



INSIDE
**Troop 161 adapts
to virtual scouting**
P. 11

The 'Niwot Buffer' likely to grow with new Open Space purchase



Photo by: Patricia Logan

Views of the Flatirons and farmland would be preserved if the county finalizes a deal for 40 acres west of the Diagonal and south of Oxford Road.

By **PATRICIA LOGAN**

A 40-acre property west of Niwot has been eyed by Boulder County for years, prized for its views along the Diagonal Highway and for its agricultural use. This week, it is being recommended for purchase as open space, pending approval by the Boulder County Commissioners. The Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee (POSAC) earlier recommended the purchase.

The land is west of the Diagonal Highway, south of Oxford Road. Some of it abuts the highway directly and a portion is west of the Kilt Farm on the corner of that intersection. The purchase does not include other land owned by the Chandlers, which is north of Oxford Road. The sellers are willing, the funds are there and it meets the acquisition goals of Parks and Open Space by preserving rural lands and scenic buffers, according to county staff.

The property is owned by Darrell and Geraldine Chandler, who will be paid \$1,250,000 if the deal is approved. The 40-acre parcel also includes 20 shares of Left Hand Ditch water and .50 shares of the Williamson Ditch.

"This property has been a priority for the program for many years," said Sandra Duff, senior land officer for the county. "The location, the willingness of the sellers to sell, and the benefits it will provide for the community through the Open Space program is why this is unique." The land is also characterized as "an important piece in the Niwot area community buffer."

Duff said that if it isn't purchased by the county, the property could be sold for development for one single-family residential home. The property also qualifies for two Transferable Development Rights (TDRs), which could be sold for the right to construct homes in the Niwot area on land which is part of an approved subdivision.

If the open space purchase goes through, the county intends to sell the property at a later date, subject to a conservation easement, which would ensure that it continues as agricultural land. It is currently used to grow hay, any future sale would also need to be approved by the county commissioners. Duff said it would likely be a small agricultural operator.

Niwot Tavern giving back on Christmas



Photo by Michael Rickicki

The indoor dining area at Niwot Tavern, once filled with diners, is now filled with donations for coat drive and booze baskets for sale.

By **MICHAEL RICKICKI**

Owners of Niwot Tavern are conducting their second annual coat drive to help the homeless as the holidays approach.

The inside lobby, once filled with people, is currently filled with boxes of coats, hats, blankets and hygiene essentials, all to be donated to organizations with less support.

"We try to deliver to places that don't get as many donations," co-owner Stacy Szydlek said. "A lot of the well-known shelters get overloaded with donations while the smaller ones are left without, so we do what we can to help." Szydlek delivered the first round of donations to Longmont. "We dropped off a lot of hats and coats to Tay, who runs a soup kitchen and gives supplies to the homeless."

The 2020 report on the state of homelessness by MDHI stated that at least 31,207 people reached out for services related to homelessness between July 1, 2019 and June 30, 2020 in Denver, Adams, Arapahoe, Douglas, Jefferson, Broomfield and Boulder Counties. MDHI

Continued on Page 8

Niwot LID board considers 2021 marketing plan



Photo by Ann Whitehill

The three-weekend Niwot Holiday Magic celebration is one of the events that economic director Catherine McHale helped reshape in light of 2020's ongoing challenges.

By **JOCELYN ROWLEY**

At the final monthly meeting of 2020, the Niwot Local

Improvement District's Advisory Committee met virtually to consider two funding requests related to marketing and economic development in 2021.

Treasurer's Report

But before the fun could get underway, the board heard from LID Treasurer Bruce Rabeler with an update on the district's finances through the end of November. To date, the board has approved \$254,303.08 in funding requests in 2020, including \$101,512 for the public parking lot. This exceeded the 2020 budget allotment by \$104,990.08. To fund the shortfall, the board will need to seek a supplemental allotment from the district's capital reserve balance, which is approximately \$220,620. With no further funding requests expected in 2020, Rabeler doesn't anticipate much change in the final totals.

The figures are not quite as

Continued on Page 4

Community

CALENDAR

COVID-19 UPDATES

Beginning Dec. 9, the Boulder County Department of Public Health will begin hosting a weekly COVID-19 update virtually and by phone every Wednesday at 3:30 p.m.. The first update will include information about the local and state COVID-19 outlook and an overview of COVID-19 vaccine distribution plans for Colorado. Future sessions will include similar status updates as well as timely topics or areas of

concern. For details, including the video link and phone number for future sessions, visit www.boco.org/COVID19CommunityUpdates.

HOLIDAY LIGHTS FOOD DRIVE

From sunset to 9:30 p.m. through Jan. 6, Chuck Rodgers' drive-through holiday light extravaganza at 5980 79th Street in Niwot is on display for free to the public. For the fifth straight year, Rodgers will be accepting donations of money or

canned food on behalf of Longmont's Meals on Wheels program, a service that provides meals to the elderly and disabled in the area.

NIWOT HOLIDAY MARKET

The Niwot Business Association is sponsoring a Niwot Holiday Market from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m, Saturday, Dec. 5, featuring special appearances from Santa and Mrs. Claus, throughout the Niwot business district. The Niwot Community Semi-Marching Free Grange Band will perform at 11 a.m. near Niwot Real Estate.

Niwot LID Advisory Committee seeks candidates for upcoming vacancies



File photo

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



Christmas Eve

5:00 pm - Live on NUMC Facebook page

6:30 pm - Gather in church parking lot for Candlelight Singing of Silent Night (distanced, w/masks)

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WINC HOLIDAY FAYRE

The annual Women's International Niwot Club Holiday Fayre, slated for Dec. 12, has been adapted to maintain compliance with Boulder County COVID regulations. Craft and food vendors have paired up with Niwot merchants who are providing indoor space to avoid the large indoor gatherings of years past. Vendors are scheduled to be open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., with holiday music throughout the business district.

By JOCELYN ROWLEY

commissioners, who serve as the board of directors for the district.

Boulder County is seeking applications for three openings on the Niwot Local Improvement District (LID) Advisory Committee, a nine-member independent board that "prioritizes expenditures of the LID sales tax revenue," and makes recommendations to the county

The Niwot LID was formed in 1992 and was authorized to collect a half-percent sales tax to pay for street, drainage and other improvements in Old Town, beginning in 1993. In 2007 following a successful Niwot effort to change state law, voters in the LID

Continued on Page 9



Left Hand Valley Courier

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Find out more about our team at LHVC.com/About

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LHVC PET SPOTLIGHT



Meet Ryan. This adorable senior fellow is looking for a forever home of his own through Longmont Humane Society Right now. Ryan is eight years old, and possesses many of the qualities that we all appreciate in older dogs; he is a good listener, has wonderful house manners and is happy to relax and nap while you get along with the business of your day. Ryan has been enjoying the comfort of a loving foster home while he waits to meet his perfect match and here's what they have to say. "Ryan is a sweet, gentle soul who barks more in his sleep than when awake. When people hear that he's eight-years-old, they say 'He's an old man,' but you would be surprised how energetic and playful he is. He loves tugging on ropes, chasing after lasers and playing catch with bouncy balls. He also LOVES car rides. That will get him up any time. Once he warms up to you, he loves cuddling, lays on your lap and sleeps for hours. Just remember to have your zoom calls muted because his snores can be loud!" Ryan can be paired with the right dog, though he is looking for a home with no kitties and high school age or older children, please. To learn more about Ryan or to make an appointment to come in for a visit please call us at 303-772-1232 today!



FAMILIAR FACE

JENNIFER MORRISON



Courtesy photo

Jennifer Morrison, this month's Familiar Face, and her Goldendoodle, Ginger Ale.

By VICKY DORVEE

This wonderful Familiar Face suggestion was courtesy of co-owner of the Niwot Tavern, Tara Kpogoh-Narh. Kpogoh-Narh wrote, "Jennifer Morrison lives and breathes Niwot. She is a local who helps support everyone...small businesses in

Boulder, Hygiene and Longmont. She's just amazing. She's always advertising for everyone. I'm sure you've seen her posts." The posts Kpogoh-Narh is referring to are on a public Facebook page called Nifty Niwot.

Kpogoh-Narh added, "She brings Stacy [Szydle, co-own-

er] and I dinner a lot of nights at the tavern while we're working, because we get tired of eating the same food all the time and it's so nice to have a home cooked meal. When she received her stimulus check, she sent the money to small businesses needing help."

This was enough to pique our interest in Morrison and find out what makes her tick.

Left Hand Valley Courier: (LHVC) - Where have you lived and what brought you to the Niwot area?

Jennifer Morrison (JM) - I grew up in Boulder and graduated from Boulder High School in 1981. My twin sister moved to the northern Virginia area in 1993 and talked me into joining her in 1996. I ended up in grad school, George Washington University, so I stayed there until 2000 when I graduated with an MS in finance. I moved back to Denver in 2000. But, when the economy crashed in 2001, I had to go back to the northern Virginia area for a job. I was recruited to return back to the Boulder area for a job in 2005, which is when I moved to Niwot.

I worked for 10 years in Gunbarrel in the mid-80s to mid-90s and regularly ate

lunch at Rev Taylors and Cottonwood Café, so I was familiar with Niwot. The main reason I landed in Niwot was that I was looking for somewhere quiet, dark (not a lot of street lights), and space between the houses. After living in the north Virginia area, I definitely wanted fewer people.

LHVC - What was your education and work path?

JM - I started out at Fort Lewis College in Durango where I was working on an accounting degree. I decided to take a break and got a job as a bookkeeper at Art Hardware in Boulder in 1984. I helped transition their accounts receivables to a computer system. I left Art Hardware for a job at Wiland Services located in Gunbarrel in 1986, which was the beginning of my database marketing career. I eventually completed my B.S. in marketing from Metro State College

while attending night school. And, as I mentioned previously, I also have a M.S. in finance from George Washington University.

I have worked in database marketing for pretty much my whole career. I have been an independent contractor for the past 10 years or so. As a data analyst, I have worked with many different types of companies. I help them with customer acquisition and upsell campaigns, as well as campaign results.

LHVC - Tell us a bit about your family and pets.

JM - I have a Goldendoodle named Ginger Ale, who's seven years old, and a cat named Otis, five years old. I also have a brother that lives within an hour of my sister [in Virginia]. My dad and stepmother live in North Carolina. It's weird to be

Continued on Page 12

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LID Meeting

Continued from Page 1

up-to-date on the revenue side, as reports from the state of Colorado and Boulder County have been delayed by several weeks. According to the latest figures, the district earned \$20,212 in August 2020, bringing the total revenue for the year to \$136,444, a 4.5 percent increase over the same period in 2019. However, as reported in October, this amount could be inflated by as much as 15% due to a potential collection error that remains under investigation by the state.

Looking ahead, the 2021 budget amount will remain the same as 2020 (\$149,313), due to the uncertainty surrounding the revenue total. Typically, the district's annual budget is set at 80% of the previous year's collections, but it seems that the total won't be known with certainty by the end of 2020.

Economic Development Director Catherine McHale appeared on behalf of the Niwot Business Association with both of the month's funding requests: \$25,000 to fund her position for 2021, and \$9,541.75 to fund the town's marketing and advertising expenses through the first quarter of the new year.

To support her case for the first request, McHale updated the board on her 2020 development efforts, which have focused as much on keeping existing Niwot businesses open as in bringing new ones to town. Nonetheless, there were still



File photo

some of the latter, most recently the micro-retail Little Holiday Shops of Niwot in Cottonwood Square. The past year has also seen a new retail outlet on 2nd Avenue, Few of a Kind Vintage, and a new tenant, Harness Energy, in the former Excel Electric space. McHale also reported success with a recent "Small is beautiful" Facebook campaign aimed at prospective small business tenants.

McHale then discussed her role in supporting NBA members and local businesses through monthly newsletters and other informational emails, particularly as it relates to pandemic relief programs and assistance organizations. She also regularly conducts outreach with local business owners on marketing and advertising.

McHale updated the board on the retrooled marketing campaigns she has launched in hopes of boosting Niwot's small retailers and restaurants after the stay-at-home orders issued during March and April, including the Niwot tasting tour, a campaign designed to encourage loyalty to local outlets. It was launched in the

image of McHale's Shop Niwot Love Niwot Passport event, a month-long shopping and dining reward program that had the misfortune to debut at the beginning of March.

"This was my wonderful project, the worst-timed big campaign ever," she said. "I spent all of January and February preparing, and a couple of weeks later we were all in lockdown... It didn't have the effect we wanted because of the timing, but five people still handed them in. It is what it is, but I found quite a few lessons there, and it influenced some of the things I did tactically later in the year."

McHale also launched a "Keep Niwot Strong" campaign in print and on social media to help keep the community informed about changes in business services and hours, as well as the numerous informal outdoor events that sprang up over the spring and summer. She even dabbled in direct mail, with a holiday shopping postcard sent to households in Niwot and south Longmont in mid-November.

During the discussion following McHale's presentation, several on the board, including business owners Rabeler (Little Bird), Eric Bergeson (Niwot Wheel Works), and Cornelia Sawle (Niwot Inn), praised McHale's efforts to keep the town "busy and active" in challenging times.

"It's been really impressive to see all the energy and creativity that has come in during this horrible period," LID Chair Laura Skaggs said. "I feel it's an exciting town, and to stay exciting and upbeat in these days is no small feat. I think that's what you're communicating about Niwot, and I think that's terrific."

The request was approved by a unanimous vote.

"Of course, I know you all know that there are so many other people who are doing so much," McHale said afterwards. "That's how it goes in Niwot. I just write the report. But there are so many other things, like the sidewalk sales, and all the bits and pieces."

McHale then turned her focus to the NBA's proposed marketing efforts for 2021, with a request for just under \$10,000 to help fund the first quarter of anticipated expenses, which she projects will total \$46,167 for the year. That will cover social media and website services; print advertising in local publications, including the Left Hand Valley Courier, as well as boosted Facebook campaigns. It also covers recurring printing and mailing expenses, as well as technology expenses such as email services, and ongoing computer and internet expenses. The NBA will be contributing \$8,000, bringing the LID's expected contribution for the year to \$38,167. By comparison, her projected budget in 2020 was \$35,823 and \$30,749 in 2019.

McHale's specific plans for 2021 tentatively include a "Jump Start January" campaign focused on fitness and wellness, a new version of the Niwot map, and new video content, which was hard to produce in 2020 due to restrictions. She also hopes to run another passport campaign when conditions are more favorable, though she cautioned it's been difficult to pin down details in the fast-changing health conditions.

"We know we want to do something, but we don't know quite what it's going to be," she said of plans for later in 2021. "Things will change, and we're

probably going to have to think on our feet. But it's going to be themed around promoting loyalty, awareness of downtown, arts, and events that are happening, as well as supporting businesses."

In the discussion that followed, committee members were again generally supportive. The request was then approved unanimously.

New Business

County liaison Mark Ruzzin announced that Boulder County's biannual recruiting period for advisory boards and committees will open on Dec. 11 and run through Jan. 15, 2021. There will be three vacancies on the LID board, after terms expire for business members Bruce Warren and Mary Counce and resident Jim Eastman at the end of February. Counce, who replaced Harris Faberman in late 2018, is eligible to apply for a second five-year term, but Eastman and Warren have each served a limit of two terms, and will have to be replaced.

Due to the pandemic, the entire application process will be held virtually, including interviews with the commissioners. Ruzzin expects the new members to be appointed some time in February, so new members will be in place for the monthly meeting in March. For more information, visit the county's Advisory Board and Commissions page after Dec. 11.

Parking lot update

In old business, Warren provided an update on the construction of the new parking lot west of Murray Street in old town Niwot. He reported that the NBA is working with the general contractor, Whitestone Construction, to refine the plans. They are also working with county planning staff to complete the development agreement and secure building permits.

"It's coming together really well," Warren said. "We're moving forward, but it's always slower than you expect.... I think it will go smoothly once we get going."

The LID advisory committee will hold its next monthly meeting in virtual format on Tuesday, Jan. 5, 2021 at 7 p.m.



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Holiday Magic in Niwot

By COURIER STAFF

Niwot's 2020 holiday celebration continued last weekend with the Niwot Holiday Market and WINC Holiday Fayre.

Cottonwood Square and 2nd Avenue were decked out for the occasion, including this joyful ice sculpture by Ice Cubed, which stood in front of Adam Robinson's Seven Wealth office at 240B, 2nd Ave. Carolers and musicians entertained shoppers with holiday standards, while Santa and Mrs. Claus took gift requests outside the Left Hand Grange.

The festivities will continue on Dec. 12, with the Niwot Holiday Market from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m, featuring special appearances from Santa and Mrs. Claus. The WINC Holiday Fayre, slated for Dec. 12, has also been adapted to maintain compliance with Boulder County COVID regulations as vendors have paired up with Niwot storefront merchants to display their wares.

Visit Niwot.com for more information, including a holiday shopping map showing the location of each vendor and the times for Santa visits and other outdoor activities.



Photo by Ann Whitehill



Photo by Ann Whitehill



Photo by Ann Whitehill

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An ancient poem and modern photos come together in a coffee table book

By PATRICIA LOGAN

It is hard to find such a wide variety of interests and talents in one person, let alone see them all come together in one book. But Niwot resident Sandi Siegel has combined her love of yoga, mythology, modeling, and the Sanskrit language to create a new coffee table book, "Sanctuary Song." It's based on a poem written between the years 700 and 750 A.D. and features the Hindu goddess Tripurasundari.

"This particular story is set to the three stages of a woman's life. The daughter, mother, crone are all seen together at once. It's about that representation of our psyche, of our being, of our living, where we are able to look at all three at once. So, past, present and future are not a linear thing. They exist in some ways, given the situation, all at once."

The story resonated with Siegel, who is passionate about mythology. "It so struck me for its beauty and relevance to the things I've been teaching and trying to live by for so long," said Siegel, who trains yoga instructors and teaches chanting, along with being a musician.

Siegel worked with her Sanskrit teacher in Boulder to translate the 1200-year-old poem by Adi Sankara. She's been studying the ancient lan-

guage for eight years. "I love it more than I ever could have known that I would love something. Language always comes fairly easy to me but Sanskrit, really not being spoken anywhere, is a different ball of wax. What I love so much about it is, it's a big puzzle. The language itself is not linear and allows for all sorts of interpretation because of that. I'm a lover of puzzles."

The book is a collaboration with photographer Julie Kruger, and features yet another of Siegel's talents - modeling. Years ago, her children encouraged her to go for a casting call in Denver for people over 50. She got the gig and has been modeling ever since. She and other models of various ages illustrate the book through artistic poses and scenes.

Siegel hopes the book inspires readers to interact with people of all ages. "When we lose intergenerational connectivity, the society suffers," she said. "We lose the wisdom of each other. We lose the inspiration of each other. This goddess and her story represent the fact that all of our generational things are present at once. And we can benefit from each other's greatness and wisdom. I think we've lost some opportunities and we can gain them back if we receive each other's greatness and abilities and not try to do



Courtesy Photo

A new coffee table book, "Sanctuary Song," draws on the many talents and interests of Niwot resident Sandy Siegel.

everything ourselves."

All of the proceeds will go to the non-profit Together Rising. The organization

represents Siegel's desire to inspire connections, citing its goal to "transform collective heartbreak into effective action" by connecting givers with people and organizations that address critical needs

in communities in the United States and throughout the world.

"Sanctuary Song" is currently available at Inkberry Books in Niwot and at SandiSiegel.com.

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New book gives a look at Longmont history

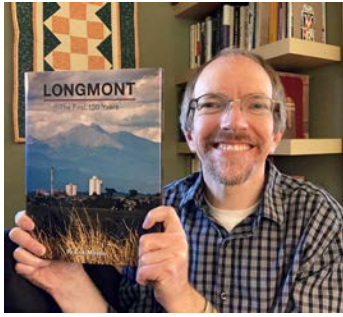


Photo courtesy of Erik Mason

Author Erik Mason

By **DEBORAH CAMERON**

A recently published book is an ideal gift for local history lovers to find under their tree. Erik Mason, Curator of Research at the Longmont Museum, has published the coffee table book, "Longmont: The First 150 years."

The book, Mason's first, includes both carefully researched text and nearly 300 images. Many of the photos were made available when the museum received custody of the Longmont Times Call's photo archives in 2015.

Compiling the book took time. Mason began his research and writing about two years ago and took a sabbatical in early 2019 to focus on research and selecting his images.

"I tried to tell the story both through text and photos," he said. "I think that's one of the great things about the richness of the Museum's photo collection is that we're able to illustrate so much of Longmont's history through our photographs."

The timeline in the book isn't relegated to the present-day city's origins. "I wanted to make sure that we recognize that people were in this area for more than 14,000 years. The first chapter talks about the earliest people to come through. We talk about the Cheyenne, Arapaho, and Ute tribes that lived in this area."

Longmont, as an entity, isn't introduced until the third chapter. "Longmont is founded in 1871, following the establishment of Burlington, the precursor community that is covered in

the second chapter," said Mason.

The book also addresses the history of the entire region, including present-day Niwot. It includes stories of Chief Niwot and of the bankruptcy of the Niwot Bank during the Great Depression.

When asked about surprises he found, Mason said, "I've been at the museum for more than 20 years, and I understood the broad arc of Longmont's basic story, but some of the patterns that began to emerge were striking. One of the first ones I noticed was the recurrence of natural disasters, particularly floods."

Mason found that the 2013 flood was just the latest in a series of floods that affected the area. "There was one in 1969, 1935, 1921, 1894, and in 1864 when the community of Burlington was badly affected. It was a surprise to me how much the pattern occurred with the same impacts each time." Mason's book uses photos that demonstrate this pattern, showing areas of the city near each other but

flooded at two different periods of time.

Another feature of Longmont's history Mason noticed was how resources in the Longmont community have grown in the last fifty years. This was especially evident when he looked at efforts to expand Longmont United Hospital in the middle of the last century.

"It took all kinds of fund drives and the effort was put over the top because somebody auctioned off a fur coat. That's how close they were on money. Now, because Longmont has resources which are available as a large city, there wasn't a big community drive for any of the new medical facilities, the new rec center, and so forth."

It is also striking that, in many ways, dramatic chapters in the region's history were happening while Mason was working on the book. Ultimately, the book ends in the year 2019 but closing the book then wasn't an easy choice.

Mason explained. "Finishing up in 2020, I had to decide

that certain things were stories that are still going on now. We're not going to know how that one ends for a while. For that reason, I decided to stop with the end of 2019."

"I had to set a page limit. I wanted to write a book that people could actually pick up. Not one that had every story in it."

The book, which has been published by Donning Publications, has been well-received. "I've been pleased. People have been enjoying looking through the book and viewing the photos. They've been buying it up. Sales have exceeded expectations, said Mason.

Copies are available for purchase at \$39.99, both online and at the Longmont Museum's gift shop on 400 Quail Road, or by phone purchase at 303-651-8374 where customers can arrange for a curbside pickup. The book can also be purchased at Barbed Wire Books on Mainstreet in Old Town Longmont or borrowed from the Longmont Library.



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Niwot resident challenges herself to write a new song for each day in November

By HANNAH STEWART

You've probably heard of "no-shave November," which raises awareness for cancer research, but have you heard of "new-song November"?

Instead of a charitable campaign, it's a creative one in which singer-songwriters challenge themselves to write a new song every day of the month. Niwot resident Emma Schaefer, who graduated in 2018 from Shining Mountain Waldorf, was one participant this year, after seeing posts about it online for the past few years.

"I learned about this challenge from Lily DeTaeye," Schaefer said. "I met her in Colorado a few years ago through Rocky Mountain Song School. I've seen each November how she's done this challenge and I remember thinking 'wow that's so cool she's doing this, I wish I had the time.'"

Schaefer attends Grinnell College in Iowa and is studying multimedia storytelling--a major that she's created with the help of her advisors and professors. But, in light of COVID, she decided to take a year off school to focus on her own projects, like songwriting.

The inspirations for the



Courtesy Photo

Niwot resident Emma Schaefer has used her gap year to focus on developing her storytelling skills, largely through music, and has written 30 songs for New-Song November.

songs were diverse, many simply written by being open to the proverbial moment. "I realized throughout the process that

they [the songs] were so rooted in the specific day or moment, any moment has the potential to be a song," she said.

With this in mind, Schaefer said that she tried to go into the challenge without any expectations, which was harder, at times, than she anticipated. With a laugh, she explained that at first, she was worried that she'd write songs that she didn't like, or didn't feel were good enough.

"Every day, I reminded myself that it's okay, it [the song] doesn't have to be great. I ended up writing a lot of songs I'm really happy with because I had the freedom to not inhibit myself."

She shared how some songs were about various perspectives on the 2020 election, and another about 2020 itself, while other songs were made more in the moment. One memorable song was inspired by a conversation with her friends where she asked them for ideas and ended up writing a song about an old woman in the forest.

When listening to the songs, which are archived in Schaefer's Instagram memories, it's clear how raw and personal they are. Yet, they seem incredibly relatable at the same time. She sings with a bit of a folksy twang at times, while other songs sound like they belong in the boy-loses-girl (and the

girl's moving on now) part of a romantic movie. In her videos, Schaefer not only shows off her singing chops, but also her talent with the piano and guitar.

For Schaefer, song-writing is both a passion and another way to make stories and connections with others. "There's so much division in our world right now in our society and I truly believe that stories are what bring people together," she said.

"When other people tell their story, that can build empathy and that's so integral in what can shape a healthy community, a healthy society," she said. ... "So sharing stories, in whatever way that may be, is something that can heal everyone because the storyteller is empowered when they share and the listeners are really impacted and it's this really beautiful."

To stay up to date with Emma Schaefer, you can subscribe to her mailing list at <https://emmakieranmusic.com/subscribe> where she sends out updates about her projects, or follow her at @Emma_Kieran on Instagram, where you can also view her songs from new-song November.

COAT DRIVE

Continued from Page 1

also reported the demographics, which showed that 21,765 single adults, 2,437 families and 2,370 children accessed services or housing related to homelessness.

"We don't see many homeless people in Niwot, but they are certainly out there and although we're all struggling through this pandemic, there's things we can do to help," Szydle said. "We had a woman hand knit 75 winter hats without us asking whatsoever, and another woman who dropped off a basket of produce because

she figured we needed it more than her."

The Niwot Tavern is not only delivering coats and hats to the less fortunate, but other products required to maintain health under extreme exposure as well.

"We had a man drop off two backpacks filled with men's hygiene equipment like razors, shaving cream and soap bars," Szydle said. "We need more products like that and we could also use feminine hygiene products for a women's shelter on Iowa Avenue in Longmont."

Back in March, Niwot Tavern owners opened a food bank for students because schools shut down and many parents

lost their jobs. With a rise in cases of COVID-19 across the state, and further shut downs becoming more evident, it's probable that the Tavern doors will open for this service once again.

"With winter coming and everything that's happening with the pandemic, we'll probably bring back the food bank," Szydle said.

Back in 2005, Niwot Tavern owners Bob Russell, Gary Zarlengo and Tony Santelli started a Christmas tradition at the Tavern, offering free Christmas dinner to those in need. Even though people will not be able to enter the Niwot Tavern for free Christmas dinner, the

current owners are determined to keep the fifteen-year tradition alive.

"We promised Bob that we would continue the tradition which I think gave him some peace before his passing," Szydle said of Russell, who died earlier this year. "So, this year we're taking the dinner on the road, dropping off meals to anyone we pass who needs it, along with the shelters we'll be delivering coats to and the nursing home residents who usually come here."

Despite the financial challenges brought on by the coronavirus pandemic, the hearts of those who care have still found a way to help those in need.

"I was raised to help people. The world is crazy right now but I still think that every human is worthy of food and a nice bed," Szydle said. "And from the donations we've received, you just know that this town feels the same. I'm so happy that we've been in Niwot throughout this."

The Niwot Tavern is open every day from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. for curbside pickup and any donations towards the coat drive. The Tavern is also selling baskets of liquor for holiday gifts. Szydle stressed a need for sanitizer wipes and razors which they will hand out along with the Christmas dinners.

Gifts for Gardeners



Photo courtesy of Storyblocks

Paper seed pots and other gardening knick-knacks make great gifts for the gardener in your life this holiday season.

By **CAROL O'MEARA**

Colorado State University Extension,
Boulder County

SPECIAL TO THE COURIER

From simple pleasures to outright splurges, the season for giving is upon us. As you rush to buy gifts for your gardeners, stop to consider what type of green thumb

they have. This will help you narrow down your choices in making that small purchase go a long way to happiness.

Experienced gardeners are a little harder to shop for since we have the basics. But that doesn't mean we don't like a load of manure. A big pile of poo would have appalled my mother, but I think

it's a very sweet gesture. Just make sure the manure comes from an herbivore and is aged four months or longer.

Are they devoted vegetable growers? The one thing they'll love is the gift of seeds. Big dreams grow from small packets and gathering a up a collection is the perfect way to please without breaking the budget.

Many of our local seed companies have great deals on gifts and seed collections for your gardener. Check out gift sets from Botanical Interests (botanicalinterests.com/category/Holiday-Seeds-and-Greetings), a gift card from BBB seeds (bbbseed.com/), or find underutilized heirloom seeds at Amkhaseed (amkhaseed.com/).

A Paper Pot Maker is an inexpensive way for gardeners to make seed starting pots from paper. It's a fun craft project for children, too, providing an activity to combat boredom. A sustainable choice for those wanting to

reduce the amount of plastic they depend on, a Paper Pot Maker is fun and easy to use, over and over. \$15.95 at For Small Hands (forsmallhands.com/pot-maker).

If your gardener wants to add humor, check out the hilarious sculpture Gnome-Be-Gone by Utah artist Fred Conlon. Tackling the debate between gnome lovers and haters head-on, his two metal creatures carry aloft a peaked-cap, kitschy gnome like a captive. Marching the garden interloper off makes space for what should rightfully adorn the garden: a flamingo (please don't email me to try and change my mind. I'm firmly in the flamingo camp). \$125; find this at Uncommon Goods, (uncommongoods.com/product/gnome-be-gones-with-gnome).

If your gardener is new to the hobby, a gift basket is a great way for you to cover a lot of items they might need. Filled with plant markers, seeds, and pots, a handsome, functional basket is an all-

in-one gift they'll love. You can pop in an additional tool to make the basket complete. \$49.95; Gardening gift basket from Mountain Lily Farm (available on Etsy. etsy.com/listing/568594979/vegetable-garden-gift-basket-heirloom?gpla=1&gao=1&).

For those who spend all day working with their hands, focus on quality, not quantity. Go cheap and you risk harming your green-thumbed friend, since poorly made tools can snap, snag, or worse, require too much pressure to operate. Yes, a good pruner is costly – about \$75 and up – but they last a decade or longer.

Don't forget gloves, plant markers, or other knick-knacks gardeners love. We're not a picky group; after all, we treasure scraps of twine and get woozy over manure. If you're unsure, ask another gardener for their opinion before you purchase something. We'll be honest and let you know if it works or not.

LID Board Recruitment

Continued from Page 2

approved a measure that increased the sales tax to one percent and allowed revenues to be used for marketing and promotional materials, as well as to pay for capital and transit-related projects.

Although the LID still owed Boulder County for the street and drainage improvements on Second Avenue, the county allowed the new revenues to be used for the purposes permitted under the new state law.

The original debt was paid off in December 2010, and since then the entire 1% sales tax revenue has been available for expenditures

that benefit the business district. Another Niwot-led effort to change state law allowed funds to be used for events and allowed expansion of the LID boundaries. Because Niwot is unincorporated, the LID sales tax is the only direct source of tax revenue for improvements that benefit the local improvement district.

The Advisory Committee meets monthly to consider requests for funding and discuss other district-related business. In the past 12 months, the committee has approved disbursements for construction of the new public parking lot, as well as repairs to Spear Man Lodge tree sculpture. It also helped fund recurring events including Wine About Winter, as well as new events to replace those canceled by pandemic concerns. The committee is also responsible for updates and

revisions to the Niwot Strategic Plan, which serves as a roadmap for future planning and LID expenditures in the community. The plan was first adopted in 2011 and has been revised twice.

The LID Advisory Committee holds its meetings on the first Tuesday of each month at the Mountain View Fire Station on Niwot Road at 7 p.m. However, due to ongoing public health concerns, these meetings will be conducted virtually via Microsoft Teams until further notice.

The application period will be open from Dec. 11 through Jan. 15, 2021. New five-year terms for two business community representatives and a residential representative will begin in March 2021. LID members are limited to two consecutive five-year terms. Leaving the board are business representative Bruce

Warren and resident Jim Eastman, whose second terms end on Feb. 28. Business member Mary Counce, who completed the term vacated by Harris Faberman in 2018, is eligible to serve again. Other current members are Eric Bergeson (Niwot Business Association representative), Scott Firlle (resident), Bruce Rabeler (business), Lisa Rivard (resident), Cornelia Sawle (business), and Laura Skaggs (Niwot Community Association representative).

The county is also recruiting members for other local advisory boards, including the Area Agency on Aging. For more information, call the Boulder County Commissioners' Office at 303-441-3501. To apply, please visit <https://www.bouldercounty.org/government/boards-and-commissions/vacancies/>

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NHS environmental club puts pressure on county commissioners in light of proposed fracking site

By HANNAH STEWART

In 2017, Crestone Peak Resources, a Denver-based producer of oil and natural gas, requested permits from the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission (COGCC) for three large drilling sites in Boulder County along Highway 52. However, the Boulder County Commissioners have held the Crestone Peak applications due to an update to permitting requirements (Senate Bill 19-181). At the county level, Crestone has not submitted any applications.

“It surprised me how little people in the community knew about this [proposed fracking site],” said Jamie Williamson, a freshman at Niwot High School. “The most exciting part, however, is seeing that we really can, with the power of the people, start working for a cleaner future and seeing how change is already happening.”

Niwot High School’s Environmental Club has been appealing to the County Commissioners, and the public, for stricter regulations.

“We, the youth of Colorado, simply ask our elected officials to do their job, to protect us by using their power and the opportunity presented by SB 19-181 to protect Colorado’s future. Ban Fracking,” said Maya Beauvineau, a senior at Niwot High School, in a press release.

If Crestone is granted a permit, 140 proposed wells as described in the final draft of their application (see p. 2) could go online. These wells are concerning to the NHS Environmental Club as well as other Niwot residents as the fracking site is only three miles away from the high school. According to Beauvineau and the club’s research, typical sites are only about three to five wells, “So 140 is really enormous when you put it in that context.”

Niwot sophomore Stephanie Mow said, “For the sake of our community we’ve been really involved to try to stop this, because we’re worried about our commu-



Courtesy Photo

From right to left and top to bottom:

Maya Beauvineau, Mercer Stauch, Tessa Everett, Josh Ludski-Lee, Victor Gerber, Lilly McLellan, Everest Finn, Stephanie Mow, Lily Sykes, Daniela Garcia, Emma Bovaird, Desta Soma

nity’s health and how our future’s going to be in Niwot.”

For the past year, club members have been attending public hearings and recently released a video asking the commissioners to “take greater action to protect our future.” The video, which consists of testimonials from 15 students aged 10 to 18, is approximately three-and-a-half minutes long and relies on a number of emotional, factual and anecdotal appeals to the commissioners.

“Especially during the pandemic, if anything were to happen to the outdoors, it would be a disaster for my mental health as well as that of my friends,” said junior Mercer Stauch. Another student pointed out that fracking not only is harmful to the natural environment, but also the health of the community.

Club members said that methane is released at various points throughout the fracking process, and that while methane does produce more heat and light energy

by mass than other oil and gas alternatives, methane is also potentially very dangerous.

The students said that unlike other greenhouse gases, methane is more efficient at trapping heat within the atmosphere, which therefore contributes to climate change. The club also learned about, and wants to spread awareness around the carcinogenic chemical Benzene, which is one of the most common chemicals released during the process, with the possibility to cause cancer.

“There’s often the line ‘our future,’” said junior Victor Gerber. “But it’s not just the future. Our present is also affected, that [climate change] could affect us and future students after us. We have to make sure that both our present and future is protected.”

The environmental club isn’t the only group opposed to Crestone’s proposition. Gabi Boerkircher, communications specialist in the Commissioners’ office said that a number of Boul-

der County residents have spoken up.

“The County always appreciates public comments and they will be very useful in designing the amendments to Article 12 and in keeping track of public sentiment,” Boerkircher said. “The Dec. 1 public hearing was well-attended and included many helpful comments that County staff and the Commissioners will take into account as the new regulations are finalized.”

According to Beauvineau, at the Dec. 1 hearing, the environmental club and other participants who oppose fracking outnumbered oil and gas representatives 40:1. “It’s been really encouraging to see the number of people [who come out in opposition to the site] grow,” she said.

However, a number of Niwot’s students expressed concern and frustration over other community members dismissing their activism because of their age. “[We] need people to notice we

are humans and notice what the commissioners are trying to do,” said freshman Daniela Garcia. “At some point they will have to listen to us.”

Mow also expressed frustration. She said that in addition to speaking at the commissioner meetings and putting out their video, the club has put out information on social media sites including Nextdoor. “For me, it was kind of hurtful, a lot of the responses were kind of like ‘you’re just a high schooler, you don’t know anything.’ It doesn’t give the right message about youth activism that we want. It kind of puts us down because it makes it seem like we don’t really have a voice.”

Sophomore Lilian McLellan agreed that it’s difficult to go up against a powerful industry, like oil and gas, but said, “The youth have to live the longest with consequences of current events....It’s important that we have a say in what is going to happen.”

The Environmental Club members remain optimistic and focused. In fact, they are planning a follow-up video, this one more targeted toward community members. They want to inform other residents about the potential repercussions of this site if approved, and hope that with enough support, it will influence the regulations that the commissioners are set to finalize this month.

“Although this whole process has been very encouraging and empowering,” said Beauvineau, “as youth, ultimately what we need is to see the people in power take our testimony and pleas and put this into law, more stringent regulations in law.”

To stay up to date and learn more from Niwot’s Environmental Club, you can follow them on Instagram at @gogreengoniwot.

For those interested in learning more about oil and gas development in Boulder County, information can be found here; and written comments can be submitted to oilgascomment@bouldercounty.org.

Local Boy Scout Troop 161 weathers impacts of COVID-19

By JACK CARLOUGH

Since the COVID-19 pandemic escalated in March, it has been a rollercoaster year for Niwot's Boy Scout Troop 161. Despite the challenges associated with running a troop during a pandemic, Head Scout Master Bill Dickens' group has adapted with ease.

After halting operations for over a month in the spring, Troop 161 shifted to remote mode with virtual meetings. Dickens said the troop was mostly quiet over the summer and missed its planned trip to Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico. When Boulder County Health regulations loosened in the fall, the troop was cleared for more in-person events.

Troop 161 was able to camp and canoe and scouts earned merit badges involving composite materials and signs, signals and codes, according to Advancement Chair Michelle Law. Following months of virtual meetings, Dickens said his group enjoyed finally getting to meet in person again. "The camaraderie and stuff is huge getting back together," he said.

Obviously Boy Scouts isn't quite the same over Zoom, but Dickens said Troop 161 has only lost a few members and is in the process of gaining a couple new scouts. The troop currently sits at 44 members, including Dickens' 12 and 13-year-old sons.

Three members of the troop have also achieved the prestigious Eagle rank. Niwot High School students Brandon Hult, Evan Law and Ben Jones have all reached the highest rank in Boy Scouts in the past few months. Normally, the trio would be given an Eagle court of honor recognition, but that has been postponed due to COVID-19.

Troop 161 has another four members nearing their Eagle rank and a few of them have been working on building a stage at the TLC Learning Center in Longmont. Becoming an Eagle Scout already comes with a slew of hard work and the pandemic has only made things more difficult for Troop 161 scouts.

"Doing that Eagle Scout project is for the scouts to overcome the challenges and

adversity and I think with the pandemic, it's been a whole new level for the Eagle Scouts working through their projects at this time," Dickens said.

With the latest round of Boulder County health regulations, Troop 161 recently shifted back to virtual events. Dickens' has kept the meetings worthwhile, however, and brought in Jon Kedrowski, who has summited Mount Everest twice and is a motivational speaker and author. Kedrowski spoke to the troops about the value of overcoming adversity through his experiences climbing some of the most challenging mountains in the world.

"I think everyone enjoyed seeing his adventures and trips and how he related it back to what we're going through today," Dickens said.

Whilst navigating COVID-19, the current era of scouting has expanded far beyond building campfires and setting up tents, and continues to thrive in coping with the adversity of the pandemic.

For more information on Troop 161, their website can be found [here](#).



Courtesy Photo

Member of Niwot Troop 161, including Jesse Horn, assist Niwot senior John Mealy with his service project, a portable stage for the TLC Learning Center in Niwot.



Courtesy Photo

John Mealy (center, kneeling) a senior at Niwot High School, enlisted his fellow Troop 161 members to help construct a portable stage at the TLC Learning Center in Longmont, to serve the center's needs and to meet the requirements for an Eagle Project. Also pictured, from left Caden Weihe (Silver Creek High School), Thomas Horn (Niwot High School), Gustave Kuhlman (Niwot High School), Mike Mealy (Niwot High School), Jesse Horn (Niwot High School), Caleb Law (Niwot High School)

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Continued from Page 3

from Colorado yet have no family left here.

LHVC - Do you have any hobbies?

JM - I took up crochet about three years ago. I've really been enjoying it. I mostly make hats, scarves, and blankets ... many I donate.

LHVC - In what ways do you connect with the community?

JM - I have always been a fan of small businesses. My favorite restaurants and breweries are all small businesses. I enjoy using my marketing skills to help small businesses even though (or maybe because) most of my work experience has been with big corporations.

I started a Facebook group called "Niwot" about eight years ago that was primarily for local friends to communicate about Niwot. Last spring, when COVID hit, I changed the name to "Nifty Niwot" and

it has now grown to over 250 members. This group is open to the public, so now it includes many people that I don't know.

I also started [the] NextDoor group for Niwot about 8 or 9 years ago. I was the lead for the group until recently when I passed the baton to another local.

LHVC - Are there any plans you're looking forward to?

JM - We were supposed to travel to Belgium and Holland last April to see the tulips but the trip was cancelled due to COVID. I'm hoping that we can go this coming spring.

LHVC - What's a fun fact about you?

JM - I have an identical twin sister named Jill. We were always best friends. Unfortunately for me, she still lives in the northern Virginia area. We try to see each other at least twice per year and of course, we talk on the phone often.

If you have a suggestion for a Familiar Face in Niwot or Gunbarrel, please send a message to Editorial@lhvc.com

Cookie Moms send holiday cheer from Niwot

The Niwot Patriotic Cookies Moms have been hard at work since Thanksgiving, packing up goodie boxes for the Christmas mailing to the troops. Ju-

lie Breyers' 3rd grade class from Niwot Elementary school provided wonderful pictures and notes, as did others. Each of the 28 boxes eventually sent

out included many home baked treats, as well as a holiday letter from the group, and a copy of the most recent Left Hand Valley Courier.



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Student-Athlete of the Week

Charlie Herring



Photo by Jocelyn Rowley

As right tackle, Herring (71) enjoyed pushing people down in the service of fellow senior Ayden Bartko and the Niwot offense.

By JOCELYN ROWLEY

For Niwot first-year coach Nikolas Blume, the 2020 football season will be memorable for many things, and not all of them pleasant. But one pleasant memory he will have is of senior Charlie Herring, a newcomer like himself, whose “work ethic and dedication to his teammates,” helped the coach nudge the program in a promising direction.

“Charlie was a first year starter and a great leader for us this season,” Blume wrote in an email interview. “You won’t find a young man more dedicated to bettering his friends. He has a contagious sense of humor and helped keep practice fun during these strange times. Along with our other seniors, we appreciate how he took the late season start in stride, never complained and set a positive example for all of our younger players.”

Indeed, the younger players outnumbered the Niwot seniors in 2020 by a hefty margin this year, which made Herring stand out more than his newcomer status did. For his part, Herring

enjoyed the “camaraderie and brotherhood” of the developing, and especially his unsung role as an offensive lineman, where he protected quarterback and fellow senior Ayden Bartko.

“It was fun,” Herring said of playing an unglamorous position. “I got to block and push people out of the way.”

Unfortunately, there wasn’t much else fun about the Cougars’ 1-6 season, and Niwot suffered some painful losses on the way to their only victory, against Thornton in the final week. But the win was important to Herring and the dozen other seniors who stuck with the team, so the 2020 season wasn’t a total loss,

in his estimation.

“It was actually a really big deal,” Herring said of Niwot’s stirring 26-20 comeback win over the Trojans on Nov. 20. “We hadn’t won any other games that season, and, for our seniors, we went out with a legacy, and for everyone else, that sets a path.”

Indeed, Herring sees “great things” ahead for Coach Blume and Niwot football, especially in a more normal season.

If the football season had its ups and downs for Herring, so has the 2020-21 school year so far. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, Herring started his senior year of high school remotely, only to move to the part-time,



Photo by Jocelyn Rowley

Herring and his fellow football seniors were honored in a modified version of Senior Night before their game against Holy Family, on Oct. 9.

hybrid model six weeks later. Now St. Vrain schools are back to the remote model, as COVID-19 cases have risen to record levels across Colorado and Boulder County. Along the way, Herring and other 12th graders missed out on traditional fall events such as homecoming and spirit assemblies.

“There are parts of it where it feels harder than junior year, and parts feel like it’s a breeze,” he said. “The online stuff is not really my thing. I learn a lot better in person.”

That said, Herring does enjoy his creative writing classes with Mrs. Roberts, whom he also had as a junior. He also enjoys his automotive classes at the Career Development Center and the “hands on” work he does there.

Herring’s love of cars doesn’t stop there. In fact, he consid-

ers himself a “car guy” and has been known to spend his free time in the garage. When asked about his dream car and his classic dream car, Herring didn’t have to think too long.

“My dream car would be a Dodge Challenger SRT,” he said, “or a ‘66 Chevy Camaro SS.”

Herring is hoping to make a career out of his passion. After graduation, he plans to study at Broomfield’s Spartan College of Aeronautics and Technology in preparation for a career as an automotive or aeronautical mechanic.

When he’s not under the hood or on the field for Niwot, Herring enjoys fishing and spending time with friends and family, including sisters Lily and Olivia.



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