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Positive News for a Change!



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Long Live The Pig!

By Diane Bergstrom

"Is Isabella alive?" asked editor Anita Wilks after inquiring about my safety and then of Jen Lo Farm and Lois Hickman, author of last month's article on Crackers the Goose. YES! Isabella the Pig is alive and well. Oddly, she was my touchstone too. Maybe in my subconscious I reckoned if an elderly pig (15 1/2), who is arthritic (often can only stand on her knees), with a respiratory ailment, living near the St. Vrain river could survive, then the rest of us could too. Her odds were not betting odds. After many attempts to contact Lois in disaster-struck Lyons, I finally reached her and she confirmed all human, animal, and fowl inhabitants had survived!

There have been many miracles, small and large, through the flood disaster that hit Colorado's front range in September and honestly, I don't know a fraction of them after being without TV or internet connection for over a week and basically staying on the block for days while dealing with a flooded car, home, etc. Feeling like I was on an island in a city, I was touched by so many opened hearts. Neighbors helping neighbors, neighbors meeting neighbors for the first time, local friends all trying to keep track of each other, sharing whereabouts with others, distant family and friends calling for confirmation, and texts and phone calls uncommonly started with, "Are you safe?" and ending with, "I love you." We don't tell people that nearly enough.

Anita let me know that she has received at least 15 inquiry calls about Lois and the farm and on a recent phone call, I relayed that to a very touched Lois. She relayed the events on the farm. The river rose rapidly on Wednesday night and swallowed highway 66, flooding the farm. Thursday morning, they scrambled to take stock of animals, belongings, and doing everything one does to handle the unthinkable. Lois' daughter, Jennifer, heard Isabella squealing and waded to her enclosure (photo in last month's issue). She was struggling and crying for help. Isabella's snout was the only part visible above water and an occasional eye, (Continued on next page.)



Lois treating Isabella before the flooding.



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Highlander Animals

and she was screaming for her life. Jennifer yelled to Lois, "Isabella's drowning!" and together they slung a blanket under her belly and pulled her to the nearest high ground. They then went on to save everything else, relocating dogs, cats, and the youngest chickens. Crackers and the ducks thought their watering hole had just had a major upgrade but everything felt the franticness of the situation. Animal Control arrived the following day and five people moved Isabella out of the flood plain.

Serendipity was on her side; Lois had been giving her antibacterial drinks for her cough before the flood hit and that has boosted her immune system. She also had been giving her baths with antibacterial soap for a skin condition. Animal Control evaluated which animals were most vulnerable and moved Crackers to the Longmont Humane Society. The LHS determined Crackers needed more space and transferred



Crackers to a horse stall at the Boulder County Fairgrounds. A Lyons friend helped Lois retrieve Crackers, among others, and they returned to the farm,

Crackers on Lois' lap, peeping and talking to her the whole way. Letting her loose near the rabbit hutches, Lois watched Crackers spread his wings, run all over the farm, honking and looking for his pig. When Isabella heard his honking, she actually stood up on all fours and moved in that direction! Her goose was home! They have been pen mates since Crackers was adopted at

the farm, snuggling together at night, Crackers preferring the pig's company over her feathered friends. Lois said, "She is one happy pig! She snuffles and talks to me. She is happy her goose is back. For being the most feeble of them all, she looks good."

On the list of many, many things that need to be done to rebuild the farm is a winter enclosure for Isabella and Crackers on higher ground. If anyone would like to support the farm by donating time, money or materials, please contact Julie Abrams, one of the Occupational Therapists who does therapy on the farm, at justabrams@yahoo.com <<mailto:justabrams@yahoo.com>>. Lois assures, "Every penny given is going to the farm and animals." I wish everyone a complete recovery, in every way needed, and a continued awareness of the importance of our communities. Thank you for your care and concern, and long live the pig!

(File photo of Isabella eating.)

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Temporary Transit Options

New, temporary transit options available to Boulder County residents in aftermath of flood Saturday, Sept. 21, 2013. Media Contacts: Mary Cobb <mailto:mcobb@via-colorado.org> , Via Mobility Services, 303-473-2882 Barb Halpin, Emergency Operations Center, 720-564-2935 (8 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily)

Via Mobility Services provides flood victims with free transportation to Disaster Assistance Centers in Boulder County; Other options available for mountain residents.

Increased traffic and the lack of transportation options in the mountains and foothills of Boulder County continues to be a problem for our residents and road & utility work crews. Similarly, residents impacted by the flood may have difficulty getting to one of the disaster assistance centers. In order to alleviate some of the congestion and isolation issues of getting to and from Boulder from our mountain communities, and to assist residents getting to or from a disaster assistance center, VIA, RTD, City of Boulder and Boulder County are working together to provide accessible transportation options for plains and mountain residents affected by the flood.

Transportation to/from Disaster Assistance Centers and for basic needs through Oct. 17, Boulder County's nonprofit Via Mobility Services will provide flood victims with free on-demand transportation to Boulder County's disaster assistance centers, as long as Via staff can safely reach the pickup locations. To schedule a ride, call 303-447-9636 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Via will also provide free on-demand transportation for any flood victim in its service area to access healthcare,

food, employment, or other essential services to help stabilize their lives. Via can also provide information about mobility options and referral to other transportation resources that may be available in local communities. Call 303-447-2848 ext. 1014 or email egallegos@viacolorado.org for more information.

Mountain community transportation updates: The Climb bus will resume service with a modified route from Gold Hill Road through Sunshine Canyon Drive to the Boulder Transit Center. The Climb is operated by Via. Please see www.the-climb.org for additional route and schedule information.

In collaboration with RTD and Boulder County, Via will also provide two mid-day routes from Boulder to Nederland through Sunshine Canyon Drive using four-wheel-drive paratransit vehicles.

RTD's reconstituted large coach N route will provide early morning and late afternoon between Nederland and Boulder via Highway 119 and Blackhawk. See www.via-colorado.org or www.rtd-denver.com for more information.

Via Mobility Services -Via is a private, nonprofit organization providing on-demand transportation, individual, and group travel training and mobility options information and referral. For more information, please visit www.viacolorado.org or call 303-447-2848.

—www.bouldercountyflood.org and www.boulderflood-info.net— *(Editor's Note: Too bad this does not include a way for Coal Creek residents to get to town, there must not be enough of us to warrant consideration, but if you have needs try to call and request help anyway.)*

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Wilderness Therapy To Reinvent Itself?

From Krista Langlois

In the basement classroom where the first Wilderness Therapy Symposium was held in 2002, event director Jim Lavin put out a plate of cookies and a bowl of Doritos and hoped for the best. Today, the event is held at an upscale hotel in Boulder, Colo., and Lavin spends a couple thousand dollars on hors d'oeuvres alone - reflections of the industry's effort to reinvent itself.

Wilderness therapy is a tricky term, and even those who practice it have a hard time agreeing what it means. Generally speaking, it brings a combination of traditional therapy, holistic living and outdoor experience to teenagers and young adults with mental, emotional and behavioral health issues. Practitioners today are more likely to use yoga or meditation than the tough love approach of the past, but to many people outside the industry, the phrase conjures dark images of boot camps and deaths in the desert.

At the annual symposium held recently, amid feel-good workshops about using art as therapy and "emotionally focused family therapy," long discussions revolved around combating public misconceptions that still persist from the 1990s. In 1994, the death of 16-year-old Aaron Bacon in a boot camp-style therapy program in Utah caught the attention of the media and sparked a national outcry. Jon

Krakauer's Outside story about the incident, "Loving them to death," convinced many people that wilderness programs for at-risk teens are little more than punishment, sometimes bordering on abusive.

The bad press of the 1990s was well-deserved, and it served as a "kick in the butt" for wilderness therapy, says Danny Frazer, co-founder of Open Sky Wilderness Therapy in Durango, Colo. It prompted programs to seek state licensure, amass academic research to support their work, and employ professional psychologists and medical doctors on staff. Allegations of abuse still pop up now and then, yet teenagers are twice as likely to end up in the emergency room when just staying home as they are when attending an accredited wilderness therapy program, according to research from the University of New Hampshire.

Still, public opinion has been slow to catch up with advances in care, and sensational press following in the footsteps of Krakauer's piece continues to reverberate. In 2008, an online reader stumbled upon HCN's own critique of wilderness therapy published in 1996 (which asked whether a federal crackdown was needed), and commented that she'd been considering putting her son in "one of these camps." After reading our (by then outdated) article, though, she changed her mind.

Therapeutic wilderness programs are trying hard to

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distance themselves from boot-camp style programs, but the latter still exist and some people don't differentiate between the two. At the symposium, I watched two videos demonstrating the differences. The first video (warning: this link is graphic) made me so uncomfortable I nearly left the room. Filmed in 2009 at a youth boot camp in Calif. that has since shut down, it shows a crying, trembling child being screamed at by four adults in military uniforms.

The second clip was recorded at the now-defunct Aspen Achievement Academy - a highly praised wilderness therapy program, albeit one with its share of bad press. In the clip (which starts 28:29) a teenage girl refuses to hike, and one of the guides calmly convinces her to get up and keep going. Having worked as a wilderness therapy guide myself for two years, I know that getting through to a defiant teenager requires patience and skill. People who choose to work with at-risk populations in challenging outdoor environments do so because they believe that traditional therapy is often most effective when combined with the healing power of nature.

Liz Verea-Semion, a parent I ate lunch with at the conference who's now on the board of a nonprofit that supports wilderness therapy, told me that her daughter tried to commit suicide when she was 13. A consultant recommended wilderness therapy, but "I'm Hispanic," Verea-Semion said. "We don't send our kids away. We will figure it out in the family."

Twice-weekly therapy sessions and a new school didn't help, though, and 18 months later her daughter began showing the same troubling symptoms. Verea-Semion turned to wilderness therapy in desperation. "Was it successful?" I asked her. "Yes," she said. "Yes, yes."

Success stories from the field abound, but collecting data to substantiate the anecdotes has been a challenge. For the past 15 years, independent researchers from the Outdoor

Behavioral Healthcare Research Cooperative have been analyzing data and publishing papers that have largely shown wilderness therapy to be safe, and sometimes more effective than traditional residential therapy. Combined with accreditation from respected organizations such as the Association for Experiential Education, licensing standards and cost-benefit analyses, proponents believe the research will soon thrust wilderness therapy into the mainstream.

"It's only a matter of time before insurance companies are convinced that it's a bona fide treatment," says Frazer, of Open Sky. Insurance coverage is the holy grail of wilderness therapy. Companies hope that recognition from insurance providers will help legitimize their work in the eyes of the public and - perhaps more importantly - enable more kids from diverse backgrounds to participate in programs. Since most companies are privately run and can cost parents more than \$400 a day, a major criticism of the industry is that it caters predominantly to wealthy Americans. Some families can get about 25 percent of costs covered by medical insurance, but they have to fight for it independently.

On the first day of the recent symposium, researcher Mike Gass announced that New Mexico Medicaid funds may soon be available for wilderness therapy programs there. The announcement came on the heels of a favorable article in the American Psychological Association's Monitor on Psychology magazine. Together, the news was enough to make everyone a little giddy. "The field is evolving," said Will White, founder of Summit Achievement in Maine. "I don't think people can get away with bad practices anymore."

Krista Langlois is an editorial intern at High Country News. Full disclosure: she has worked for two wilderness therapy programs, Alaska Crossings and Pacific Quest. "Cross-posted from High Country News, hcn.org. The author is solely responsible for the content."

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Montana Wild Bison Herds

From Sarah Keller

When 34 Yellowstone National Park bison bounded off a trailer into north central Montana this August, their century-long absence from Fort Belknap Reservation ended. The repatriation comes at a time when Montana is making gradual progress towards fostering free-roaming bison herds.

While hundreds of thousands of bison live in Montana, most are commercial stock carrying cattle genes, and none of them range freely like elk, deer and antelope do. Even non-commercial bison, like those owned by the tribes, are fenced-in. In the case of Yellowstone bison, they are confined by state policy that keeps them from freely leaving the park. Since 2011, bison have been allowed to migrate out of the park during winter. But in spring, they are hazed back into Yellowstone, or into holding facilities, even occasionally shot or sent to slaughter, if they venture out of "tolerance zones" into cattle grazing areas.

Thanks to conflicts with cattle grazing, the idea of the state changing its stance to treat bison like wild, free-ranging animals, as opposed to livestock, is perpetually controversial. Even so, Montana is now taking steps towards having more genetically pure bison in the state, and giving them more room to roam. Since 2012, Montana has transferred dozens of bison from Yellowstone National Park's herd to two Indian reservations in northern Montana, including Fort Belknap. Those bison aren't free

ranging, but the move may reduce hazing and ad hoc killing of errant animals near Yellowstone.

On top of that, Montana is moving forward with two new bison plans. One is a fresh look at the state's policy towards Yellowstone's bison, which will consider allowing some bison outside of the park year round. Another is a statewide bison management plan that could lead to decisions about how many wild bison should roam in Montana, and where they will do it.

"For all the success that Montana has had with wildlife restoration there's an important chapter (to be written) and that's the one that starts with the word 'bison,'" says the National Wildlife Federation's Northern Rockies region executive director, Tom France, noting that the idea of fostering a wild bison herd on Montana's plains has gained traction in recent years.

Yet recent progress hasn't come without its challenges. That's because some bison (and elk) carry brucellosis, a bacterial disease that can cause pregnancy failures in cattle, and ranchers fear that their cows will catch it, decimating herds (although there's never been a documented instance of wild bison spreading brucellosis to cattle, and ironically, many think that bison first caught the disease from cows). There are also concerns that the animals, known for busting through fencing, will destroy private property and compete with cattle for grass.

As an example of how these fears play out, the recent transfer of bison to Fort Belknap, by way of a Yellowstone herd at Fort Peck, would have happened much earlier if not for a months-long legal scuffle. When the state moved Yellowstone bison to Fort Peck in the spring of 2012, then-Governor Brian Schweitzer, along with conservationists and the Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes, celebrated it as an early step in building a new source pool for expanding genetically pure bison outside of Yellowstone. (Many of North America's hundreds of thousands of bison are contaminated with cattle genes, and only four percent, including the Yellowstone herd, are genetically pure.)



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But a livestock and property rights group didn't take it as well. They quickly sued to stop the transfers. A county court blocked further bison transfers, and the state appealed to Montana's supreme court. Then, this past legislative session, Montana's representatives were busy with eight anti-bison bills introduced to drastically inhibit bison movement, allow on-sight bison shooting on private property (as opposed to managing them as a game species with a hunting season that requires licenses and limits), and make the state liable for private property damage from bison. State Senator John Brenden, a leader among bison-haters, compared restoration efforts to trying to bring back dinosaurs, when he asked, "Why do you want to spread this creeping cancer, these woolly tanks, around the state of Montana?"

But the state doesn't share Brenden's attitude. Three of the anti-bison bills made it to Governor Steve Bullock's desk and he vetoed all of them. Montana's supreme court wasn't much help for the anti-bison crowd either. In June, the court ruled in favor of the state after it appealed the county court's bison-blocking decision. That once again opened the gate to truck bison around the state, and onto Fort Belknap last month.

Now Montana is preparing a draft plan for broader bison restoration options, due out early next year. The state could consider a range of options from doing nothing, to restoring a herd of about 1,000 bison, the size geneticists say is needed for a healthy population. Assuming the state opts for anything but the do-nothing option, the question

becomes: Which parts of Montana should see herds return? The National Wildlife Federation considers the area in and around the 1.1 million-acre Charles M. Russell Wildlife Refuge a prime location for a big bison repatriation effort. It's a rare expanse of unbroken native prairie, which is necessary for balancing bison conservation with legitimate concerns about having one-ton animals with little regard for fences busting up private property.

The refuge is already wildlife-rich, and it's even adjacent to a large bison-friendly effort on private land. The American Prairie Reserve has been buying and leasing land adjacent to the refuge, with the ultimate goal of linking up public and private land into three million acres that can support wide-ranging animals like pronghorn, and perhaps someday wild bison. In a 2012 HCN op-ed, France wrote, "...We should focus on where and how to restore wild bison, not whether we ought to do so." While the debate about returning wild bison to select parts of Montana hasn't disappeared, the fact that the state is leading a discussion on the topic may mean that bison will eventually rejoin the venerable ranks of the state's free-roaming beasts.

Sarah Jane Keller is a High Country News editorial fellow. Follow her on Twitter @sjanekeller. "Cross-posted from High Country News, hcn.org. The author is solely responsible for the content."

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By Ann W. Smith, MS, LMFT

“As I discuss in my new book *Recover to Live: Kick Any Habit, Manage Any Addiction*, you can’t lead a productive and fulfilling life if unhealthy behavior is holding you back. Perfectionism can be just as damaging as many other compulsive behaviors. Ann Smith is among the best in the world at helping people to break lifelong patterns and find balance in their lives. I would highly recommend this book.” -Christopher Kennedy Lawford

Chicago, IL, August 6, 2013 - Anything worth doing is worth doing well. Practice makes perfect. Winning isn’t everything, it’s the only thing. Failure is not an option. In today’s perfection-obsessed culture, these are the maxims we live by. Yet the damage they cause can be stifling. Renowned author and professional in the field of relationships and personal growth, Ann W. Smith, author of *Overcoming Perfectionism: Finding the Key to Balance - Self-Acceptance* (HCI Books- \$14.95) knows this first hand. Smith has dealt with her fair share of perfectionism and has borne witness to this all too common phenomenon in her professional life, having spent the last thirty years addressing the impact that compulsive patterns have on individuals and family. While perfectionism lacks much of the stigma attached to today’s most common compulsions-

smoking, gambling, sex addiction, alcoholism, and drug abuse-many of the negative consequences on self and the family system are the same.

Psychological and physical implications often include: headaches, isolation, fear of failure, sleep disturbances, workaholism, back pain, overeating, sexual dysfunction, depression, suicidal thoughts or tendencies, strained relationships, criticism of self and others, the need to be in control, and excessive guilt and shame.

In this groundbreaking book, Smith provides a path to reversing this pattern. From a unique perspective she describes differences between two types of perfectionism, overt and covert; the important role that early attachment, temperament, sibling relationships, and life circumstances play in developing this pattern, and outlines the practices necessary in order to find balance and improve quality of life.

About The Author: Ann W. Smith MS, LMFT, is a nationally recognized leader and professional in the field of healthy relationships frequently presenting at major conferences throughout the U.S., Canada, and Finland. As a licensed marriage and family therapist, she has spent nearly thirty years helping clients heal from the impact compulsive patterns have had both individually and on

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family systems. Ann is also the director of Breakthrough at Caron—a program she designed for Caron Treatment Centers aimed at helping adults achieve the quality of life they desire, improve relationships, and achieve personal goals. Ann’s professional experience has landed her interviews with Dateline NBC, National Public Radio, Newsweek, Us Magazine, Redbook, U.S. News and World Report, Philadelphia Magazine, Washington Post, Forbes Women, Wall Street Journal, Web MD, and numerous other newspapers, magazines, and radio and TV programs across the U.S. Currently, she is a regular contributor to Psychology Today’s website through her popular blog, Healthy Connections, with over 200,000 views to date.

Ann has also authored *Grandchildren of Alcoholics: Another Generation of Co-dependency*. To learn more about Ann visit www.breakthroughatcaron.org or www.annsmith.com. *Overcoming Perfectionism* by Ann W. Smith - Publisher: HCI -Readers will learn the root cause of this compulsion, how to fully experience and accept their essence, and finally, they will discover that although the inborn traits that make up their individual essence are imperfect, once accepted; they become the doorway to a happy and fulfilling life.

Tara Conner, Miss USA 2006, Public Advocacy Consultant, Caron Treatment Centers: *As a former Miss USA, I’ve dedicated a lot of time to trying to be the perfect woman. In fact, I spent so much time trying to be the Tara that everyone else needed me to be that I wasn’t in touch with my own needs. Ann Smith has helped me to develop and live in sync with my own values and authentic self. She has empowered me to love the woman I am today. I would recommend this book to anyone seeking self-acceptance.*

Rokelle Lerner, Author of *The Object of my Affection Is in My Reflection: Coping with Narcissists*, Clinical Director Cottonwood Inner Path Workshops: “The drive for perfection is a painful dynamic that destroys relationships and leads to a life of despair, emptiness, and exhaustion. Ann Smith has taken her seminal work on perfectionism and created an inspirational and practical guide! I’d recommend this book for anyone who is plagued by patterns of perfectionistic thinking or behavior!”

Robert J. Ackerman, PhD, Author, *Perfect Daughters: Adult Daughters of Alcoholics*, Professor and Program Director of the Human Services Degree Program at the University of South Carolina at Beaufort: “I highly recommend Ann Smith’s second

edition of her highly successful book, *Overcoming Perfectionism*. She has taken her work to another level, one that will benefit all who are making the journey beyond their painful childhoods. Her work is very personal, but her willingness to share her knowledge and emotions will touch many readers. Her style of writing makes you feel that this book is just for you and so it is.”

What is perfectionism? For some it is just a preference for order, or a drive to be the best they can be, but it is a choice. For those I write about it is a compulsive pattern of behavior and thoughts that is based on low self esteem, repressed feelings, insecurity or shame. It is not a conscious choice and becomes a need to maintain excellence in many areas of life. It is only a problem if it has a detrimental effect on one’s quality of life or conflicts with personal values.

Are all perfectionists the same? I see two types of perfectionists. The Overt perfectionist is easy to see, they are orderly, organized and a little uptight. They may be critical of others and hard to please. Some overt

(Continued on next page.)

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perfectionists are focused on social standards and how others should be.

The Covert perfectionist does not appear perfect in many areas of life but has a mental committee of critics who pressure them to be better; very self critical and tends to make comparisons to others and does not measure up. They are especially challenged by relationships where they do not feel adequate or good enough. Coverts tend to be more self-oriented, concerned about their own performance and less about others.

How serious is it? Perfectionism has been linked to anxiety, depression, suicidal ideation and suicide attempts. It is also related to lower relationship satisfaction and fear of intimacy.



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How does perfectionism hurt a relationship? Perfectionists are sensitive and defensive about making mistakes or being blamed or criticized. They avoid vulnerability and openness, trying not to appear flawed or bad. Since intimacy requires openness with emotions, their relationships may be superficial and focused on "doing" things for their partner rather than just being close. Some may also appear superior, expecting things to be done a certain way to the point of demeaning a partner.

How does it affect children when a parent is a perfectionist? The Overt perfectionist may become an enforcer or teacher rather than a loving parent. Emphasis is on doing what is right or correct rather than allowing children to learn from mistakes and develop their own identity. At times it may seem that the parent's self esteem is dependent on the success of the child. Some children will rebel; others will try to comply while hiding their imperfections and doubts from their parent.

How can this pattern be changed? I see it as a 3-stage process. First they need to see and evaluate the pitfalls of it and how it began. If it is not a problem, it doesn't need to change. If it is causing problems or is not a reflection of your values, it is important to make changes. Second is what I call "Becoming Me" where a perfectionist looks closely at who they really are - their essence. It is important to be real and slowly practice letting others see who you are. The third step is to let go of expectations and forgive yourself for past mistakes. It is a time to begin accepting yourself and others as is.



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Flood Damaged Trees

Flood-Damaged Trees Cause Additional Safety Concerns

As many communities along the Front Range in Colorado deal with the aftermath of recent flooding, one concern that should not be overlooked is the risk of trees falling due to the erosion caused by rushing water. Community Forestry Program Manager Keith Wood of the Colorado State Forest Service said heavy flooding can soften soil and wash it away from roots of trees, weakening tree stability and eventually killing any roots that become exposed to the air.

Conversely, other trees may slowly weaken or die if their roots have been in standing water for long periods of time or are smothered by a thick layer of newly deposited soil. "In flood-impacted areas, there will be trees at risk of falling over due to the loss of root structure, which presents a safety risk to affected communities," said Wood. "Besides the immediate threat, weather events such as a early winter snows and down-sloping winds create an extended risk of weakened trees falling."

The CSFS offers several tips to evaluate tree health concerns and avoid harm: Look for signs that a tree has been compromised and may require an inspection, which include a new lean to the tree, mounding of soil near the trunk, cracks in the soil as it dries out or obvious soil grade changes near the tree.

Use only an insured, International Society of Arboriculture-certified arborist to inspect trees for flood damage. Professionals often are listed in the phone book under "tree services," and a listing of ISA-certified arborists can be found at www.isa-arbor.com.

Avoid approaching trees adjacent to creeks, ditches or areas where flood waters are receding. Keep an eye on any trees of possible concern for the next few months, especially in riparian areas, and **be aware of the lingering risk of falling trees, especially in high winds.**

Look out for broken or cracked branches caused by water pressure, water weight or previous recovery and rescue efforts. To deal with trees of concern, arborists may recommend trenching to remove standing water, removing excess soil on top of root systems and replacing soil lost over root systems. For more information about tree care and protection, visit the Colorado State Forest Service website at csfs.colostate.edu

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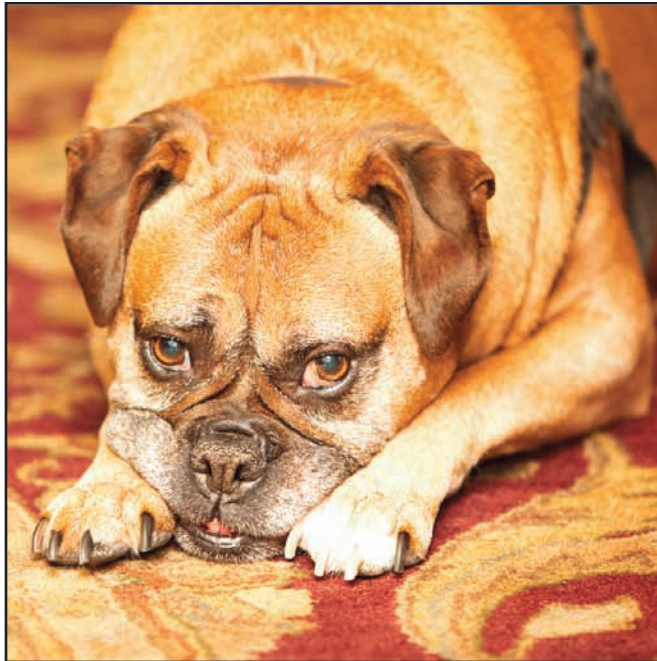
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Dogs Never Lie

By Melissa E. Johnson

In times of joy, all of us wished we possessed a tail we could wag. ~ W.H. Auden

Madison would be freaking out right now if she were here to see this flood. She would be tempted to get in the creek but she would hesitate; tuned into the water's raging energy; connected to the heightened turmoil around her. She was sensitive like that; dialed in before others even knew.



Like the time she made a big fuss of dragging her blanket and pillow around to my side of the bed so she could sleep

next to me. I noticed the change right away, and I wondered out loud if perhaps I had cancer, or something terribly wrong, because I had heard about dogs that can sense these things. A few days later I learned that I was pregnant. She continued to drag her bed around to my side for weeks until one day she didn't; and, again, I wondered out loud if everything was okay with the baby. A few days later I miscarried. She didn't drag her bed around to my side after that, but she stayed close and loved me through my tears.

One time she charged to the edge of the yard and scared the dickens out of our neighbor. She could be intimidating with her stocky frame-almost 100 pounds and mostly muscle-but Madison just wanted to say hello; a real lover. We knew her approach could use some work. Still, she went too far and she knew better, so when her daddy

scolded her bad choice she put herself in time-out; cowering on the little mat in front of the soaking tub in the master bath, shaking and shivering in her remorse. She wanted to do right, she really wanted to do right, and it killed her to think that she had disappointed us.

But she could never really disappoint us, not for long anyway. No matter the infraction, just one look at her cute little mug and soon we were laughing at her heartfelt expressions. She could be a real drama queen sometimes. Mostly we just loved her and cherished every minute we shared.

She was her daddy's best friend before I came along, but she welcomed me with loving paws and big wet kisses-she even let me paint her



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 “Party-in-my-Ca-bana” pink for the summer and “Fa-La-La-Luscious” in time for the holidays. From the way she watched me beautify, I imagined that she secretly wanted to join me in

my primping. And when she walked down the aisle as the honorary ring bearer for our New Year’s Eve nuptials, wearing a big red flower behind her ear, I couldn’t have loved her more if I had given birth to her myself. I hope she knew that.

When she left her condo in the city for mountain dwelling, we teased that she was living the high life in her new retirement home. More than bacon and eggs-more than

anything-she loved being outdoors, and she moved freely between meditations in the sun, chasing sticks and mindless rambling creek side. Madison taught me so much about living, about the joy of routine and unconditional love, about seizing each moment and never being afraid to ask for what you want. I envied her life.

Sometimes I still hear the tap of her nails on the hardwood floors and I turn to call her name. Then I remember. But like the wind that moves the trees and urges the water downstream, we’ll carry her in our hearts forever. We love you dog.

Melissa is a writer, photographer, artist and lawyer. Read more on her blog at www.HeartLaw.blogspot.com.

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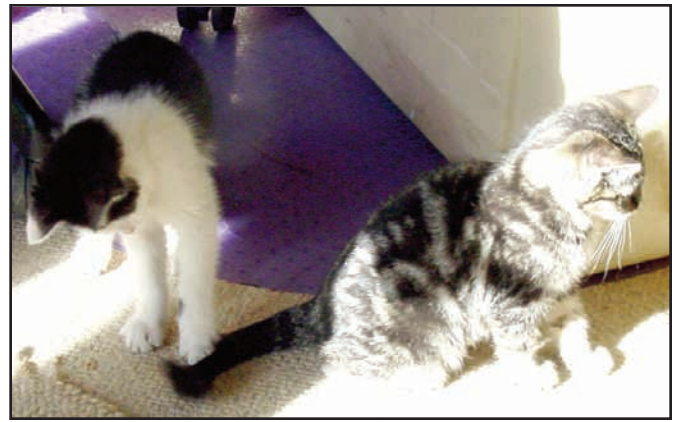
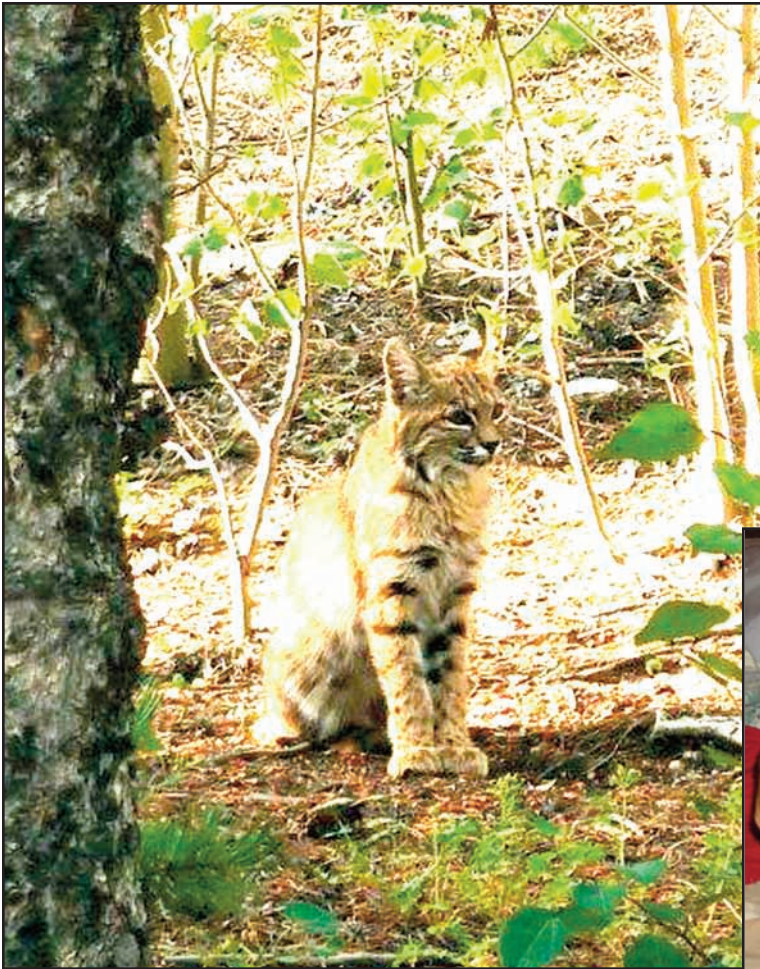
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Top Right: Kitten got kitten tail.

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Don't Be Afraid To Use The Term Sacred

By Dave Stalling

It is difficult to know what's sacred nowadays because somehow, money has come to top the list. It may be that one person's "sacred" place is another person's gas and oil field. Why else would anyone consider drilling around a place called Chief Mountain in northwest Montana, along the border of Glacier National Park and the Blackfoot Nation? The peak stands out along the Rocky Mountain Front, that rugged 200-mile wall of steep reefs that rise up from the Great Plains.

Elk, bighorns, pronghorn, badgers, wolverines, lynx, mountain lions, wolves all thrive on this land. Clear, clean rivers along the Front sustain some of the last remaining healthy populations of west slope cutthroat trout. And grizzlies still wander out onto the plains as they did when the explorers Lewis and Clark came through in 1805. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, this is the place that contains the "top 1 percent" of wildlife habitat remaining in the Continental United States. So if anything can be called "sacred," I think this is the place.

Seven years ago, I assisted a coalition of local hunters, anglers, ranchers, outfitters, businessmen and tribal leaders

in a successful effort to protect a significant chunk of the Rocky Mountain front from gas and oil development, mostly around the Badger-Two Medicine area south of Chief Mountain. As a professional conservationist, I had to be cautious about using emotional arguments, about calling a place sacred, focusing instead on the economic importance of hunting, fishing, clean water and wildlife.

But then at a community meeting, I had to wholeheartedly agree with Stoney Burke, a local man from Choteau, who was accused of being "emotional" about Montana's Rocky Mountain Front. In reply, he pounded his fist on a table and shouted, "You're goddamn right I'm emotional; if you can't be emotional about a place like this, then what the hell can you be emotional about?"

He compared putting roads and gas wells along the Front to permanently scarring his daughter's face. When someone noted that Forest Service lands must be managed for multiple use that includes gas and oil development, Burke replied, "Multiple use doesn't mean you take a crap in your kitchen." I thought then: If only everyone were as passionate and emotional about sacred places.

While working along the Front, I got to know Earl Old Person, chief of the Blackfoot Nation. While eating



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breakfast with him at the Two Medicine Cafe in East Glacier one day, I shared with him some personal problems I was facing. The chief suggested two simple remedies: Medicine Grizzly Lake and Chief Mountain. "Go there," he said. "You'll feel better." Of course, he was right.

The mountain has been sacred to the Blackfeet for centuries, and it remains sacred to many First Nation people throughout North America who travel to the mountain for sweet-grass ceremonies, placing prayer flags and other religious rites. When white settlers came through in the early 1900s, they observed Native burial sites along the base of the Chief.

But what protection does a sacred place have these days? Recently, the Bureau of Indian Affairs allowed leasing a large swath of land around Chief Mountain for gas and oil development, with the blessing of some tribal leaders and members eager for profit. Others were angered, sickened and saddened. The Blackfeet can be as divided and conflicted as the rest of us when it comes to such things. I envy and can only imagine the bond Native people once

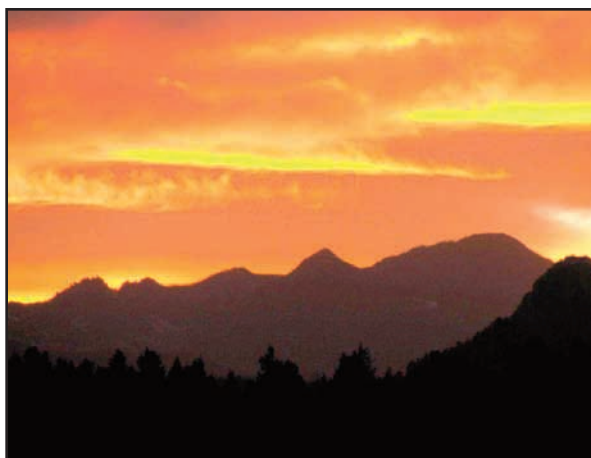
enjoyed to the land and wildlife.

Through a lifetime of hunting, fishing and roaming through remote and wild places for as long as 10 weeks at a time, I've tried to create my own connection to wild animals and wild places. I think that people living close to the land — needing the land - naturally find reverence for it.

These days, our society is so divorced from our planet that we forget that clean air, clean water and wild places continue to sustain us all. Elders from Southern Alberta's Siksika Band pass on this tale: Near the end of days, a Great White God will appear from the top of Chief Mountain, and upon his departure

the mountain will crumble and be destroyed. I wonder what drilling, what attack on the mountain, will have occurred before the mountain crumbles. I hope we can avoid this atrocity.

Dave Stalling is a contributor to Writers on the Range, a service of High Country News (hcn.org). He is a writer and wildlife advocate living in Missoula, Montana. Highlander file photo of a Rocky Mountain Sunset.



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Beat Your Sugar Addiction

10 Surprising Foods You Will Want Off Your Grocery List

When you think of addiction, various illegal and harmful substances probably spring to mind but not sugar. Yes, you know that candy, cookies, soda, and your other favorite sweet treats aren't the healthiest options-and sure, you may feel the urge to satisfy a craving once in awhile-but there's no way that sugar can totally hijack your life right? Wrong. Believe it or not, sugar is highly addictive and acts on the pleasure center of the brain just like alcohol and heroin. In other words, the more you eat, the more you want.

Combine sugar's addictive nature with its omnipresence in our sweets-and-carbs-loving society and you have a recipe for a health disaster. Fortunately, the popular *For Dummies(r)* series is here to decrease your reliance on sugar and make positive changes that will help you transition to a healthier diet. "Today, the average American consumes more than 130 pounds of sugar each year, which your body isn't designed to handle," says Dan DeFigio, author of *Beating Sugar Addiction For Dummies(r)*

"As a result, our country is plagued with high rates of obesity, diabetes, chronic fatigue, high cholesterol, metabolic syndrome, and much more-a very high price to pay for the sake of habit, preference, and convenience." In

his book, DeFigio explains the science behind sugar addiction and why it's so harmful for your body. He also helps readers identify whether they might be sugar addicts and gives them the tools to create a sustainable and more nutritious diet, including exercise recommendations and healthy recipes.

One of the first steps in decreasing your reliance on sugar, he says, is making smarter choices regarding the food you buy and eat. "Unless you grow your own vegetables and raise your own livestock, the grocery store is where you make primary food decisions for you and your family," DeFigio points out. "Though most people recognize the junk-food quality of obvious high-sugar foods like candy and ice cream, many unhealthy items are available in the stores that you may erroneously think of as healthier alternatives. Also, remember that sugar doesn't come only from sweet foods, but from anything containing corn syrup, for example, or from carbohydrates."

Here, DeFigio reveals ten foods that aren't as healthy as you may have thought: Diet soda. Diet sodas are sugar-free and calorie-free, so they must be a healthier alternative to sugared, "original" soft drinks, right? Wrong. Diet drinks are artificially sweetened with aspartame (NutraSweet), a chemical that causes brain damage and increases appetite. The type of caramel coloring used in many diet sodas is a carcinogen, and the phosphoric acid in sodas leeches calcium out of your bones, contributing to osteoporosis.

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Yikes! “Stay away from sodas of all types, both sugared and zero-calorie,” DeFigio recommends. “If you like the fizz of soda, drink mineral water instead. You can flavor it with fresh lemon and lime. To gradually wean yourself off of sweetened drinks, try adding stevia powder instead of sugar or chemical sweeteners to your beverages. Stevia is a natural, plant-based sweetener that has virtually no calories and doesn’t carry the health risks that artificial sweeteners do. Over time you can gradually decrease the amount of stevia powder that you put in your drinks.”

Frozen entrées. Because today’s brands of health-conscious entrées are low in fat and calories, many dieters believe that they’re making a smart decision by eating these handy products. A quick look at the ingredients list shows that this isn’t the case. For example, a glazed chicken entrée from the most popular line of “healthy” frozen foods contains high-fructose corn syrup, several preservatives, salt, artificial caramel color, partially hydrogenated oil (trans fats), sugar, and maltodextrin (more sugar). None of those things are going to win a healthy ingredient contest anytime soon! “Frozen dinners don’t really save much time-it doesn’t take long to chop up some organic chicken and vegetables and make a stir-fry with fresh ingredients that you can control,” points out DeFigio. “Taking a few minutes to throw together a homemade meal like this ensures that you eat healthy ingredients and avoid dangerous chemicals.”

Bacon. Sorry, bacon lovers. Though a high-protein breakfast is desirable, you can find much healthier protein sources than bacon. Conventional bacon is made from feedlot hogs and is usually loaded with nitrites and other preservatives, sugars, artificial smoke flavoring, chemical coloring, and MSG. Ounce for ounce, bacon is mostly fat and chemicals. Did your appetite survive that description? “If you really love bacon, find a local farmer who can sell you bacon that’s made without harmful chemicals from animals that are raised on good food without hormones,” suggests DeFigio.

Canned soups. A piping hot bowl of chicken soup or chili sounds like a healthy meal. Even though meat and vegetables are the primary ingredients, canned soup typically contains feedlot meat, too much salt, genetically modified ingredients, high-fructose corn syrup, MSG, and preservatives. “If you don’t want to make your own soup, look for brands that are made from organic ingredients, without chemical additives, and that are canned in BPA-free containers,” instructs DeFigio.

Genetically modified foods. In the

1990s, food manufacturers began using plants that had gone through a process of genetic engineering-inserting genes from other plants, animals, or bacteria to alter the crop’s genome. Foods that have been genetically modified-often referred to as GM foods or GMOs (genetically modified organisms)-have caused concern among some members of the scientific community for possible human and environmental health risks, such as infertility, organ damage, and immune system problems. “No one knows for certain what harm these products will end up causing to people’s bodies and the environment as we move into the future,” comments DeFigio. “My guess is that certain modifications are probably harmless, but some of them are certainly not. Unfortunately, only time will tell. In the meantime, I advise you to stay away from genetically engineered food products whenever possible. By law, food labeled ‘100 percent organic’ can’t contain genetically modified ingredients, so look for that label when shopping. Better yet, find a local farmer who raises nonmodified crops.”

Microwave popcorn. You may *(Continued on next page.)*



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consider popcorn to be a low-calorie, high-fiber snack, but microwave popcorn isn't a healthy choice. When microwaved, popcorn bags leak perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and other plastic residues into your food. PFOA has been linked to infertility, thyroid disease, and a host of other endocrine disorders. "Aside from the packaging, commercial microwave popcorn typically contains harmful trans fats, preservatives, artificial colors, sugar, chemical sweeteners, and other 'flavor enhancers' like MSG," warns DeFigio. "Read the ingredients once and you'll never touch a bag again. To avoid dangerous chemicals, pop your own non-GMO corn at home with an air popper. If you like, add organic butter and sea salt."

Fruit juice and juice drinks. Even though fruit juice is loaded with vitamins and antioxidants, even 100 percent juice contains too much sugar to be a good choice for those who are trying to limit their sugar intake. Excess fructose (fruit sugar) causes body fat accumulation, increased appetite, liver disease, and elevated cholesterol and triglycerides. And be careful: Juice cocktails and juice boxes for kids are often only 10 percent fruit juice, with the

rest of the ingredients being high-fructose corn syrup and other sweeteners, artificial colors, and preservatives. "An 8-ounce glass of orange juice has approximately 25 grams of sugar," says DeFigio. "Keep this in mind when portioning your beverages. If you choose to drink fruit juice occasionally, make sure you drink 100 percent juice (with no additives) and limit yourself to a 4-ounce serving."

Rice cakes. Any all-carbohydrate snack-especially if it's made of processed, enriched grains-causes an insulin spike followed by a blood sugar crash several hours later. Rice cakes, granola bars, and other all-carb snacks aren't good choices for sugar addicts, because the lack of protein keeps them on the blood sugar roller coaster and stimulates cravings. "Half a rice cake (whole grain, not enriched) topped with almond butter or organic cheese adds fat and protein to mitigate the insulin response and keep your blood sugar levels more stable," comments DeFigio.

Protein bars. Most of the protein bars found on the shelves of grocery stores and health food stores are laden with sugars, syrups, preservatives, and fractional oils (oils that are processed to become more saturated than they are naturally). "These products are basically candy bars with added protein," asserts DeFigio. "Fortunately, not all protein snack bars are loaded with chemicals.

Peanut butter. Though natural peanut butter is a good source of healthy fats and protein, industrial peanut butter (including commercial brands like Skippy and Jif) is made with hydrogenated oils (trans fats) to keep the oil from separating to the top of the jar. Industrial brands also add sugar and sometimes other additives like preservatives and flavorings. "Stick with organic, natural peanut butter," instructs DeFigio. "The ingredients should have no more than two items: peanuts and (maybe) salt. Refrigerate

natural peanut butter after opening and stirring."

"When you come across any of these foods in the grocery store, keep walking!" DeFigio concludes. "You can't eat what you don't have. And remember to make small, sustainable changes instead of trying to overhaul your eating habits overnight. The good news is, a basic knowledge of good nutrition and where to find it can have a huge impact on your well-being and health, now and in the future."

(Editor's Note: As a sugar lover from childhood, it has been a challenge to remove and replace sugary treats with healthy and nutritious substitutes that satisfy that sweet tooth. All I can say is that if you don't have it in the house, you won't drive many miles to get it, so only apples & dark chocolate kisses.)



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Senator Nicholson's Bills That Make A Difference

Increasing Access to Oral Health - Many citizens are unaware of the negative health effects caused by poor oral health including Strokes, Lung Disease, Stomach Ulcers, Pneumonia, Heart Attacks, Diabetes, High blood Pressure, and Heart Disease. These bills help all Coloradans access better oral health care.

Senate Bill 242 - Adult Medicaid Benefits - This legislation creates a limited dental benefit for adults on Medicaid. This legislation will save millions of dollars by providing preventative care.

Senate Bill 261 - Oral Health Community Programs - This legislation will offer grants to communities that wish to fluoridate their water or provide protective tooth sealants for children.

Ensuring Access to Vital Services - It's important that we provide access to necessary services for the most vulnerable among us. These bills help citizens suffering from mental illness and survivors of domestic violence.

Senate Bill 266 - Mental Health Crisis Response System - This legislation creates a statewide coordinate response system for individuals suffering from mental crisis.

Senate Bill 271 - Address Confidentiality Program - This legislation finds permanent funding for the Address Confidentiality Program, which allows survivors of Domestic Violence use confidential state provided

addresses to prevent their perpetrators from finding them.

Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect - Recent reports regarding child fatalities have left Coloradans outraged. That's why I sponsored several bills to help ensure that suspected abuse and neglect is reported and that our children are protected.

Senate Bill 220 - Emergency Medical Providers as Mandatory Reporters - This legislation requires Emergency Medical Providers to report suspected child abuse.

House Bill 1271 - Child Abuse Reporting Hotline - This legislation creates a hotline for reporting suspected child abuse and creates procedures for dealing with such reports.

Strengthening the Economy - this session I have worked to continue building the economy and helping Coloradans find employment.

House Bill 1292 - Keep Jobs in Colorado Act - This legislation ensures that Colorado workers are hired for positions created by state contracts and that good faith efforts are made to utilize Colorado products.

House Bill 1036 - Local Improvement Districts - This bill also expands the authority of Local Improvement Districts by allowing the use of sales tax to promote, organize, and manage public events and to include noncontiguous properties with the Board of County Commissioners and Property Owner Approval.

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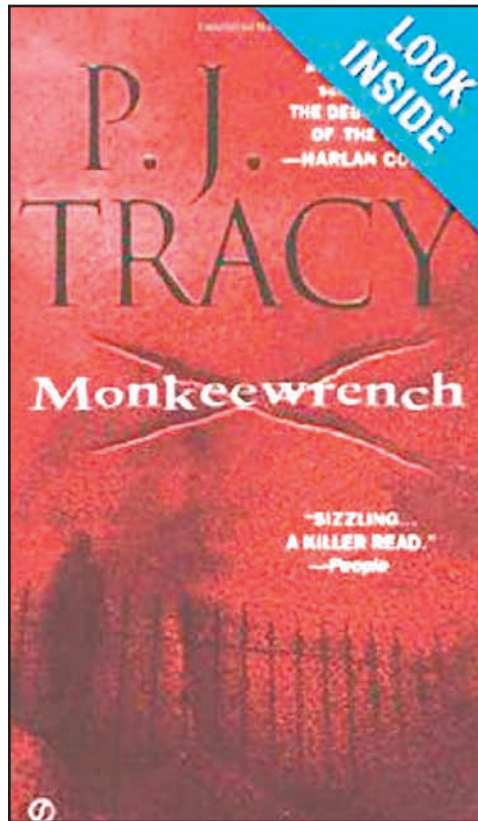
Mother-Daughter Team Up For Suspense Series

By Tracy Reseigh

Monkeewrench, written by mother and daughter writing team P.J. Tracy, is their debut suspense novel (originally published in 2004) about separate murder cases that begin in Wisconsin, and collide in Minnesota. The connection appears to be an eccentric group of computer game designers, the employees of Monkeewrench.

Minneapolis Software Company Monkeewrench has just introduced a new game that is being tested by a limited number of gamers. This game is a far cry from their usual educational games for children. This game is called Serial Killer Detective, and it is an interactive game where the players get to go inside a murder scene and try to solve the crime, the player is the detective.

Soon it is discovered that the murder scenes in the game are the models for real life murders scenes playing out in Minneapolis. The Minneapolis police department questions the



Monkeewrench gang and learns that there are twenty scenarios written into the game. Now they are forced to work with their number one suspects, the Monkeewrench employees.

Rural Wisconsin Sheriff Michael Halloran also has a string of murders to contend with in his little town. While investigating their respective crimes, a common link is discovered and soon Halloran and the Minnesota police department join forces to try to solve the seemingly related crimes.

In trying to get ahead of the next murder scenario, the Minnesota police department discovers that the Monkeewrench gang are not who they say they are. Additionally, they are tagged by the FBI because of a past series of murders so now the Minnesota detectives are trying to solve a crime where the suspects are some of the smartest people they have encountered, while trying to beat the

FBI's involvement time table.

Monkeewrench is a book for readers who enjoy the suspense/crime and drama genre. Tracy does a nice job of developing the characters, and providing their back-stories without making that part of the story telling tedious. The crime solving is suspenseful and succinct as well, there does not seem to be unnecessary story telling in this book. This is also the first book in the *Monkeewrench* series (Highlander readers will know that I'm a fan of book series), so for people who enjoy book series, I recommend this one. Published by Signet Book, *Monkeewrench* is available online or at Barnes and Noble for \$7.99. And also used at Amazon for a discount when you buy more than one in the series.

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Dear Editor,

I realize the HIGHLANDER is not an important mainstream newspaper or magazine, but just the same, hundreds or thousands of people read it each issue and accordingly, HIGHLANDER has a responsibility typical of most journalistic organs. One of those is news stories are couched as news. And editorials are clearly marked as opinion or editorial.

And so we turn to the recent article called *Working For Our Incumbent Senator in Dist. 16*. This article appears to be a news story. It certainly is not marked as an editorial. But, somehow HIGHLANDER seems to be promoting a politician. Jeanne Nicholson. What is this? Why not just come right out and say: "I, Anita Wilks like and endorse and support Jeanne Nicholson as a representative of residents of Coal Creek Canyon." At least everyone would not take this for a neutral news story.

But wait, there is more. I am a resident of Coal Creek Canyon. A few years back when the controversy was going on about canyon residents maintaining or losing our agricultural designation that was being voted on in the Colorado Legislature, a large group of canyon residents went to Jeanne and asked her to support keeping the ag classification. We asked her to support our classification and we asked her if she would vote to keep the classification. And, she DID promise us she would support the classification. She told it to our homeowners association president. She told it to others.

And then, she voted the other way. By my calculation, she lied to us. She lied. So, how do you feel about supporting a politician who lied? Think we have enough slippery, and dishonest politicians already? And now you publish this angelic picture of this politician who failed to keep her word and promise. Look how innocent she looks in your picture. Did she provide it? Probably. Those of us who were snookered know the real story and you need to also. But also, would you please put ANY articles like this under an editorial classification going forward? People are not stupid. You are undermining your credibility even though your magazine is free.
September 2, 2013 Harry Grass

Dear Editor,

Speaking of opinions there are a few Coal Creek citizens who thought they had a right to a property tax agricultural designation because they allowed a neighbor's cows to occasionally graze on their

approximately 2-5 acre parcels in Blue Mountain estates. They asked me to protect their continued "right" to an agricultural designation. I promised to look into the matter but did not promise to protect what they perceived to be a right. More than anything else I believe in fairness. I do not think it is fair to avoid paying the same taxes that the rest of your neighbors pay to support our schools, roads, fire fighting services, law enforcement services and other services that we all benefit from in one way or another unless you are making a living providing the rest of us with food. The people who own and operate farms and ranches have good reason to have an agricultural designation and to pay a more modest property tax because their operations require larger parcels of ground and they are providing the rest of us with food. That seems fair to me. However I think the rest of us need to fall under the residential or commercial property tax designations and pay our fair share. Sincerely, Jeanne Nicholson *(Continued-next page.)*



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Highlander Letters

To Mr. Grass,

In response to your letter: Senator Nicholson sent her own response here (*previous page*), and I wish to address your vitriolic diatribe about news vs. editorials. The Legislative Reapportionment of Senate District 16 and the possible repercussions of this is news and it is my right as editor to label it as such. It is also common knowledge that I have endorsed Senator Nicholson for years, even when she ran for Gilpin County Commissioner. It seems you are out of the loop and in addition to your warped sense of right and wrong feel you somehow are also above having to pay your fair share of taxes. Should all horse owners have ag designation? Imagine the loss of tax base! WOW!

When you start paying my printing, postage, labor and distribution expenses along with maintaining my advertising base then you may try to dictate to me my responsibilities about journalism. But I maintain you are one of the many who only wish to focus on the negatives because I've never received any communication from you

about the positives in my publication every month. This serves to undermine your credibility on all subjects and Senator Nicholson's information is clarification enough for all to see you for whom you really are, a citizen who has in the past shirked your tax obligations and only have sour grapes to share when fairness finally wins. Editor

Letter to the readers.

Tri County Mountain Crafts aka TCMC will not be holding their annual Autumn Arts Festival this year. Due to the flooding in the canyon and Hwy 72 being closed in numerous areas, we have decided to postpone our event and hopefully hold a "Spring Fling" in April or May.

If anyone would like to contact one of our members to purchase Christmas gifts/items or other forms of our work, please contact me and I'll put you in touch with whomever you wish to speak.

Also, please be aware that our work is available at Coal Creek Coffee during their hours of operation.

If you have any questions about our group or the type of art we make, please don't hesitate to contact me by phone or email. If you email me, please put TCMC in the subject line and if you phone, don't hesitate to leave a message if necessary. Thank-you for your past patronage, Linda Caldwell, Pres. TCMC - cccco@aol.com 303-642-1422

From: Richard Alan Keen Richard.Keen@Colorado.EDU
Flood rain measurements-**Rainfall records needed** - Dr. Richard Keen, the Weather Service climate observer up on Gap Road, would like to collect any and all measurements of the big rain from anywhere in and around Coal Creek Canyon. This would help us estimate the total amount of

rain that fell on - and then ran out of - the Canyon.

The heaviest rain appears to have fallen in a band along and north of Coal Creek, especially during the downpour between 9 pm and midnight on Wednesday evening Sept. 11th. If you have a rain gauge, or stuck a ruler in a bucket at the end of the storm, please send along your numbers, whether they are cumulative readings, daily readings, a weekly total, or a record of the Wednesday evening downpour (when the rain was most intense and variable around the Canyon).

Please include the date & time and amount or your reading(s), your location, description of the gauge (or bucket) you used, and whether there were any washouts, basement/crawl-space flooding, or other significant

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effects., and e-mail your data to richard.keen@colorado.edu

I'll use the data to map the storm across Coal Creek Canyon and vicinity, and forward it to the State Climatologist at CSU and to the National Weather Service, who will also find your observations useful. Thanks! Dr. Richard Keen

Transporting Firewood May Spread Tree-Killing Insects According to Colorado State Forest Service

Stocking up on firewood is on the minds of many Coloradans, with some seeking full cords for winter fuel while others are in need of only a few armloads for fall hunting trips. But because of the immense impact bark beetles and other insects can have on Colorado forests, the Colorado State Forest Service wants to be sure people are aware of the risks associated with moving firewood.

"There are many potential risks associated with moving firewood, from spreading native insects like spruce beetle to introducing non-native urban pests from outside our borders," said Sky Stephens, CSFS forest entomologist. The transportation of firewood is a common cause for the accidental introduction of harmful tree insects and diseases to new areas. Insects, fungi and diseases can hitch a ride on cut wood - from both living and dead trees - and are often hidden away under the bark.

Stephens says insects of primary concern include the emerald ash borer and gypsy moth - pests that have not yet impacted Colorado but are active threats to its deciduous trees. Thousand cankers disease, which has already killed most of the black walnut trees in some urban Front Range communities, is another major concern related to moving firewood. The CSFS offers several tips to help protect Colorado trees and forests: Burn firewood at the location where you buy or cut it. Leave behind any wood you don't burn.

Don't ever transport firewood or other raw wood across state lines (it may even be illegal). Ask firewood dealers questions about the origin of the wood, and always try to buy local. The best option is anything labeled with the Colorado Forest Products logo.

For more information about insects and diseases that

threaten Colorado trees, contact a local CSFS district office or go to <http://csfs.colostate.edu>.

Forestry Tip of the Day: Some thoughts on the Flood

In my opinion Boulder County is one of the best places to live in the United States. We have the most beautiful mountains, the best people I have ever met and more recreational opportunities than imaginable.

It is amazing how in a couple of days everything seems to change. The past few weeks have been an extremely difficult time for so many of you, the folks that make this place so special to me. We will bounce back from this Boulder County and we will be stronger than we were before.

The south county Nederland Sort Yard is currently planned to be open on four consecutive Fridays and Saturdays, through Oct. 12.

Due to ongoing disaster response our sort yard schedule is subject to change with little warning. Before hauling slash and logs to the sort yard please call our daily operational hotline at 303-678-6368 to confirm operational status. For complete details about this free log and slash disposal program please visit:

<http://www.bouldercounty.org/property/forest/pages/fhsort-yards.aspx>

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Black Bear-Unnatural?

By Casey O'Malley

On Father's Day in 2007, a black bear fatally mauled an 11-year-old boy who was camping with his family in Utah's Uinta National Forest. The family had gathered at an undeveloped, dispersed campsite 1.2 miles away from an established campground with amenities. The incident was the first documented black-bear fatality in the state. The same bear had raided coolers and pawed at a camper's head just the day before, and the state Department of Wildlife Resources sent wildlife officers out to track it down and remove it.

But they were unsuccessful, and the next evening the bear attack occurred. The boy's death was a heart-wrenching tragedy, but it is making news six years later because the family sued both the Utah Department of Wildlife Resources and the U.S. Forest Service. They claimed that state authorities had already identified the bear as a problem but did not give them ample warning that there was an aggressive bear in the area.

No warnings were posted and the road to the undeveloped campsite remained open. A ruling on their suit against the Forest Service awarded them nearly \$2 million. A Utah district court, however, dismissed the family's suit against the state last fall, decreeing that a black bear, an animal native to Utah's Wasatch Range, is a natural condition on the land and the state cannot assume responsibility for the bear's aggression. The family appealed and the case slowly made its way to the state's Supreme Court.

This July 19, the Utah Supreme Court ruled that the state had, in fact, a duty to protect the boy from the bear and that a bear is not a "natural condition" on public lands. The Supreme Court's decision bumps the case down to the district court, where a trial will now occur to determine if the state's Division of Wildlife Resources is at fault for the boy's death. Utah's wildlife agency has yet to issue a statement about the new ruling. To be a "natural condition," the Supreme Court said, something must "have a close tie to land itself" and "persist on the land," and not be transitory or temporary.

According to the Utah Supreme Court, the transient nature of animals, as they move from one place to another, takes wildlife out of the expected, natural condition of public lands. The court decreed that natural conditions of the land are limited to things that are "topographical in nature" or directly connected to topography, like ravines, rocks and resulting rockslides, and snowpack and resulting avalanches. For inexplicable reasons, the court's definition fails to include wildlife.

Utah is a state with an extensive mosaic of urban-wilderness lands. Most of Utah's population is jammed

into the Wasatch Front, with cities pushing against the mountains that curtail their growth to the east. Residents flock to the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest, making it one of the most heavily used parcels of public land in the nation.

Though it is wonderful to see people embrace their public lands, it is odd and bizarre for the state's Supreme Court to decide that wildlife is not natural and therefore not welcome. The national forests that surround the Salt Lake Valley are inevitably going to host human-wildlife interactions, with some of those interactions joyful and Kodak-moment-worthy, and some of them violent. The court's decision signifies more than the state's absolute duty to protect visitors from aggressive wildlife. It also signifies that we are one step further away from understanding the complicated dance that arises from living so close to wilderness. I fear the day when all visitors will expect the state to protect them from everything uncomfortable - from bee stings and sunburn to sprained ankles.

Perhaps there is some comfort in the words of Justice Jill Parrish, who authored the dissenting opinion on the Supreme Court's ruling. She writes: "Long before the borders of Utah were drawn, the land, in its natural condition, contained large and small indigenous wildlife in addition to its topographical features. And today, conservation efforts aimed at preserving the natural condition of Utah's public lands include support for and rehabilitation of native species. To read 'natural condition' in the limited context of topographical features ignores an entire segment of the unique natural conditions of Utah's public lands."

At least she understands that the natural condition of public lands includes wild animals, and that it is up to us to both respect and expect their presence.

Casey O'Malley is a contributor to Writers on the Range,



a service of High Country News (hcn.org). She is a writer and teacher in Salt Lake City. (Recent black bear photo by Kelsey Kempfert. What isn't addressed in this article is that allowing bears to have access to coolers, trash, etc. sets them up to becoming dangerous to humans. Who left the coolers/trash out for the bears to get into?)



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New Technology To Trace Fracking Fluids

From Tay Wiles

As the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency comes under fire for abandoning studies that linked contaminated water to hydraulic fracturing, and oil and gas companies consider how to fix their public image around the issue, states are trying to figure out how much transparency to demand from the industry. Meanwhile, researchers are racing to find the most effective tracer to mix with fracking fluid that could dramatically change how the industry works.

This fall, a company founded by scientists from Rice University in Houston will conduct a field test of a tracer made with what chemistry and materials science professor Andrew Barron believes is the key ingredient to success: nano rust. Barron and other researchers hope this tracer will settle once and for all whether oil and gas companies are damaging drinking water, and, in the event of contamination, allow communities to determine who - or what - is at fault.

“People (with contaminated wells) usually say (I know it was fracking) ‘because I’ve got methane in my water,’” Barron said. “(But) it’s difficult to discern whether it’s from one source or another.” With new tracer technology to help narrow it down, “It may turn out it was Halliburton that contaminated your water, and in another case, it may

turn out it’s the municipal dump that’s dumping into a stream that has groundwater close to it.” For their field test, Barron’s company will mix nano rust particles into at least two million gallons of fracking fluid before pumping it into the ground for hydraulic fracturing (a process that uses pressurized water, sand and chemicals to break up rock and release gas underground). Texas-based Southwestern Energy will host the testing at one of its wells and has also funded some of Barron’s tracer research. Barron, and his company, FracEnsure, anticipate they may publish results from the field test in a Society of Petroleum Engineers journal.

Tracers that can already be used in fracking fluid today usually either dilute too quickly or rely on radioactive material, which isn’t a great way to test for contaminated water without contaminating it in the process. Barron says his nano rust solution is harmless, detectable at low concentrations and also lasts at least several weeks, and possibly more, making it easier to detect a slow-moving problem.

Depending on the results, Barron hopes to have the nano rust tracer on the market within a year. He and his colleagues launched FracEnsure in 2011 to use the nano rust product to provide a service for companies, state governments or individuals, in which they test water for contamination upon request. As far as costs go, that will depend on the market. “It’s not the dollar amount; it’s what percentage of the total cost of the well it is. We’re aiming that (the price for our tracer) should be far less than 10% of (the cost of) the chemicals” that the drilling company is already using.

A second tracer company, BaceTrace, which popped up last year, is FracEnsure’s biggest competition so far. BaceTrace began as a research project out of Duke University, with grant money from the school, and also hopes to complete a field test before the end of the year. When CEO Justine Chow combined her biology undergraduate work with her curiosity to find a fracking fluid tracer during her graduate work, she came up with what she says may be the perfect solution: artificial deoxyribonucleic acid, or DNA. Just a thimbleful amount is needed for 7 million gallons, or 11 Olympic-sized swimming pools, of



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fracking fluid.

Each tracer is a unique sequence, and each well will be assigned its own tracer, which allows a precise accounting of where the contamination came from. If a tracer assigned to well A shows up in an aquifer, that's evidence that that well or a fracture in the rock linked to it is connected to that aquifer. If multiple DNA-based tracers come up in one sample of flowback water, or one aquifer, that means there's an underground connection in the fractures between the wells in which the injection fluid for each gets mixed. "It would be interesting for the company to know that," Chow says. "They'd probably be more productive if they didn't spread fractures out so far." The Duke team has already had several oil and gas companies express interest in the DNA tracer when it's available. This interest raises the question: If these tracers have the potential to show that a project is contaminating a community's drinking water, then why are these companies chomping at the bit to try it out?

"This technology is another way for our industry to add a level of transparency to what we do and gain the public's trust," Christina Fowler, a spokesperson for Southwestern Energy writes in an email. Where lawsuits arise over contamination, the tracers will help plaintiffs support claims that their water has in fact been contaminated by local oil and gas development as opposed to other causes, and on the flip side, would help defendants - which

Southwestern has been in the past on this issue - prove they're not the source of the pollution, Fowler says.

Yet whether these new technologies will ultimately be useful in holding the oil and gas industry to a higher standard of accountability hinges on whether tracer tests have adequate safeguards to ensure companies do not manipulate results.

Both FracEnsure and BaceTrace are working out the kinks and considering applications outside the oil and gas industry. It takes a couple of days to test water samples in a lab to determine whether they contain a tracer, Chow says; she's hoping to develop the technology to be instantaneously detectable in the field. And water management and the agriculture industry might also benefit from a reliable tracer technology, in order to better understand how various water sources interact underground.

"If the general public and the states have the information, then you can make a decision," about whether to continue or begin drilling in certain locations, Barron said. "Irrespective of which direction you come from, the information is important."

Tay Wiles is the online editor of High Country News. Follow her on Twitter @taywiles. "Cross-posted from High Country News, hcn.org. The author is solely responsible for the content."

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OCTOBER
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Looking for a Way to Help United Power Members? Round-Up Your Electric Bill

Operation Round-Up is a voluntary program where members choose to have their monthly electric bill 'rounded up' to the next whole dollar. The money is used to provide assistance to community organizations and families. That small change, an average of 50 cents per month, adds up fast. Since its inception in 1995, Operation Round-Up has donated over \$1,000,000 to individuals, families and charitable groups in United Power's service territory.



Round-Up is available to United Power members facing financial hardships, and in the wake of recent flooding, there are United Power members who may need support in the coming months.

Sign up today by checking the box on your next United Power statement, clicking on 'your Community' at www.unitedpower.com, or by calling customer service at 303-637-1300.



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