



SPORTS
Tough weekend for
Niwot basketball
P.10

What season is it?



Photo by Heather Rutherford

Just as it should be beginning to look a lot like Christmas, a weather phenomenon more commonly seen in the summer months made an appearance over Niwot. On Dec. 15, a double-rainbow appeared west of town as a fast-approaching snow squall came over the mountains, bringing cold air, gusty winds, and a very brief spate of precipitation.

Centennial State Ballet wows with 10th annual performance of The Nutcracker

By HANNAH STEWART

After pausing mid-season due to the pandemic, the [Centennial State Ballet](#) (CSB) was elated to return to Niwot High School to perform The Nutcracker this year. The 2021 production marks the company's tenth anniversary season and has moved from a completely online model to a hybrid one, offering in person performances in addition to the live-streamed option.

"Last season, we filmed our performances at locations around Longmont, partnering with local businesses and organizations to bring the story of The Nutcracker to life right here in the community," said Laura Malpass, Community Coordinator for CSB. "As we



Photo by Hannah Stewart

Niwot Junior Marie Hefley said, "We look up to the younger kids just as much as they look up to us and it's really special." She danced in the roles of maid, Snowflake Corps and Dew Drop in the Centennial State Ballet production of the Nutcracker.

continue to follow and embrace health and safety protocols, with the help of our intrepid community of volunteers, the dancers' masks for

each production have been beautifully incorporated into the costuming for each role."

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It's not too late! Think local for last minute gifts



Photo by Vicky Dorvee

Niwot's Conoco Gas Station is home to healthy potted green plants nice enough to be last minute holiday gifts.

By COURIER STAFF

We're in the home stretch of the holiday shopping season, and for those of you with a few names left to check off your gift list, be sure to consider one of the dozens of unique items from the artists, growers and crafters that call Niwot and Gunbarrel home.

Gas up and grab a gift

When you fill 'er up at the Niwot Conoco in the Cottonwood Shopping Center, don't just drive off - go inside where you'll find a treasure trove of charming gifts for your loved ones. You'll be stunned by the corner of the store loaded with healthy green potted plants. Would you believe there are \$1 used books, your favorite snacks and candies sitting next to some very tempting less familiar treats, tons of decorative knick

knacks and puzzles, and seriously, so much you didn't know you wanted or needed?

Here's a fun idea for a kid gift - create your own coupon for whatever denomination feels right along with a guaranteed interesting visit to the gas station where the coupon can be spent. It may take a few dozen times up and down the aisles to decide what to spend it on, but it will be a blast to go exploring.

Gifts from Niwot and Gunbarrel-based Foodie Favorites

Everyone likes to eat, and Niwot is home to unique world-class food and beverage options. Even better, gift certificate options where your friends or family can choose their own gift means it will

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Community

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C O R R E C T I O N

In the Dec. 15 issue of the Left Hand Valley Courier we incorrectly attributed the mural in the Niwot Road underpass to Ellen Haswell. While Ms. Haswell did help with many aspects of the mural, it was primarily the work of Giselle “Bre” Thiele. We apologize for any confusion. Ms. Haswell is the author of “A Little Book of Words for Those Who Grieve.”

The eagles have landed



Photo courtesy of Bill Ringer

Gunbarrel Estates resident Bill Ringer has eagle eyes and an eye for eagles. According to Ringer, both bald and golden eagles have been showing up more frequently. The two bald eagles pictured here were seen at sunset on Dec. 18 and a golden eagle was viewed just two days earlier.

“There are always more in the winter, but they can be seen here any time of year,” Ringer said. I grew up in Boulder and remember when a bald eagle sighting was front page news. The eagle comeback is a great success story for wildlife preservation. We have golden eagles too.... (It’s) always a treat to see the Eagles here- Boulder County Open space LOBO trail, Gunbarrel Estates.”

Left Hand Valley Courier

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Published weekly in Niwot, Colorado by Left Hand Valley Publishing, L.L.C. Member Colorado Press Association.

LHVC PET SPOTLIGHT

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Barley

This sweet and smart eight-year-old fellow is looking for his perfect match, could it be you? Barley is a bright and mature dog that has excellent obedience skills including advanced leash manners as well as the ability offer sit, down and “place” on cue. Barley loves his treats and will get very wiggly when he is especially pleased or excited! Barley is looking for a home where he can be the only beloved pet and would appreciate a family with high school age or older children, please. **If Barley sounds like he may be a good fit for your dog-loving family, please call (303)772-1232 or email info@longmonthumane.org for more information or come in for a visit today!**

Niwot Tavern holds winter gear drive

By KATRINA STROUD

Tara Shaheen and Stacy Szydle, owners of the Ni-

wot Tavern, are hosting their third annual winter gear drive. They're accepting donations up until Christmas

Eve and will distribute the items on Christmas Day.

In addition, the Niwot Tavern will be preparing 100 meatloaf meals, with the help of their supplier, U.S. Foods. Around 40 meals will be served at Roosevelt Park, where the winter gear will also be distributed. The rest of the meals and gear will be handed out to homeless people they find around the area.

Any leftovers will be donated the next day to the OUR Center in Longmont. The OUR Center is a community-based agency, where volunteers and church-goers provide culinary services, hospitality and child care, and financial literacy programs.

Some of the best items they have received so far include: 15 hand-sewn hats by an anonymous knitter and a continuous visitor who brings granola bars, socks, hats, and toothpaste.

With all the love and support from the community, there are still a few items that the winter gear drive is in desperate need of. They have plenty of coats and

blankets, but they would be more than happy if someone brought in:

Hygiene items (floss, toothpaste, toothbrushes, hairbrushes, bar soap, nail clippers, wash cloths, etc.),

menstrual products, and men's jeans and sweaters.

So if you're in the spirit of holiday giving, stop by the Niwot Tavern and help someone in need.



File photo

Niwot Tavern will be preparing and distributing 100 holiday meals and donated winter clothing at Roosevelt Park on Christmas Day.

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LoBo Trail and Twin Lakes 2022 improvements funded

By KRISTEN ARENDT

On Dec. 7, Boulder County Commissioners approved the budget to fund 23 of 32 proposed Boulder County Parks & Open Space projects.

The \$1.5 million line item for the proposed [Capital & Stewardship](#) plan is funded by the county open space sales tax, money that is designated to support the acquisition of open space and pay for programs that help preserve habitat, provide educational and recreational programs and create and maintain trails.

In addition to the sales tax funding, the county will utilize funding from grants and private partnerships. The total investment in the 2022 Capital & Stewardship Plan currently sits at just over \$4 million.

For 2022, of the 23 selected projects, the largest budget will go toward recreation and facilities, with Boulder County funding 10 total projects.

One such project focuses on resurfacing sections of the LoBo Trail. Portions of this trail, which connects Longmont to Boulder and runs through Niwot, were constructed about 20 years ago and have received minimal maintenance.

"We receive many reports



Courtesy image

Boulder County Parks and Open Space LoBo Trail resurfacing

of that trail being below grade with water ponding issues after it rains," Boulder County landscape architect Mary Olson said in a presen-

tation to the commissioners. "Resurfacing a couple sections of the trail will bring the trail back up to standards and reduce the ponding and

icing that can occur after precipitation."

Three sections of the LoBo Trail are slated to be resurfaced, including a stretch by Lefthand Valley Grange Trailhead, a portion east of N. 71st Street, and a section by Twin Lakes. In addition to reducing standing water in the summer, the trail resurfacing will additionally improve safety by eliminating icy conditions in the winter. Total cost for the project is estimated at \$54,550.

Also on the table for 2022 is a bank stabilization and erosion control project at the popular Twin Lakes Open Space in Gunbarrel.

"The west lake of Twin Lakes has been devastated by overuse by dogs and humans with severe erosion along the shores of the entire West Lake," Olson said. "The widening trail is damaging tree roots and the loss of soil has created multiple safety issues."

In addition to stabilizing the banks and applying erosion control blanketing, the county plans to improve the public access points to the area. By adding dedicated entry points, dangerous areas along the bank can be closed to the public using fencing. The project is budgeted at \$37,562.

Other trail, recreation, and facilities improvements

on deck for 2022 include:

- Coalton Trail: Trail upgrades will include re-routing a steep section to prevent erosion and bring the trail up to meet ADA and Rocky Mountain Greenway standards.
 - Tolland Ranch Trail: This proposed 6.5-mile multi-use trail would connect West Magnolia, a popular mountain biking trail network near Nederland, to the Jenny Creek Trail allowing access to the Continental Divide.
 - Rock Creek Trail: A joint project with the cities of Louisville and Lafayette, this proposed 2.1-mile trail will connect between the Coal Creek and Rock Creek Trails.
 - Heil Valley Ranch: As recovery continues from the Calwood Fire, the county plans to upgrade the trailhead parking, adding an additional 20 parking spots.
- Special Project Manager at Boulder County Parks and Open Space Tina Nielsen, who hosted the presentation, noted that all of these projects work toward the four key goals of the department's 2025 Strategic Focus — cultural relevance and inclusion, resilience, maintenance backlog, and safety.

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Gift ideas for the bibliophile in your life

By HANNAH STEWART

Books are wonderful gifts because of their versatility. Especially now with the holidays, they allow you to travel to different places and times, all while staying comfortably snug at home.

Whether you're a library fan, local bookshop lover, or an online shopper, we've got a few holiday/winter suggestions for our Courier readers. Another option, thanks to The Wandering Jellyfish Bookshop, is to buy a bookshop gift card, which supports local bookstores. Niwot's Inkberry Books has a large selection of books that's sure to appeal to most readers.

Now, in no particular order, are five holiday books sure to warm your heart—

Christmas at Rosie Hopkins' Sweetshop: Jenny Colgan takes readers to a sleepy English village called Lipton, but this holiday season is a little more exciting than usual. Rosie, the local sweetshop owner, is at the center of some holiday-chaos. Her Australian family comes to visit, there's a small tragedy that threatens the school Christmas pageant and like any holiday love story, there's an element of will-they-won't-they. What I loved about this book is that it isn't some Hallmark story, nor is it one with a life lesson. Instead, it's a heartwarming story about people and the holidays. I also loved how real

the characters seemed. Between their dialogue and descriptions, it was immediately clear that Colgan took time to really develop her characters and their places within the story.

The Holiday Swap: This holiday romcom by Maggie Knox is sure to give you Parent Trap vibes. It may not exactly be trading places to get your parents back together, but it's just as entertaining. With mere days until Christmas, Charlie Goodwin loses her sense of taste and smell, which is a bummer for anyone around the holidays, but especially for her since she's the judge on a holiday-cooking show. Somewhat similarly, Charlie's twin, who runs a bakery, is also having a hectic season and desperately needs a break. So they switch places, but it's not the simple solution they thought it would be. Knox is a talented and descriptive writer—in the first few pages, she instantly puts you in Charlie's headspace, which makes the read that much more enjoyable and evocative.

Llama Llama Holiday Drama: If you're not a holiday romance fan and you've got a little one at home, Anna Dewdney's book may be the one for you. It's a read-along style book for young readers, and it's super cute. Plus, Dewdney expertly captures the feeling of trying to shop and spend time with your child—trying to be subtle, trying to include them, even if they don't want to

bake cookies, just eat them. The plot itself is simple, but the rhyming and illustration makes it an entertaining and short read.

Holiday in Death: JD Robb's noir murder mystery is a bit of a non-sequitur in this list since most holiday stories are more on the heartwarming side. This one is enthralling because it follows a killer Santa Claus and follows Lieutenant Eve Dallas, who's hot on the case. Right off the bat, Robb is a highly descriptive author and instantly overwhelms

readers with details and a vivid scene. Honestly, this doesn't seem like a novel for the faint of heart, but if you're a murder-mystery/true crime lover who'd like a hint of the holidays, this may be the book for you. Plus, it's set in the future, so it's also got a dystopian vibe that will appeal to those fans as well.

Holiday Ever After: Jill Shalvis has a nice collection of holiday-themed short stories in this collection, and it's a nice mix of unique yet semi-stereotypical

holiday stories. There's love, surprises, and anxiety over seeing the love interests—the usual, but Shalvis is a descriptive author who draws you into each story. The way she writes the characters make them seem so realistic and honest, it's like watching a holiday romance instead of just reading one. At the same time, since the sources of conflict are a little more relatable than many of the plotlines found in Hallmark films, it makes the stories that much more enjoyable.



File photo

Inkberry Books in Cottonwood Square and Wandering Jellyfish on 2nd Ave. have all of your holiday book shopping covered.

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Boulder County presents annual prairie dog report

By KATRINA STROUD

On Dec. 14, Boulder County Parks & Open Space held its annual meeting to discuss this year's prairie dog removal activities and the population updates on burrowing owls and black-footed ferrets.

According to the presentation, removal occurred on 41 "no prairie dog areas" (NPD) properties on park or open space property, and tenants were treated on 19 properties.

As of this year, 6,099 burrows have been treated with gas cartridges, which produce smoke and carbon monoxide once ignited. Gas cartridges can be flammable and should only be used in non-grassy open fields. Carbon monoxide (CO) is a popular fumigant in prairie dog removal, as it is considered a humane method of putting them to sleep, and it does not cause secondary



File photo

Boulder County Parks and Open Space delivered its annual report on prairie dog management on county lands in 2021.

toxicity. For instance, if a hawk ate a prairie dog that died of carbon monoxide, the hawk wouldn't get sick or die from consuming it.

The other 23,579 burrows

were treated with compressed carbon monoxide, which is piped down into burrows with hoses. Compressed CO is often safer to use than gas cartridges, as it is easier to

target the burrowing system and there is no likelihood of causing a fire. In total, 29,678 burrows were treated and removal occurred on 318 acres.

There are a total of 17,198

"no prairie dog acres," but 4.4% of the land is currently occupied by prairie dog colonies. This year, 1,499 animals in total were trapped. 601 of them were taken to a black-footed ferret recovery facility and the other 898 animals were taken to a raptor rehabilitation.

Other non-lethal methods were used for prairie dog removal this year. Barrier fences were installed in a total of 6,475 feet on agricultural property and another 650 feet were installed due to "neighbor issues."

Boulder County has seen a decrease in prairie dog colonization this year in comparison to 2020. The Habitat Conservation Areas (HCA), also known as areas suitable for prairie dog habitat, totaled 1,150 acres, decreased by

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The service will be In-Person and Live on Niwot UMC Facebook page. Masks required for those gathering in-person.

Embrace the community, transform the world

Prairie Dog

Continued from Page 6

26.28%. The Multiple Objective Areas (MOA), areas that can support prairie dogs with other activities, such as trails and grazing, totaled 1,670 acres, decreased by 20.89%.

Burrowing Owl Management has seen a decline in burrowing owl nesting since 2019, with less than 10 recorded sightings in 2021. The management team was operated by 29 volunteers and completed 685 hours surveying and monitoring the owls. From their collected data, the management team is proposing stronger maintenance of prairie dog populations to provide burrows for owls to nest in. The number of habitat acreage required to improve burrowing owl populations is still undecided.

Recent success has been found in black-footed ferret populations. Delta Dust, a waterproof dust used for eliminating pests, was used in prairie dog colonies within the South County Grasslands and on Rabbit Mountain since 2016. The prairie dogs living in those areas have been treated by the Sylvatic Plague Vaccine this year. The sylvatic plague is a bacterial disease transmitted by fleas, and Prairie dogs are susceptible to this, to this most susceptible to prairie dogs, which results in the decline of black-footed ferret populations, the rarest mammal in North America, as the ferret species depends on them for food and shelter.

So far, 52 acres of the South Grasslands and 1,096 acres of Rabbit Mountain have been treated with the vaccine, which is covered in peanut butter as a tasty bait. The current annual costs for

the sylvatic plague vaccine, the delta dust, and the labor required is \$21,286. The costs and materials are expected to increase as colonies grow.

The management team at the Carolyn Holmberg Preserve at Rock Creek Farm is considering removing the lethal control moratorium. The team reported, "Exterminations will not occur during the pup-rearing time period of March 1 to May 31 annually. This timeframe was selected to capture the peak rearing season to limit the potential of young being left unattended in the burrows. The exception will be in cases where dispersing individuals attempt to colonize an NPD without prairie dogs. If these areas are free of prairie dogs as of March 1 of each year, direct lethal control may be used to prevent recolonization during this time period."

The report also stated, "Removal of the moratorium would result in fewer prairie dog deaths due to better overall control and reduce on-going impacts to agricultural properties and tenants."

"Given current staffing and resources, staff have not been able to successfully clear NPD areas with the moratorium. Staff request will be to lift the moratorium," the team concluded.

As of now, staff proposed changes to Section 8.3.3 of the Prairie Dog Habitat Element of the Grassland and Shrubland Management Policy regarding the seasonal moratorium on lethal control. This item is scheduled to be presented to the Parks & Open Space Advisory Committee (POSAC) on Thursday, Jan. 27, followed by a presentation to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) for approval on Feb. 10.

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Gift Guide
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be sure to be a hit with them. Options for food include Cottonwood Square standards like the more relaxed Niwot Tavern or newly opened fine dining staple Farow. Second Avenue destinations range from newly renamed Italian spot Cimminis (formerly Pinnochios). If you head to Gunbarrel, you can give someone the gift of either a sweet or a savory pie at Tip Top Pies or a nice night out at Apertivo.

If your foodie focuses on beverages, there are plenty of world-class breweries you can buy from and support area businesses. Head to Fritz Family Brewers, Avery Brewing, Beyond the Mountain Brewing or Gunbarrel Brewing. They've got both beer and merchandise that will please anyone on your shopping list.

For the art lover in your life

The Left Hand Valley is home to dozens of talented painters, designers, sculptors, makers, and crafters, so it's not hard to come by artwork that is as beautiful and unique as the region it comes from.

Local potter [Mark Rossier](#) makes his home in Niwot, as well as his nature-inspired ceramic and wood-fired creations, which are for sale in his showroom online and at 400 Franklin Street. Also from Niwot is critically acclaimed painter/photographer [David Bjorkman](#), whose recent work includes photos taken on Niwot trails and can be found on the back wall of Fly Away Home. The Courier's own Ann Whitehill handcrafts [fine leather](#) bags that are as functional as they are stylish - visit [annwhitehillstudio.com](#).



Photo by Vicky Dorvee

The Nook inside the Niwot Market has decorative and functional items that make great stocking stuffers and hostess gifts.

[com](#).

Exhibits of local artists and creators are regularly featured on the walls of many Niwot businesses, including Winot Coffee, Little Holiday Shops, Fly Away Home, Inkberry Books, and Old Oak Coffee. Or, head over to osmosis art and architecture, where you can purchase prints of the winning entries from the 2021 Why Not Niwot juried art show, or artwork from other local artists, including Gunbarrel painter [Lanya Deeb](#).

Support the local pollinator population

Bees, butterflies and other flying insects and animals play a critical role in the life cycle of flowering plants, including most fruit and vegetable species. Ensuring the health of these [pollinator populations](#) is critical, and it's becoming easier than ever to do so.

If someone on your list has a sweet tooth, pick up some honey from local cultivators Jeff and Dawn Server at [Meadow Lake Honey](#), and help support the [local bee population](#). For the gardener in your life, give a gift card to [The Flower Bin](#) or [Harlequin's Gardens](#), along with a list of [pollinator-friendly flowers](#). Harlequin's also has [supplies for the budding beekeeper](#) in your life.

Niwot in watercolor

Niwot's historic downtown is a frequent subject of resident and renowned artist [Jane Langdon](#), whose graceful style evokes



Photo by Vicky Dorvee

All natural cannabis edibles might be just the perfect gift for your recipient, available at Starbuds Niwot

warmth and nostalgia. Pick up a print of her vibrant watercolors at one of many Niwot retailers, including Little Bird, Wise Buys Antiques, osmosis art and architecture, and Niwot Market.

Support local food producers

Give the gift of fresh, locally-sourced produce, meat, or dairy products with a share in one of the area's many [Community Supported Agriculture](#) programs, such as nearby [Kilt Farm](#) (8140 Oxford Rd, Longmont) or [Ollin Farms](#). (8627 N. 95th St., Longmont).

Shares start as low as \$12 per

week for singles, with seasons typically lasting from April or May to November.

Make a charitable donation on someone's behalf.

Colorado Gives Day was Dec. 7, but it's not too late to make a gift donation to one of the [dozens of local organizations](#) that serve the Left Hand Community. 2021 has been an especially difficult year for many of these groups, as their fundraising activities were severely curtailed due to pandemic restrictions. Even a small

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Gift Guide

Continued from Page 8

monetary gift could help maintain Niwot Children's Park, [provide transportation to the elderly](#), or support [therapeutic services for the disabled](#). Some of these organizations are also offering [holiday items for sale](#).

Niwot Market has you covered

[Niwot Market](#) offers a wide range of local products for your holiday home and table, as well as gourmet chef-prepared foods from their deli. While you're there, check out Pebble Art Jewelry for offerings from local jewelers, such as Kate Head; Juniper & Twine, for a unique floral creation; and The Nook's boutique shelves in the produce section featuring small very giftable decorative and useful household items. Don't forget to show support for your favorite independent grocer with a "Niwot Market" emblazoned T-Shirt, tote bag, or hat.



Photo by Vicky Dorvee

Visiting Belle Terre is so delightful, it's like taking a quick trip to France and finding the perfect gift for a friend.

Special shops right around the corner

Bruce Rabaler and Liz Gould aren't just co-owners of Niwot's eclectic [Little Bird](#) (122 2nd Ave.), they are also talented creators in their own right. The local landscape features prominently in [Rabaler's photography](#), which can be found in a 2022 calendar or for purchase online. Little Bird also carries Gould's [handcrafted jewelry](#) and a line of [artisanal soaps](#).

A Few of a Kind Vintage + Mercantile [www.fewofakindvintage.com](#) (124 2nd Ave.) may be a newbie on the retail scene in Niwot, but it took no time at all for it to feel like the shop totally belongs here. The modern mercantile does what its name suggests - offers rare wonderful items that are simple and special. And there are new goods all the time in a range of prices...some tantalize the tongue, some the eyes, others the nose. There are hats, candles, cocktail mixers, journals, and distinctive found items.

Treat yourself or a loved one at Niwot Jewelry - Niwot's family owned jewelry store has something for everyone, from affordable to extravagant! Visit [niwotjewelry.com](#)

Make them so much merrier

Don't fret about these gifts being the right size. It's easy to find a present at Starbuds [https://www.starbuds.us/niwot](#) that fits just right. If you want to give pain relief, relaxation, mood elevation, or general merriment, the Niwot recreational marijuana dispensary has experts to help guide you through the decision making process. There's a multitude of cannabis products to choose from - edibles, creams, flower, and accompanying supplies.

Nothing will raise your family and friends' spirits more than when you show up for festivities with a bottle or two from Niwot Liquor [https://niwot.com/food-drink/niwot-liquor](#). A gorgeous bottle of whiskey or wine is sure to bring a smile to the recipient. The extensive beer selection and the well-curated hard liquors make gifts from this little store a big hit.

Feeling a little French?

Belle Terre Floral [https://www.belleterrefloral.com](#) in Cottonwood Shopping Center is fantastic with its luscious bath bombs, candles, and colognes, along with ornaments, clothing,

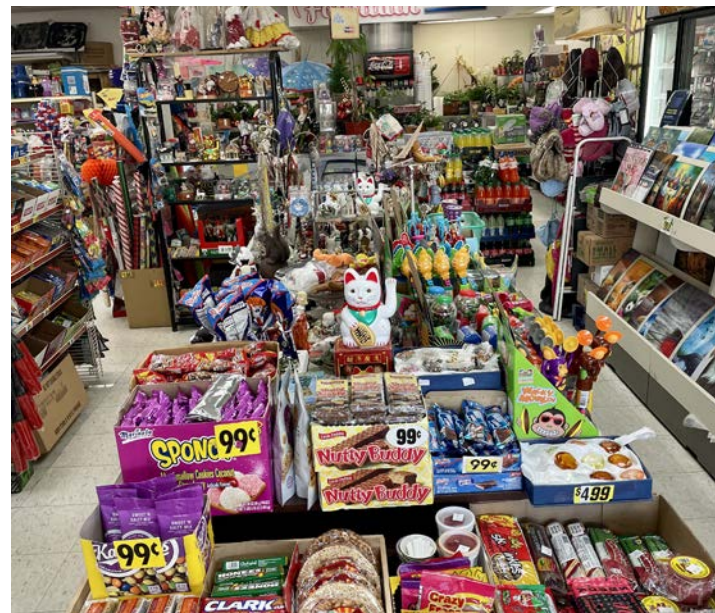


Photo by Vicky Dorvee

Explore the treasures of this special store and you're sure to find a gift worth giving.

bags, exotic candies, and super special succulents and houseplants. Owner Sarah Cioni's greeting cards with her own still-life flower photos are gorgeous keepsake gifts. And oh yeah, there are flowers too...lots and lots of stunning flowers.

Still stumped?

For that hard-to-buy recipient on your list, consider these out-of-the-box options.

- A Colorado-themed gift basket and a custom printed canvas bag at [It's Only Natural Gifts](#), based in Niwot.

- Pick up a [sugar cookie kit](#) or travel mug from Old Oak Coffee.
- Give the gift of weekly news and support local journalism at the same time with a [gift subscription](#) to the [Left Hand Valley Courier](#).
- Gift cards or certificates from many Niwot businesses are available at a special kiosk in Niwot Market.
- Or Visit [Niwot.com](#) for a list of food, retail and services available for creative gifting.

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Niwot girls struggle in Trojan Classic Invitational

By JACK CARLOUGH

Not much went right for the Niwot girls basketball team in the Trojan Classic Invitational, hosted by Longmont High from Dec. 16-18. The Cougars' scorching start to the season was simmered with losses to Thomas Jefferson, Evergreen and Longmont.

In the span of about 48 hours, Niwot watched its 4-1 record slip to 4-4.

Up first in the tournament for Niwot was Thomas Jefferson on Dec. 18. Niwot trailed by just three points following the first quarter but progressively watched the deficit increase in an eventual 46-23 demise. Head coach Jon Hill believed the Cougars struggled with focus, a rare occurrence thus far under the first-year head coach.

"That's the first time that we didn't play with heart," Hill said following the loss. "I think we wanted to be everywhere but on a basketball court."

Standout freshman guard Rose Pacheco, who was com-



Photo by Jocelyn Rowley

Freshman Rose Pacheco moves past a Thomas Jefferson defender during Niwot's first game of the Trojan Classic on Dec. 16.

ing off a 22-point performance against Middle Park on Dec. 4, once again led

Niwot in scoring with six points. While it wasn't her best shooting performance of

the season (2-for-9), she was a much-needed spark off the bench.

"This team has really picked me up, and they're just all really positive," Pacheco said. "It helps me stay in my game, especially when we're all cheering for each other."

Hill had a similar observation when he noticed Niwot's positive attitude on the bench. He said that senior Grace Crall, in particular, was keeping her teammates upright.

"Grace Crall made a comment of 'we've got to be good teammates, no matter what the score is,' because we had some girls kind of getting down on each other," Hill said. "That's important because we talk all the time about we don't need to be a good teammate when we're up 20, we need to be a good teammate when we're down 20."

Despite the leadership, Niwot's rough stretch continued the following day against Evergreen. The Cougars-Cougars matchup was

controlled from start to finish by Evergreen, ending in a 50-27 loss. Complimenting Pacheco's 11-point output was fellow freshman Evelyn Melis, who had seven. No other Niwot player surpassed two points.

In Niwot's tournament finale against crosstown rival Longmont on Dec. 18, the Cougars had no answer for Trojans sophomore guard Savannah Pohl, who recorded a double-double in their 46-23 win. High school double-doubles don't come often, but Pohl did so easily with 16 points and 11 rebounds.

The bright spot for Niwot was senior guard Carly Toothaker's aggressiveness and free-throw shooting. She scored five of her seven points from the charity stripe on the afternoon.

Up next for Niwot is another crosstown matchup at Silver Creek on Dec. 21. The girls will then have a couple of weeks for winter break before their next game at Battle Mountain on Jan. 5.

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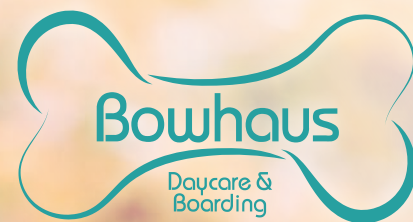
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Ravaged by COVID, Cougars limp through weekend tournament

By JACK CARLOUGH

It hasn't been easy for Niwot boys basketball to put together a formidable team in recent weeks. Head coach Clay Wittrock estimated that since early December, nine Cougars have missed games and/or practices due to impacts of COVID-19.

Niwot canceled its recent Steamboat Springs trip (which has been rescheduled for Jan. 4) and is waiting to reschedule games against Colorado Academy and Eagle Valley that were missed during a five-day program shutdown.

Low numbers and moving pieces have been a stark reality for Wittrock this entire season.

"We've been fighting injury and illness since tryouts," Wittrock said on Dec. 16.

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Photo by Jocelyn Rowley

Senior Rowan Granat jumps over a Bear Creek defender to score two of his 13 points in Niwot's opening game in the Longmont Trojan Classic Tournament on Dec. 16.

Niwot finishes second in REX Coaches Invite

Codevilla breaks two school records

By JACK CARLOUGH

Senior swimmer Mary Codevilla's Niwot legacy grew a little larger following a pair of historic races at the REX Coaches Invite on Dec. 18.

Codevilla, a Notre Dame commit, has been swimming for the USA National Junior Team and the REX Invite was her first meet of the season with Niwot. Her senior debut was a good one as she broke a pair of school records at the Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center in Thornton. Her time of 2:02.56 in the 200 IM and 50.71 in the 100 freestyle were both Niwot bests.

Unsurprisingly, both of Codevilla's record times had

her finishing first in both events. Codevilla's efforts helped Niwot finish second in 4A at the meet with 155 points, well ahead of Golden's third-place finish of 30 points. Heritage won 4A at 269 points.

Second-year head coach Kyle Bachrodt was "pleasantly surprised" with the results.

"Our team right now is very happy with second place and to win in 4A by the margin that we did, is nothing to scoff at," Bachrodt said.

Codevilla wasn't the only top-three individual finisher for Niwot, however, as sophomore Jamieson Legh, who also swims for the junior national team, placed third in the 100 fly (56.75).

With Codevilla swimming her final high school season, Bachrodt is confident that Legh is ready to take the lead next year.

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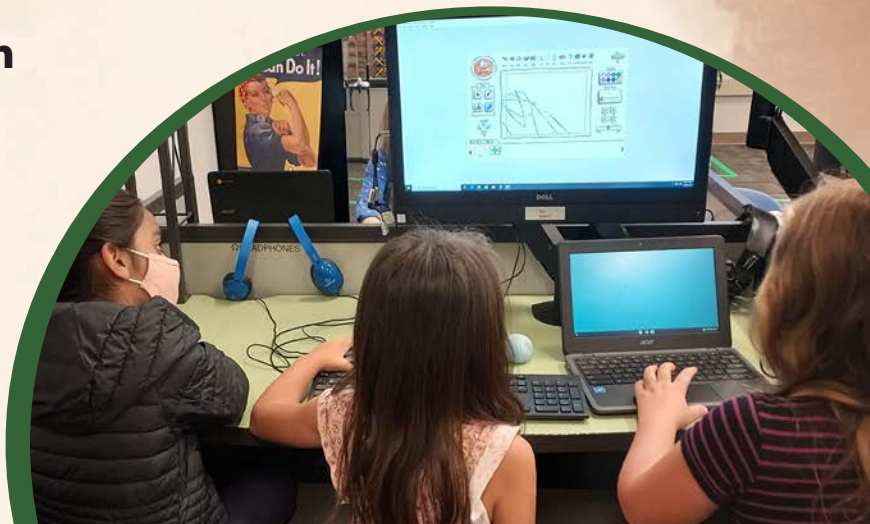
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Ballet

Continued from Page 1

It was immediately obvious in watching the performance just how much thought went into the production. CSB is the [premier youth ballet company](#) in Northern Colorado and expertly works to develop and showcase its diverse cast. With company dancers ranging from kindergarten to college, as well as adult guest dancers, CSB is undoubtedly diverse in skill and experience. But that only adds to the company's charm and community.

"I was just thinking about how this is my senior year and all the times I've been standing backstage and the Sugar Plum Fairy walked by," said Lillian Vance, a senior at Silver Creek. "Now, I've been dancing with her [the Sugar Plum Fairy] since I was a small child." In addition to playing the dragon in "The Chinese Dance" and being part of the Flower Corps, Vance is the Snow Queen in the 2021 production.

Abby Spiegel, who danced as the Moonlight Duchess, an angel, and in the Flower Corps, is another Silver Creek senior who shared Vance's feelings. "They watch us and say 'wow,' but we also watch them and say the exact same thing. They're maturing and they're getting better and it's awesome to see every day."

However, being part of CSB is more than just the opportunity to develop dancing skills. Malpass said that live performance helps dancers



Photo by Hannah Stewart

The Centennial State Ballet put on a show to a packed house this weekend at Niwot High School. Patrons could also support the company by purchasing a variety of ballet and Nutcracker themed gifts.

to prepare for life on and off the stage. She believes that it helps dancers develop skills such as cooperation, attention to detail and being one's own self-advocate.

"Our mission is to engage, enrich, and inspire the human spirit through exceptional youth ballet performances. We hope our patrons are transported into a space of joy and beauty with each performance," Malpass said.

Ellie Hara, an instructor at CSB and Drasselmeyer in the 2021 production, said that she loves CSB because it's a great opportunity to be creative and build community. She also expressed excitement about being part of the production because of CSB's emphasis around inclusivity and desire to help its members succeed.

"It's about helping them develop their skills and talents and ability to really think through 'what do I need to do for me,'" she said. "And have that discipline and self-drive to do something because it's something that carries over to all aspects of life."

This idea of self-drive was echoed by the dancers as well. Reese Ransweiler, a Niwot High School senior who performed as part of the Snowflake and Flower Corps, as well as performing as a soloist for the Arabian dance, explained that it's a huge time commitment. "We're dancing 20-30 hours per week, so that on top of high school stuff and college apps, that's a lot," she said. Even so, it's clear she has a passion for the art form.

Even through her mask, one could hear her excitement as she expressed hope that her younger peers continue to work with CSB. "Remembering that love [of dance] is really important."

The dancers themselves weren't the only ones who openly appeared to love the performance. While it was clear that the dancers were having fun, it was equally obvious the audience on Sunday enjoyed the event. For example, during the Sugar Plum Realm Dance near the end of the production, the NHS auditorium was filled with hoots, hollers, whistles and raucous applause as Longmont High School senior Deborah Hegg pranced across the stage with her co-star Mendel Boothby, a

guest artist.

"Performing is my favorite part," said Hegg, beaming. "Feeling the lights on your face, it's magical... [and] their [the younger dancers'] encouragement, when they come up to me after the show, that warms my heart so much and I want them to feel the same thing when they're older."

The CSB dancers all seemed very encouraging and hopeful for the future of the company, with many of the older dancers offering advice. Emily Lindberg, a junior at Silver Creek, encouraged students to "be kind to your body, be kind to others and know that you'll always have friends in us."

Marie Hefley, a Niwot junior, added, "You're going to learn so much through [ballet]...CSB is a great place to learn friendship and kindness, and the sense of community is incredible."

If you missed either show on Dec. 18 or 19, the taped performance will be available at the CSB's website soon. Check out their archives to enjoy previous performances: <https://b.link/CSBOnDemand>

CSB programs can be found here: <https://www.flipsnack.com/csbbboxoffice/>

CSB is a nonprofit ballet company and a community effort. If you'd like to become involved, email engage@centennialstateballet.org

In the Spring, they will be performing Don Quixote. Visit <https://centennialstateballet.org/> for more information.

Girls Swim

Continued from Page 11

"Yes, she's (Legh) younger, but she is fully prepared to fill in those shoes -- and Mary wears big shoes," Bachrodt said. "She's set the bar high, but Jamieson is, whether she knows it or not, she is ready and she is primed to take on that torch, to be the next in line for Niwot."

The Cougars earned 70 of their 155 points with strong

finishes in their two relay races. A team of Legh, Codevilla, Stephanie Mow and Rowan Lavigne placed third (1:37.98) in the 200 free and eighth in the 400 free (3:42.82).

Bachrodt said that Niwot was missing a few of its fastest swimmers, including Charlotte Heuer, and it was encouraging to see others step up.

"Relay swims, as a team, I think that we surprised ourselves," Bachrodt said. "Our 200 free relay especially really swam their hearts out and they

did something that I wasn't expecting."

Junior Julianna Strobe swam in the 100 breaststroke and shaved nearly three seconds off her preliminary time to finish 23rd (1:09.79). Another junior, Mow, also had top-30 finishes in both the 50 free and 100 back.

Niwot will use the next few weeks to continue breaking in the new SVVSD pool at Silver Creek in preparation for the Mustang Invite at the VMAC on Jan. 8.

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Boys Basketball

Continued from Page 11

"This week was the first time with three practices with basically the same group of guys, and then still adding guys daily."

After winning their first game of the season, the Cougars are now 1-5 following losses to Bear Creek, Evergreen and Longmont in Longmont High's Trojan Classic Invitational.

The Cougars' depth was tested again on Dec. 16 with five players out due to COVID-19 protocols in their opening game of the event. Loaded with multiple junior varsity swing players, Niwot was simply outmatched against Bear Creek in a 58-38 loss.

Senior Rowan Granat took advantage of his availability with a 13-point, six-rebound performance. The six-foot four-inches forward missed all of last season with an injury and is quickly making up for lost time.

"He's still getting his legs back and I think getting

used to playing at his best," Wittrock said. "I think we saw some good spurts of that tonight. We saw him attacking a little better and finding that (high level of play)."

On the other end of the grade spectrum, freshman Jack Jarvis also had a solid offensive performance with 10 points. Wittrock said his young point guard still has some things to learn but is coming along nicely.

"He brings some talented abilities on the offensive side that helped us out tonight," Wittrock said. "He's just got to keep learning how hard you got to play defense at this level."

However, the Cougars struggled with developing fast break opportunities and turned the ball over 27 times. But considering the challenge of having to mesh with multiple replacement players, Wittrock was proud of how his team fought.

"We had moments in there where we settled down and did some really good things, and then we'd manage to turn around and do something that wasn't quite as smart. I think

that's part of when you've got guys that are not quite on the same page, they haven't played together as much."

Evergreen came next for Niwot on Dec. 17 in what could be known as the Jack Jarvis game. The freshman hit six three-pointers en route to an impressive 27 points. Jarvis' effort wasn't quite enough, however, as the Cougars fell 63-52.

After falling behind 16-3 after the first quarter, Niwot outscored Evergreen 49-47 in the final three quarters to make things interesting.

On the boards, sophomore Brock Rothstein and senior Stephen Sahaj, who were both still quarantined for the Bear Creek game, combined for 10 rebounds in their return. Junior Jerek Funkhouser chipped in as well with 10 points.

Niwot wrapped up the round robin tournament on Dec. 18 with a 63-22 loss to Longmont.

The Cougars play at Silver Creek on Dec. 21 before enjoying a two-week break that ends Jan. 4 at Steamboat Springs.



Photo by Jocelyn Rowley

Freshman Jack Jarvis tries to elude two defenders during Niwot's game against Bear Creek on Dec. 16.

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