petersen, County Attorney Ben Pearlman, Chief Financial Officer Ramona Farineau, and Staff

Deputy Michelle Krezek, who will have the new job title of chief of staff, will continue to report in to the commissioners. Krezek's new title conveys the responsibilities of tracking and managing policy work, community outreach, and external commissioner initiatives.

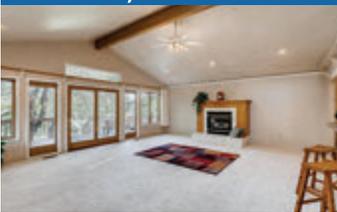
"For most of you," the commissioners said in the letter to staff, "the change will not be felt or noticed as part of your day-to-day experience. The most significant organizational change is that department heads and other staff will now report to the county administrator instead of the Board of County Commissioners."

Direct reports to Petersen will include the lead in each of these departments: Land Use, Transportation, Community Services, Administrative Services, Housing and Human Services, Parks and Open Space.

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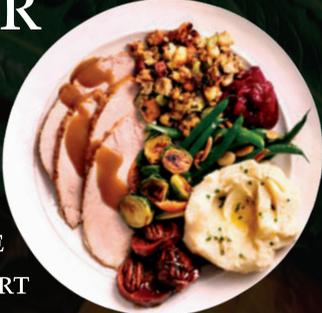
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DENTIST

Continued from Page 3

(MAGD), Savory completed more than 1,100 continuing education hours, of which 400 hours consisted of hands-on courses

To be awarded the Fellowship Award, Dr. Barone completed over 500 credit hours of continuing education course work, of which 350 hours were performed hands-on.

Subsequently, both doctors successfully passed exams that are comparable in difficulty to the dental board certification exams. Dentists who have completed this coursework have demonstrated their dedication to learning the most current dental

practices and techniques.

Dr. Barone became the new owner of Gunbarrel Dental in January 2019. She and Dr. Savory met four years ago at a continuing education meeting in Chicago. The two dentists found they share a similar appreciation for continuing their dental education in order to provide high quality service and build long-term patient relationships. Their paths crossed several times at professional meetings and eventually, after 42 years at the helm of Gunbarrel Dental Center, Dr. Savory transitioned the ownership of the practice to Dr. Barone.

They were formally presented the AGD awards on July 20, 2019 at the National Academy of Gen-

eral Dentistry national meeting held in Connecticut.

A press release from the AGD announced Dr. Savory's accomplishment and stated, "The Mastership Award is the highest honor available in the AGD and one of the most respected designations in the profession. This accomplishment meets the highest criteria for professional excellence."

Dr. Savory graduated in 1976 from Creighton University School of Dentistry. In addition to being a member of the AGD, Dr. Savory is also a member of the American Dental Association, the

Colorado Dental Association, the American College of Dentists, the American Equilibration Society, the Boulder/Broomfield County Dental Society and the American Academy of Restorative Dentistry.

Dr. Barone graduated from Virginia Commonwealth University in 2012 and completed a General Practice Residency at the University of Florida. She is a member of the AGD, the American Dental Association, the Colorado Dental Association, the Boulder/Broomfield County Dental Society, the American Equilibration Society, and is a Fel-

low in the International Congress of Oral Implantologists.

The AGD stated in a press release, "As a recipient of this award, Dr. Barone has joined an elite group of more than 17,080 members of the dental community who understand that great smiles and good oral health for their patients are the result of going above and beyond the basic requirements."

Gunbarrel Dental Center is located at 5400 Mount Meeker Rd, Gunbarrel. Visit www.GunbarrelDental.com for more information.

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High Altitude Archery offers archers diverse opportunities



Courtesy Photo

High Altitude Archery offers lessons and camps to archers of all ages and abilities.

AMY SCANES-WOLFE'S
Editorial@lhvc.com

There is probably only one place in Longmont you can shoot arrows at a dinosaur.

High Altitude Archery.

And though this archery school allows you to choose between many three dimensional targets—deer, leopard, crow, alligator, and jackalope, among others—hunting is a minor emphasis.

According to staff-member "Coach Bob," the school seeks to create "more of an instructional, classroom environment." It prides itself on family-friendly atmosphere with knowledgeable instructors and space to learn.

Some may remember when High Altitude Archery resided on Longmont's Main Street, just north of Ziggi's Coffee. It first opened in 2012 under Tom Adjutant's ownership. Two years later, the school and range relocated to their present location at 455 Weaver Road.

At that time, Paul and Kerstin Williams were clients—their son and daughter both took lessons at the range. When Adjutant gathered his clients and expressed a desire to hand over the reins, they jumped at the opportunity. "We looked at the business, fundamentals, culture, and said, this is an important part of the community, and we want to keep it going," said Paul Williams.

After the Williamses bought the business in 2016, they ramped up the marketing and outreach but held onto the core mission. "Everything still centers around that concept of archery as a sport for improving yourself," Williams said.

So how is archery related to self-improvement? "Archery is an intensely mental sport. It requires a process oriented approach to excel. That helps

Continued on Page 11

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FLAGSTAFF ACADEMY

Annual Niwot Thai gift sale to help children's home



Courtesy Photo

CWR brings Niwotians unique Thai crafts to the holiday community sale

By HANNAH STEWART
Editorial@lhvc.com

In 2011, Heather McCarthy and her daughter joined a friend on a trip to Thailand aimed at helping local children there. Overwhelmed by the love and gratitude from those she helped,

she was inspired to do more. Her need to serve this community resulted in McCarthy and a few peers starting Charities Within Reach (CWR) and opened up the Promise Home in northern Thailand.

What is unique about CWR is the organization is not supported

by any major corporation. It is a self-identified grassroots group of friends who simply want to support Thai communities. In fact, four of the seven board members hail from Niwot and the organization makes the effort to ensure that everything they do goes into the program and the Promise Home. McCarthy and her team have put in countless hours and so much effort focusing largely on helping Thai children. "Thailand doesn't have the same type of government services for children," McCarthy explained. Her home, and others like it, are sometimes the only forms of stability and support these children have.

To provide resources for the home to operate, CWR holds a few annual fundraisers including a Thai gift sale. What makes this gift sale unique is the fact that it

Continued on Page 11

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CWR

Continued from Page 3

is a small part in a larger microeconomic project. “We purchase items from the locals, and these hill tribes are able to live off our purchases, and then we sell to people here and this money supports our home,” explained McCarthy. “It’s a circle: we get to support the hill tribes and the children. We support many different families in a few different tribes. We want people who go to the sale to understand that yes, the proceeds go to the home, but that we also support many, many different hill tribe families.” Fellow CWR board member Dana Dodge commented, saying that especially at this time of the year with the holidays, she hopes that people have a little more global awareness and that people stop to think about how they can help others.

Dodge, echoing McCarthy, went on to say that CWR is a simple, grassroots organization who welcome community members to volunteer and support their cause—especially through the gift sale. “We’ve always had a Thailand sale and it’s all volunteer labor [that makes it happen]. It’s a very positive gift giving program, the mood at the fair makes it fun.” The sale, which will be hosted at the Left Hand Grange, is scheduled for 8:30 a.m. through 4 p.m. on Dec. 14. The whole group is excited for this event, because the event will give community members an opportunity to learn about their philanthropy while also giving people the opportunity to purchase unique gifts.

This teaching moment is key for the CWR team. “Given that the price of items and cost of living keeps increasing, our main concern is being able to sustain it for a number of years in the future,” McCarthy said. “We would really like to get a larger support base and a larger group of individuals who will come and join us for these events.”

HIGH ALTITUDE

Continued from Page 8

people of all ages but especially kids to organize a process to execute a shot." Students use the techniques they learn in archery to improve their interpersonal skills and day to day task execution.

Some of the school's junior clients are members of the JOAD—Junior Olympic Archery Development—team. From September through March, roughly 25 members of the JOAD team train weekly at High Altitude Archery and go out to compete. Other junior clients include local schools. In fact, just two weeks ago, 160 eighth-graders visited for a school field trip.

High Altitude Archery employs six staff members, all of whom are USA Archery

certified. And some of them have been archers for a very long time. "I started when I was four years old," said Rey Cortez, "when my parents gave me my first bow." Now raising children of his own, Cortez visited High Altitude Archery on a family vacation last summer. He was so impressed with the facility that, a year later, he accepted the job and relocated from Texas to Colorado.

High Altitude Archery offers a range of private and group lessons for youth and adults of varying abilities. But the facility also offers other opportunities. It boasts a lounge for business people, a 24-hour shooting range for members, and plenty of space to host parties and summer camps. "We do a lot of corporate, team building activities," Williams explained. "It's a great opportunity to bring the office together."

One unique offering for large groups is Archery Tag, which is more or less what it sounds like. "It's like dodgeball but with archery," Cortez explained. The key being that players shoot each other with archery tag arrows—which look like arrows with marshmallows stuck on the pointy end.

"If you're not sure whether or not you would enjoy archery, come in and give it a shot," Williams said. It costs only twenty dollars for a first visit—this includes equipment rental, range access, and a few minutes of instruction.

An introductory visit could make a nice holiday gift. High Altitude Archery is also offering reduced membership prices and introductory packages that include bows, arrows, and lessons.

"Our goal is to get everybody to try archery at least once.

Hopefully you find a passion for something you didn't think would be on your radar," said Williams.

To learn more about available offerings, visit High Altitude Archery's webpage: <https://highaltitudearchery.com>



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Seven Niwot athletes sign early letters of intent

By JOCELYN ROWLEY
Editorial@lhvc.com

It was another crowded National Letter of Intent signing ceremony at Niwot, as seven athletes made official commitments to collegiate programs on Nov. 13.

Lexi Crow, Black Hills State University

Lexi Crow's collegiate soccer ambitions may be taking her away from Colorado, but the picturesque campus of Black Hills State University in Spearfish, S.D. will be like home away from home, according to the Cougar midfielder.

"There's going to be mountains there, and open spaces, and it's green, so it's just like Colorado. We play all of the Colorado schools, so my family can come and see my games. And it's going to be close to home, but just far



Photo by Jocelyn Rowley

Seven Niwot athletes signed letters of intent on National Signing Day on Nov. 13. From left, Lexi Crow, Samrawit Dishon, Cruz Culpepper, Abbie Shaw, Elise Gillett, Kelia Portis, and Amber Nusser.

enough away."

While mountainous may not be among the first images that "South Dakota" recalls, Spearfish is located in the far western part of the state, at the northern edge of the densely forested Black

Hills, which rise thousands of feet above the prairies to the east.

BHSU competes in the Division II RMAC, and most of its league opponents are Colorado-based teams, including Metro State, Colorado Mines, UCCS, and Regis, which means Crow will be back in her home state regularly during the fall. She also considered offers from Colorado Mesa, University of Nebraska-Kearney, and Johnston and Wales before deciding to sign with BHSU, but she isn't quite sure where she'll end up on the field as a Yellow Jacket.

"I was recruited for a position I've never played before, outside back," she said. Crow is a three-year varsity midfielder for Niwot, and had two goals and five assists for the Cougars in the 2019 season before she was sidelined with an injury. "But then he got film of me playing center mid, so I don't know where I'm playing."

Cruz Culpepper, University of Washington

It's been a memorable 12 months for Niwot's standout runner Cruz Culpepper, bookended



Photo by Jocelyn Rowley

Cruz Culpepper

by back-to-back Class 4A state cross-country championships. In the interim, he also picked up individual Class 4A track titles in the 800- and 1600 meter races, and top-five finishes in the mile at New Balance Nationals and the Brooks PR Invitational.

Culpepper will be continuing his running career next year at the University of Washington, in Seattle, where he will be specializing in the 1500m. He also considered offers from the University of Northern Arizona and CU, but ultimately chose Washington for a host of reasons.

"I really liked the coaches there, and I think Seattle and the university are great places," he said after inking his commitment letter. "Training for the mile is a little bit more beneficial at sea level, but they were both great choices."

Samrawit Dishon, University of New Mexico

Fresh off her recent win at the Class 4A state cross country championships, Niwot senior Samrawit Dishon announced that she is taking her talents to the University of New Mexico, which has in recent years emerged as

one of the top distance running programs in the country. But if Dishon feels intimidated by going into such a competitive atmosphere, she isn't showing much sign of it.

"I think it's cool," she said, when asked about the pressure of being on an elite team. The Lobos were runners-up at the 2018 NCAA Division I cross country championships, as was their top runner Ednah Kelati. "It makes you work harder."

As one of the top distance runners in Colorado, Dishon wasn't lacking in high-profile offers—she also considered Wake Forest (N.C.), and Alabama—but ultimately settled on New Mexico "because it was the best place for me running."

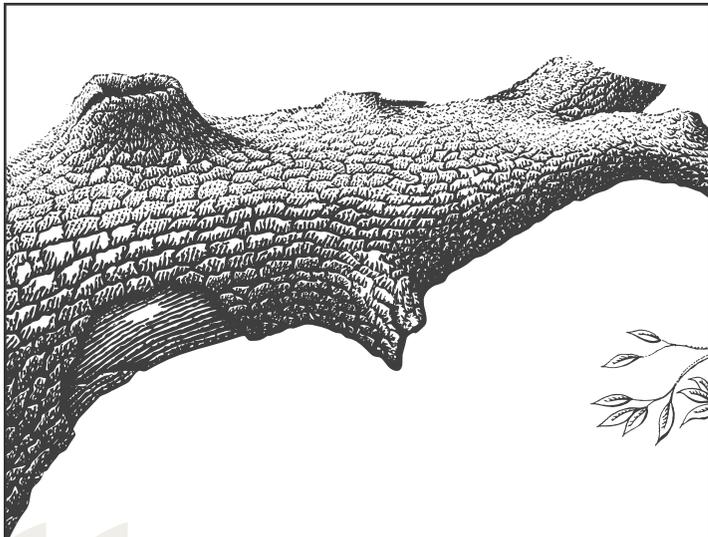
"I really liked the team and the coaches...It's warmer than Colorado, but not as hot as Arizona or someplace like that, and there's high altitude training."

Dishon isn't sure yet what event will be her specialty, but it's likely to be a long-distance one. In addition to the aforementioned state cross-country title, she was also the runner-up in the Class 4A 3200-meter run at the 2019 state track and field championships. Dishon has also been busy on the national scene. In June 2019, she won the emerging elite girls mile at the New Balance Nationals in N.C., and, in September, she finished third overall in the elite girls 5000M at the Nike Desert Twilight Festival in Casa Grande, Ariz.

As for what she plans to study, Dishon said that she is "leaning toward psychology."

Elise Gillett, University of Colorado

After her breakout performance at the 2019 Class 4A state track and field championships, hurdler Elise Gillett entertained some enticing collegiate offers from the likes of Marquette in Wisconsin and the University of Seattle in Washington. But ultimately she found that she wouldn't need to go quite that far to find everything she was looking for in a post-secondary program.



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Continued on Page 13

COLLEGE SIGNINGS

Continued from Page 12

“When I got in contact with the CU coach I knew it would be the place for me, because of the relationship I immediately felt with him,” she said after signing a letter of intent to compete for the University of Colorado at Boulder starting next year. “I really love the facilities, and being close to home is something I truly value, so I’m really excited.”

So are her parents. Elise will be the first of the four Gillett sisters to remain in-state following graduation, but the third in four years to turn her speed and discipline into an NCAA Division I collegiate offer. Claire Gillett (‘17) is currently a member of the Gonzaga University cross country team, while Mary (‘18) runs the 200- and 400 meter races for Stanford, a CU Pac-12 rival.

Elise Gillett was a key component of Niwot’s 2019 state title run at the Class 4A track and field championships, with silver medals in the 100-meter hurdles and in the 4x400 relay. At CU, she will be competing in the heptathlon, which combines seven events—100 meter hurdles, high jump, shot put, 200m, long jump, javelin throw, and 800m. It’s not typically staged at CHSAA meets, but Gillett did complete one earlier this year at the Great Southwest Classic in Albuquerque.

“The hurdles will be my focus within the heptathlon because it’s my best event right now,” she said. “I’m excited to try this new event because there’s so many different areas to improve upon.”

Gillett plans to study integrative physiology, though admits she not “entirely sure just yet.”

Amber Nusser, University of California-Davis

Amber Nusser’s path to the 2019 early signing day may have been a little less traveled than her six Niwot peers’, but that doesn’t mean it was any less grueling. For one thing, she trod it mostly on the back of Miley or Bill, her trusted horses. For another, it was without the funding and support of a high school athletic department, as equestrian is not a CHSAA sanctioned activity.

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That didn’t keep Nusser from having an impressive high school career nonetheless. She is a three-year member of the Boulder County Fair royalty court, and currently serving a year-long

term as Queen. Nusser has also competed with her horse Bill in state and national shows, both individually and as a part of the Rocky Mountain Wrangler Inter-scholastic Equestrian Association

team. Last summer, the pair took first in varsity intermediate reining at the IEA Western National Finals.

Next fall, Nusser is headed to UC-Davis to join the Aggies’

equestrian team. She plans to specialize in reining, one of four collegiate riding disciplines,

Continued on Page 14

COLLEGE SIGNINGS

Continued from Page 13

along with jumping, equitation on the flat, and horsemanship. She also considered an offer from Texas A&M, but "absolutely fell in love" with the coach and her future teammates during her official visit in October.

"Davis is a smaller team—there are 30 girls instead of 60—so it's a lot closer and a lot more like a family, and it was cool to be able to see that."

But it's not just the team than a reminder her of home and family. UC-Davis is located about 20 minutes outside of Sacramento, and Nusser described it as "a little piece of heaven in California."

"I'm not a cold weather person, so I'm excited for all the sun....It's a little more agriculturally based, which coincides with my sport and also what I was raised on. It's super cool to have a combination of all that."

Nusser plans to major in psychology and then go on to medical school. She said she was also attracted to the 112-year old institution because of its robust academic support



Photo by Jocelyn Rowley

Kelia Portis

services and undergraduate research opportunities.

Kelia Portis, Western Colorado University

Niwot hurdler Kelia Portis didn't have any other schools in mind when she chose the Western Colorado University for her post-secondary education. Even though she's not a huge fan of the frigid winter temperatures in Gunnison, she felt drawn to the "small feel" of the mountainous campus and friendly faces of the Mountaineer track and field team, which includes former Niwot teammates Erin Carroll and Kayla Nowlin.

"The track team was super-welcoming," she said. "It

will be nice going to a school where I know someone, and that really helped me through the process."

Portis will be competing in the 400-meter hurdles for Western, and possibly the triple-jump. As a member of Niwot's 2019 state championship team, she finished third overall in the 300m hurdles (45.24), and ninth in the triple jump (34-3.75). She also won a state title as a member of the 4x400 relay team, which also featured Nowlin.

Portis plans to study wildlife biology and conservation at Western, another reason she chose the "very outdoorsy" campus. She is also looking forward to working closely with other students and professors in the close-knit classes.



Photo by Jocelyn Rowley

Amber Nusser

Abbie Shaw, University of Kentucky

Niwot swimmer Abbie Shaw had a number of tempting NCAA Div. I collegiate offers to consider in the lead up to her senior year, but even she was surprised by her decision to join the Big Blue Nation.

"I would have never ever pictured myself going to Kentucky," she said after signing a letter of intent to join the Wildcats' swim and dive team starting in 2020. "But I started talking to the school, and I loved the coaching staff and everyone there, and the second I visited, I knew it was where I wanted to go."

Shaw has been a major factor in the Niwot girls swim and dive program's rise to Class 4A prominence over the past

three years. In the 2019 championships, she helped lead the Cougars to the runner-up title, with top-three individual finishes in the 200 freestyle and 100 backstroke, which she will also compete in as a Wildcat.

Shaw is expecting a bit of altitude shock going from Colorado's high plains to the low-lying Bluegrass country around Lexington, but whether that will confer much of an advantage in the pool remains to be seen.

"It will be easier to practice and to breathe and to do certain underwater sets and hypoxic drills," she explained. "So it will help, but it's not a huge factor."

When she's not in the pool, Shaw plans to study pre-med and eventually become a physician's assistant, specializing in dermatology.

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