



SPORTS
Cougars cruise
over Skyview
P.13

Final round: An emotional goodbye to 'the golf course for everyone'

By PATRICIA LOGAN

First Hole

A hawk whistles as it lands on the giant cottonwood just behind the first tee. It's an appropriate send-off as I begin my final round at Haystack Mountain Golf Course. As always, there is something that takes my attention away from the little white ball when I'm here, whether it is the wildlife, peach and purple sunsets, state-ly trees or the tawny slopes of the odd bump on the horizon, Haystack Mountain itself.

This late summer day is the last time I'll play the nine-hole course off Niwot Road. For 20 years, I've come here a handful of times a year. Like so many others, I was lured in by its welcoming charm, beauty and easy-going vibe. "It's like no other," said Operations Manager Mike Ham-



Photo by Patricia Logan

Arran Machado makes a final putt at Haystack Mountain Golf Course. "You can't replace it," said his dad, Alex Machado.

merstone, who calls this place his second home.

This weekend, Haystack's loy-

al community came in foursomes, pairs and singles, hundreds of them, all ages and stages of golf.

They lined up one after another to play one last time, packed the tables of the beer garden, listened

to music, grieved together, reminisced, expressed gratitude and raised a glass to the course that embraced them all.

"We have guys who will be tarring roofs and they'll come in after work in their smocks with tar on it, like covered in mud," Hammerstone said, "and they'll say, 'Can we play nine?' And I'll say, of course you can. This is the golf course for everyone."

But the course for everyone will soon be for no one. This spring, it was sold to a developer Michael Markel by the family that owned the property since 1963. Markel plans to build his own home here. The Land Use Code allows two other houses on the roughly 100 acres that was the public golf course.

"It's the saddest day - so that

Continued on Page 8

Niwot artist claims Kennedy Center prize



Courtesy photo

Mary McClure talks about the inspiration behind her award-winning portrait "Take Us to the Stars," honoring President John F. Kennedy.

By JOCELYN ROWLEY

"Take Us To The Stars," an original oil painting by Niwot artist Mary McClure, was named co-winner of the JFK Portrait Contest, a creative art competition inviting artists aged 14-26 to celebrate the

legacy of John F. Kennedy using one of his core ideals of service, justice, freedom, courage, and gratitude as inspiration.

"I've always associated him with the courage to go to space," McClure, 26, said of the contest's namesake. "I think space

travel is incredible, and he was the first one to do it."

The competition was sponsored by the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. in commemoration of its 50th anniversary. McClure received a \$500 prize, and her portrait will be displayed at the Center's REACH gallery until June 2022, along with co-winner Jinglin Jingan ("Spotlight"), and eight runners-up.

The win is all the sweeter, because it's an opportunity McClure almost missed.

"The contest was set for June through July, and I didn't see the call for entries until the middle of July," McClure said. "I thought I was going to be too far behind."

But the idea of painting the aspirational president had

Continued on Page 10

Protecting a legacy: Spear Lodge Man to undergo preservation



Photo by Jocelyn Rowley

Josh Morin and Russ Callas remove a piece of the Spear Lodge Man tree carving in preparation for relocating it to a workshop for restoration work.

By JOCELYN ROWLEY

Plans to preserve and repair the deteriorating tree carvings along Niwot Road have been under consideration for years, but

after the untimely death of artist Eddie Running Wolf in the summer of 2020, the project took on new urgency. Now, 14 months lat-

Continued on Page 4

Community

C A L E N D A R

NIGHTTIME FLEA MARKET

Belle Terre Floral (7960 Niwot Rd., Unit A-2B) is hosting Nacht Floh Markt, an outdoor market, on Friday, Oct. 8 from 5-8 p.m. in Cottonwood Square. Local vendors will be selling handcrafted items, local produce, fresh flowers, and more. See more about the event on [Facebook](#).

NIWOT OKTOBERFEST

Niwot Oktoberfest is coming to 2nd Avenue and Cottonwood Square on Saturday, Oct. 9, from 2 - 8 p.m. The German-themed celebration will feature beer gardens, a chili and apple pie cook-off, a live Polka band plus family-friendly activities. The Niwot Community Semi-Marching Free Grange (Polka) Band will perform at 4 p.m. at Left

Hand Corner, featuring The Chicken Dance among other tunes. For more information, visit [Niwot.com/events](#).

HIGH SCHOOL FAIR

Boulder Country Day School (4820 Nautilus Court, Boulder) is holding its eight annual High School Fair on Wednesday, Oct. 13 from 7 to 8 p.m. for all Boulder County middle school students. Public schools from BVSD and SVVSD will be on hand, along with local private schools and more than 60 boarding schools. The event is free and open to the public. For more information, call 303-527-4931 or email info@bouldercountryday.org.

FALL GARDENING WORKSHOPS

The Boulder County Resource Conservation Division is hosting a series of virtual work-

shops about successful garden cleanup and backyard composting in the fall. Starting Oct. 4, master gardeners will be leading discussions on topics including getting perennials ready for winter and winterizing the compost pile. Registration is required to get the event link. See additional details and register online: boco.org/compostworkshops.

NIWOT GREAT PUMPKIN PARTY

The 2021 Great Pumpkin Party is scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 30 in Old Town Niwot and Cottonwood Square. Put on a costume and come enjoy trick-or-treating from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and join the parade at 11:30 a.m. There will also be hayrides, magic shows and a petting zoo, as well as the annual pet costume contest. Second Avenue will be

closed to vehicle traffic during this time to keep all participants safe.

BOULDER ST. VRAIN WATERSHED ART CONTEST

Boulder County's Keep It Clean Partnership invites students to participate in the first Boulder St. Vrain Watershed Art Contest. The contest is open to students in grades K-12 in the Boulder Valley and St. Vrain Valley School districts. Winners will receive art supplies or gift cards, and their art work will be featured on Keep It Clean Partnership's website, launching later this year. Deadline for submissions is Oct. 29. For more information and a list of contest rules, visit keepitcleanpartnership.org.

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 Sponsored by
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Meet Burt! Burt is a 1 year old Blue Heeler mix. However, we suspect he is mixed with Irish Wolf Hound due to his body shape. However, Burt is only 65 lbs as of now. Burt has such a kind and loving personality. He is just a happy-go-lucky kind of guy. Burt enjoys any kind of 4-legged friend BIG and small. He can be found romping and playing in the grass, or just lounging around on the couch. Burt is being fostered through Farfel's Farm Rescue in Boulder. **If you are interested in meeting Burt or any of the other lovely foster dogs, please contact Farfel's Farm at (303)443-7711 or visit farfel.com**

FAMILIAR FACE

JOANNE NEVILLE



Courtesy photo

This month's Familiar Face, Niwotian Joanne Neville, is spotted at nearly every community event, especially if the event includes live music.

By VICKY DORVEE

If there's a Niwot event happening Joanne Neville is likely in attendance, especially if music is involved. Dressed in beautiful long skirts, with her long flowing hair, and a warm smile, Neville's love for shared joyful times shines through as naturally as sunshine. The Courier wanted to hear about this Niwotian's life – past, present, and future.

Left Hand Valley Courier (LHVC) - Where are you from

and what brought you to the area?

Joanne Neville (JN) - I grew up on the East Coast, mostly in New York and New Jersey. I originally moved to Boulder for the summer of 1984 to live with my then partner, from California. He had a climbing accident a few weeks after I came out and was in a coma for many months.

The network of amazing women who helped support me getting through that time in my life was unlike anything I had ever experienced. I knew this was where I would make my home. I alternately lived in San Diego, Boulder, and New Jersey for several years until I finished my undergrad degree. The day after graduation, I left for Colorado and have been here ever since.

LHVC - Where did you study and what jobs did you have along the way?

JN - After high school, I went to community college in New Jersey studying art, anthropology, solar energy, and a whole plethora of things while enjoying the beach and my friends until I started at the School of Visual Arts in NYC where I received my Bachelor of Fine Arts in graphic design in 1988.

I sort of graduated with obsolete skills because, while I was going to art school, Apple computers came into being and

I was not too keen on being on the computer to do art and in denial about just how quickly Macs would take over the industry. I am and always have been a very tactile person, so it wasn't a great fit for me to go back to school.

I had a lot of odd jobs for a while. I worked in a bead shop in Boulder, as a nanny, I was a stay at home mom for several years taking care of my son Jaron, I worked at a print shop after my first marriage ended, and in a gallery on Pearl Street

Mall for a while.

Then I decided to go to acupuncture school at Southwest Acupuncture College in 1999. Talk about a whole new world...I never looked back. I had found my path.

LHVC - Tell me about your present job situation.

JN - I have a part-time acupuncture practice in Longmont at the Circle of Health where I moved in June of this year. I've been the Clinic Director at Southwest Acupuncture College for 13 years. I teach

classes and supervise clinics there too. I started as a teaching assistant after graduating because I missed being in the thick of the rich learning environment I'd just left. Through that experience I realized that I have a passion for teaching this medicine and I feel so blessed to have been a small part of so many of my students' transformations into amazing practitioners of Chinese medicine.

In addition, during the pandemic I really did a deep dive

Continued on Page 5

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Tree Carving

Continued from Page 1

er, those efforts are officially underway. On Oct. 2, a group of volunteers from the Niwot Business Association moved the oldest and most damaged of the three, “Bii-toheinen (Spear Lodge Man)”, from its roadside location to a nearby workshop where it will spend the next several months under repair.

“This is a really exciting project, and I’m really excited to be a part of it,” local resident Jeff Wolcott said after the 13-ft long carving had been safely delivered to his property east of Niwot. Last year, Wolcott contacted Chuck Klueber of the NBA’s streetscaping committee about a potential fix for the degrading art work, and then ended up volunteering to see it through. “I saw the tree sculptures were rotting, and I knew of a product that you can soak wood in, and it reestablishes the wood. And I was just going to tell Chuck about it, and he said, ‘Well, this will make us a commit-



Photo by Jocelyn Rowley

A team of volunteers from local organizations has begun work to preserve the Native American tree carvings by the late artist Eddie Running Wolf.

tee of two.’”

The committee of two expanded to a committee of four on Saturday morning as the first phase of the months-long process began in earnest. Joining Wolcott and Klueber were Russ Callas, who lent both his forklift and his skills

to the job, and Josh Morin of We Love Trees, a Niwot resident and longtime arborist who planned and performed the cutting.

Morin and the team began by padding the sculpture, and then wrapping it in cellophane, to prevent any loose pieces from falling

off or becoming further damaged during the removal. Unfortunately, that happened anyway, as part of Spear Lodge Man’s arm detached, and the team ended up cutting off the inscription at the carving’s base. But the rest of it survived the process intact, much to Morin’s relief.

“I thought we’d need to dismantle the sculpture itself,” he said afterwards. “Taking it in one piece made it much easier.”

Once secured, Morin used chainsaws to cut the willow tree at the base, and even entered its hollow center to help widen the cut. Then, using Callas’ forklift, the now unrecognizable Spear Lodge Man was lifted free, and moved onto Wolcott’s trailer. There was one scary moment when the sling straps unexpectedly slipped and the carving nearly toppled, but the team quickly moved it back into position, and everyone breathed a sigh of relief. A few minutes later, Spear Lodge Man was on its way to a new temporary home. In total, the removal lasted about 90 minutes.

Laura Bloom, whose backyard is just over the fence from the carvings, had mixed emotions as she watched the Spear Lodge Man ride away. Since moving to Cottonwood Park West five years ago, she has come to regard the sculptures as “part of my identity.”

“Selfishly, it’s sad that that’s gone, but I’m really glad that they’re doing everything they can to preserve it and bring it back to the new life somehow,” Bloom

said. “I look forward to seeing what ends up happening.”

The next phase of the process involves drying the wood, and treating any insect or fungus infestations that may still be inside. Ironically, Morin said, after a tree dies is when it becomes most alive, in a manner of speaking.

“In the tree world, we have a saying that when trees are alive, they’re 90% dead, because a lot of the tissue that’s inside a tree isn’t technically living. But when a tree dies, we say that it’s 90% alive, because there’s just a whole new ecosystem that moves into a tree. They still move(?) liquid, fungi, bacteria, insects, animals, all become parts of dead trees. I think we have an opportunity, especially in this day and age, to see the beauty and the value in trees that have changed their form.”

After drying is complete, which could take up to six months, Spear Lodge Man will be treated with an epoxy that will harden the remaining wood. Wolcott has also enlisted the help of local Native American artist Bryan Valdez Redmoon, who will closely examine the piece and then assist in repairing and restoring damage to the artwork.


“He’s been doing this for 40 years,” Wolcott said. “He’s going to be helping us with the pieces that have fallen apart, with blocking and maybe recarving.”

Though the damage looks extensive, Wolcott continued, the structure of the piece is much more “substantial” than he assumed, and the internal decay isn’t quite as bad as he feared.

It is still an open question whether this process will be successful, but if it is, the other two carvings, “Cheyenne Holy Man” and “The Eagle Catcher” will undergo the same process. After that, the three will find a new weatherproof home somewhere in Niwot.

The Niwot Cultural Arts Association is working to raise funds for the preservation project, and donations have started to come in. Tax-deductible donations can be made to the NCAA at P.O. Box 733, Niwot, CO 80544 or online at www.niwotarts.org.

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NEVILLE

Continued from Page 3

into the therapeutic uses of doTERRA oils and after being able to get completely off my asthma medicines, I became a wellness advocate and am continuing to learn how to add them into my acupuncture treatments through self-study and continuing education.

LHVC - Tell us about your family and the significant people in your life.

JN - I've lived here in Niwot since 1995, and my husband Joe Pacheco joined me here after we married nearly 11 years ago. I raised my son Jaron here since he was three years old. He's married to his lovely wife Katie and they have a gorgeous son, Kelvin (3), and is the light of my life. They are currently living in Illinois, too far away.

My nephew James and his wife Danielle moved here when they were expecting their first child, and they now have David (4) who's named after my brother who has passed away, and Logan who came to us this year - a pandemic blessing. Joe's sons, Isaac and Joe, live near Denver, and we get to spend many weekends with our grandson Kayden (10), Isaac's son. Our favorite thing to do when he comes is to go to Niwot's new kid's bookstore, The Wandering Jellyfish.

LHVC - What parts of your life are the most rewarding?

JN - I love my work. I am here to serve. I love helping

people feel better and encouraging them to be on a healthier path. I adore teaching and staying connected to my former students, now colleagues, and seeing all the good they are doing in the world.

LHVC - What triumphs have made you who you are?

JN - I've experienced a lot of ups and downs in life and many losses of friends and close family, but I think my greatest triumph now is being able to always see the silver lining in any situation. I don't dwell in regrets. I may take some time to find the good stuff, but for me, it's always there. I look forward to the excitement of new challenges and know that the only constant is change.

LHVC - What are your pastimes and how do you prioritize them?

JN - Meditation and breathwork twice a day is one of my strongest priorities. This is what keeps me balanced even through the hard stuff. Reading - every night. I can't go to sleep without spending time in another world with one of my books. Essential oils have become such a love for me in the last year and a half. I also love to walk - in nature, around town, anywhere. Dancing! I feel so blessed to live in a place that offers so much live music. In the cooler months I crochet and create origami things to give to friends, students and workmates.

LHVC - What are the ways in which you connect with the community?

JN - I'm where the music is in the community. It nourishes my soul to listen to music and see joy on people's faces when they dance. I do a lot of volunteering with acupuncture. I'm a part of the Colorado Acupuncture Medical Reserve Corps. We help in disaster situations by offering acupuncture to vic-

tims and emergency workers, which really helps them focus and feel calmer.

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

JN - I'm looking forward to seeing the grandchildren learn and grow. I'll continue to learn as much as I can from life to better serve those who

need me. I'm in a big transition period right now and will take some time to continue to clear out what's not working for me and decide what I want to bring in for the next part of my life. I would love to, in the next 10 years, work less and travel more.



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October book review: *The Afterlife Road*

By HANNAH STEWART

I'm back with another [Inkberry Books](#) review and I'm very excited to share my thoughts. Author Brice Austin takes readers on seven relatively short journeys with various characters in [The Afterlife Road](#). These are stories that, at first glance, may seem mundane--a guy who doesn't want anything to do with the family business, another mourning

for a beloved family pet, or a girl who almost drowns while taking a pit stop during a bicycle race.

Austin is a talented author: he is descriptive and knows how to balance that with dialogue. Each of the stories are engaging, and even if some are a little heavier on the exposition, the dialogue and/or look into characters' psyches help the reader stay curious about the various plots.

But, what I like most about this collection is that the characters are very relatable and the stories make you think. When reading the titular piece, "The Afterlife Road," the narrator reflects on how awkward he was in high school. You can practically feel his despair at having to do chin-ups in gym class.

Or in "Love is like the Speed of Light," many readers can likely empathize with the

narrator as he talks about seeing his mom grow weaker with time. Finally, "The F.O.C." is an excellent example of how it feels to want, so desperately, to help someone you love, while wondering if you're any help to them at all.

Austin puts you in the characters' shoes, and it's so engaging because you want to know what will happen next. Then, there's this other feeling that's difficult to describe. While reading the collection, it reminded me of watching "The Twilight Zone." Maybe that's because instead of focusing on these big, monumental journeys, the stories focus on "characters' day-to-day existences." But at the same time, while the literal events in the stories are fairly pedestrian, the characters experience growth and development in ways that seem very personal.

It's almost voyeuristic. We all become like the charac-

ter Toadette in "The Afterlife Road," watching the other characters struggle with joy and pain, confusion and clarity. This collection is deeply vulnerable, but not in the same way as other pieces, where you may infer the author's state of mind while writing. Instead, it's almost as though Austin tapped into people's fears--being replaced is one such fear that appears throughout the collection--prompting readers to then look beyond the characters and at themselves.

The book is unique for this reason alone. It's engaging and fascinating, because of how Austin has taken the quotidian existence many of us face and forces us to look at it from a new perspective. I highly recommend this book. I think that its format of being a collection of short stories adds to its value, especially for those who want to get back into reading.

Happy Reading!

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Niwot LID Advisory Committee reviews five-year strategic plan

By **BRUCE WARREN**

After a five-hour meeting to review its five-year strategic plan, the Niwot Local Improvement District Advisory Committee decided that the best course of action would be to host the leadership of all of the non-profit organizations serving the Niwot community at a roundtable discussion. The purpose of the meeting will be to give each organization, including the LID, a better understanding of each organization's purpose and short-term goals, as well as start a conversation about how best to share resources.

Eight of the nine LID committee members attended the Oct. 2 meeting, including Heidi Storz, who hosted the meeting in an open barn at her home in Niwot. Chair Scott Firlle led the discussion, with LID members Laura Skaggs, Lisa Rivard, Cornelia Sawle, Bruce Rabeler, Eric Bergeson and Mary Coonce participating, along with outgoing LID members Biff Warren and Jim Eastman.

Mark Ruzzin, liaison to the LID from the Boulder County

Commissioners office, reviewed the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the LID. The committee concluded that most of the goals of the 2017-2021 strategic plan had been accomplished, even though the LID is "a funder, not a do-er" as Eastman often reminds the group. Improving connectivity, including signage along trails and at all of the entrances to Niwot, and making residents more aware of events and what local businesses have to offer were identified as goals for the next five-year strategic plan.

Among the many strengths mentioned by the group were the construction of a parking lot and a continued increase in LID revenues from the LID's one-percent sales tax. At the same time, the members lamented the fact that the effects of the Boulder County Commissioner-imposed moratorium in 2018 were still being felt, with commercial development on 2nd Avenue remaining at a standstill.

Members noted that the

LID advisory committee is designed to be representative of the Niwot business community, but also includes non-business owners from the community. By law, LID funds must be used to benefit the commercial district of Niwot, but funds can be expended outside of the LID boundaries as long as there is a benefit to the LID.

While the commissioners serve as the board of directors for the LID, the advisory committee reviews funding requests

and makes recommendations to the commissioners. LID members also discussed to what extent the purview of the committee includes advising the commissioners about specific matters which affect the commercial district, with the consensus being that doing so is appropriate if it affects the LID.

As the only Niwot-focused committee appointed by the commissioners, LID members decided to take a more active role in assisting all Niwot orga-

nizations in how they can work together to benefit the community. Organizations identified to be invited to the roundtable discussion include the Niwot Business Association, the Niwot Community Association, the Niwot Cultural Arts Association, the Niwot Historical Society, the Niwot Future League, Niwot Youth Sports, the Rotary Club of Niwot, the Left Hand Grange, Niwot High School, and Niwot Elementary School. No date has been set for the meeting.



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New Location Next to Winot Coffee 7960 Niwot Rd.

HAYSTACK

Continued from Page 1

a guy could build a house,” said George Antoine who has played here since the 1970s. “Thousands and thousands of people enjoy this course, and to build a few homes... I understand it’s a market economy, but that doesn’t take away the hurt.”

Sad was the word used over and over again on Haystack’s final Sunday. “It feels like a huge loss. There are zillions of stories here,” said Carol Hathaway-Clark whose kids learned to golf here.

Some stories are actually related to golf, but most are about the fun, togetherness and even transformational moments that happened in this one, unique place. This article celebrates a fraction of 55 years worth of memories.

I push my sunglasses tight to my face as I prepare to hit my first drive, hoping I can see the ball through the mist in my eyes. Those who have spent far more time here than me have watered the course green this summer.

My ball fades right. It may be lost to the driving range which skirts the first hole. Prairie dogs yip as I go looking. They’ve already reclaimed the 200-yard marker and beyond. Soon they’ll get the rest. But they haven’t been the only critters here.

Hammerstone says two neighbors were feuding and one sabotaged the other’s electric fence. The cattle roamed free and found greener pastures at Haystack. Having cattle on the range apparently seemed natural to some golfers who still wanted to practice. “I said, ‘No, no, you cannot use the driving range,’” Hammerstone recalls with an incredulous tone.

Fortunately, my ball has avoided the range. I hit my 7 iron out of the sparse, natural grass, skirt the big blue spruce, score a respectable six and move on.

Second Hole

My husband and I are already waiting for the people ahead of us to make it down the wide fairway. They are two people, one bag. Most courses won’t let you do that. The man skies his shot onto the green. The woman whacks along in her tank top and shorts. “Our dress code is, please be



Photo by Patricia Logan

Golfers line up at the first tee to take their turn to play Haystack Mountain Golf Course one last time.

dressed,” said Assistant Manager Kelly Christensen.

I find the scene romantic. She’s trying to learn the game he loves so they can spend time together. One of the beauties of ‘the course for everyone’ is that there is no pressure to play fast. Everyone walks. Electric carts are not allowed.

The relaxed pace makes me leave my work week edge behind. It’s Friday afternoon, warm, sunny. My husband and I sit on a bench under a shade tree. On this day especially, I am happy to savor my time at the foot of Haystack Mountain.

When it’s my turn, I pull out my neon green ball instead of my white one. Experience tells me that there are white wildflowers in the rough on the right. Other than that, it’s a pretty easy hole, helps build confidence early in the round.

“The course itself is challenging but not difficult. It will give you a run for your money if you don’t hit it where you should. It’s got something for everyone,” said 63-year-old Christensen, who learned to play here with her dad when she was 10.

She grew up, moved to a different state, had a life and returned when she was going through hard times. Nearly 50 years after hitting her first balls here, Christensen asked for a job and was hired. “This place healed me. The property, the mountain and all of it has got an energy to it that is just good juju. Anyone

who spends any time here, they will agree with me, it’s just good energy.”

Like Christensen, the course has captured generation after generation. “Probably every week a granddad comes in with his grandson and says I’m going to teach my grandson to play,” she said.

Third Hole

Turns out the couple in front of us is now waiting on the people ahead of them. We start chatting. They moved here a couple of years ago. He just discovered the course and is bummed it’s closing. “It’s beautiful and interesting too.” They invite us to play with them. We do. Haystack is like that.

Before she even tees off, the woman apologizes for being terrible at golf. We tell her that’s why Haystack is here - to learn. Take your time, don’t fret, and remember to look up and enjoy the view. There’s nothing Haystack Mountain hasn’t seen - shanked drives, worm burners and tons of hacked earth launched into the air.

Anyway, we’re not moving much faster than her. My husband routinely drives to the left and on this hole that’s a problem. Deep grass, brush and enormous cottonwood trees, 100 years old, make up the riparian ecosystem that winds along Lefthand Creek, the heart of the course.

The number of lost balls over there is rivaled only by the number of mosquitoes. I call this the Off hole. Go in after your ball,

find four or five others and leave with just as many bug bites.

Fourth Hole

There’s talk that somewhere around this hole the developer who bought the course will build his house.

But I’ll forever picture the view as it is now - a straight shot, par 3, with evergreen trees as a backstop and the foothills on the horizon. I have the perfect club for this distance. I almost always hit the green. I’ll always love this hole for that.

Fifth Hole

I drag my pull cart across the little footbridge over the creek and toward the fifth tee. Shadows stretch from the tangle of bushes and trees to the west, nearly concealing a pile of scat the size of a dinner plate. Red berries were on the menu.

Hammerstone said that bears come around, especially late summer and fall when the apple trees bow down to serve up their feast. He says Lois Ebel told him one bear got into fermented apples from the orchard by the parking lot. It climbed up on the roof of her house in a drunken stupor and somehow made it down without a splat.

Haystack’s other wildlife includes herds of elk that deposit milk duds on the course, deer that enjoy a round of grazing, bull snakes that disappear into their holes like a perfect putt, hidden winged spectators rustling the leaves, and bald eagles patrolling the sky.

“It’s the Haystack Zoo,” said Hammerstone, who tells the story of Marty Marmot who lived under a boxcar close to the old first tee and sat on top of an old tractor. “He’d watch people tee off and would run up to them, only so far, then he would scurry back. He would do that with everyone. Marty was the best,” he said.

Then there are the stories of Haystack’s wild life. In the 1970s, Christensen wanted to go camping with her teenage girlfriends. They went to the mountains but there was too much snow. One girl said she knew someplace else to go.

“No one is paying any attention,” said Christensen. “It’s an easy walk, we find a nice place to camp, no rocks, it’s soft. There is firewood all over the place. We had a bonfire. When dawn came along, we realized we were camping on the fifth green. All my friends from high school have stories about shenanigans at Haystack.”

Sixth Hole

The sixth looks pretty easy, open and straight, but then golf always pulls its surprises.

This course opened in 1966, three years after Bud and Lois Ebel dreamed it into existence. Zhanna Pauluhn was one of their six children who grew up on the property and later helped run the business. “Our slogan was everyone learns to play golf at Haystack,” she said.

Some of the Ebel kids took to golf more than others. After their mother died, the siblings couldn’t agree on a way to keep the golf course. Estate taxes came due and they decided to sell. “I know the family would have liked a buyer that would have kept the golf course going. But we knew that it wasn’t that realistic. It’s not a huge moneymaker,” Pauluhn said, acknowledging that “It’s going to be a huge loss for the community.” She plans to stay in her home next to the property. “I’m hoping I can be here and not be too sad.”

The family still owns Haystack Mountain and the land around it. Pauluhn said they don’t plan to hold on to it. It’s not clear what the fate of the iconic formation will be. Before European settlers

Continued on Page 9

HAYSTACK

Continued from Page 8

arrived, the mountain was important to the Arapaho people, including Chief Niwot, whose band spent part of the year in the area.

Seventh Hole

There is a tee box above the pond on the seventh and one to the side. I have water-seeking balls, so I stick to the side. The fairway is always some shade of green thanks to the Canada geese that live here.

Seven is supposed to be a lucky number. I wonder if Hammerstone chose it when he bought the lotto tickets. He and the other clubhouse employees ponied up \$10 a week for lotto tickets this summer, hoping for a miracle, "Even if we could just keep the clubhouse and the driving range. It would at least be a piece. We could still have the beer garden, we could still have music. People would still come out. It wouldn't be the same, but just a little piece..."

Hammerstone started golfing here 20 years ago. "I was one of those people, I didn't want to play a full-size course because it's intimidating." He became a regular. His career was in risk management and claims adjusting. But he left his job to take care of his father who became ill and passed away. It made Hammerstone reconsider his life. Jobs were scarce in the Great Recession so he took a summer job at Haystack for \$8.50 an hour. He cut back on everything to survive. It was worth it.

Hammerstone said Lois Ebel became his second mom. He calls the course home and the people around it, family. Eventually, he ended up running the place and is often there seven days a week, playing or hanging out when he isn't working.

"I love the game of golf. 'Golf in the Kingdom,' it's a great book. It's a spiritual book. That's what I love about golf more than anything. It isn't about the score - I mean it can be if you want it to be - but why not just go be part of nature and walk around? That's the spirit. That's what Haystack is really about. I'm going to be a mess when this place closes. I'm going to be lost."

Eighth Hole

"Mike, the golf course is gone," Ebel said to Hammerstone in September of 2013. Floodwater from Lefthand Creek and neighboring ditches devoured the course along with a torrent of mud and debris. Bridges were wiped out, whole tree trunks battered the land.

When the rain finally stopped, the employees and a cavalry of community members flowed in to clean up, including Nikokai Baer. "The maintenance guy had a helpless look," Baer said. "He said we needed to clear off the greens. Without that, they're going to die and they won't come back."

For 27 days straight, sunup to sundown, he volunteered his time. "It came down to manually shoveling all the dirt and silt out very meticulously so as not to damage the grass underneath, then squeegee it off once that was done," Baer said.

"He single-handedly cleaned off and kept the 8th green alive," Hammerstone said. "It was 95 degrees after the flood, so it became like clay. Two inches of silt caked on. Five square feet a day was all he could do. A little tiny patch."

The eighth green was nicknamed the Baer Trap. The work saved Haystack for eight more years, but not forever. "Heartbroken is really the only word," Baer said.

9th Hole

The ninth is a par-3 that requires hitting the drive over Left Hand Creek. It's fun to see balls ricochet off the rocks. Not that it's ever mine.

My 9 iron is perfect for this hole. It belonged to my dad who loved golf with all his being. He shared his passion for the game with his kids and grandsons before he died. He's with me every round I play.

Haystack was the place I took his grandsons, my nephews. There was never any pressure for dawdling, just an easy-going, fun, outdoor adventure with Aunt Pat-tie. I even filmed a short movie on the ninth with my oldest nephew who has since passed away. I'm forever grateful to have that memory of him and the times we shared at Haystack.

10th Hole

Wednesday grill night brought out golfers and non-golfers alike who came for the community, food, music, beer and views. "There is something about the sunsets at night, sitting out there having a beer and looking out at

the landscape and thinking, my God, this is paradise," Hammerstone said.

He and Christensen are unsure of what's next. Hammerstone is staying on for another month to wrap up the books. "I think when

the final day comes, I want to grab a bunch of grass from all over the place and go to different golf courses and throw the grass down and be like, maybe the grass will grow, and maybe a little bit of Haystack will live on."



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McClure

Continued from Page 1

called to her, so, like her portrait's subject, the budding oil painter decided to set a very ambitious goal that would test her stamina and talents

"I knew when I saw it that I wanted to do it because I'm interested in portraits," she said. "And then when I knew it was JFK, I decided it would be space themed... I've always wanted to do a painting of the moon, and I hadn't found a chance yet, so I thought, this might be my shot."

One "intense" week later, "Take Us To The Stars" was in the final stages and within days would be in front of judges in D.C.

"I think it's the fastest I've

ever painted," she said. "It was six to eight hours a day for about a week, and then enough time for it to dry and then varnish."

Though rushed, McClure said the process of painting "Take Us To the Stars" went much more smoothly than it should have.

"The whole way along, I was really pleased with it," McClure said. "Sometimes I start a painting, and it's not going well, and I keep having to adjust things. But this one was practically miraculous. It felt like serendipity. A lot of the normal struggles that I encounter didn't happen, and it was as streamlined a process as it could be, and it felt sort of wondrous."

Winning the contest has

prompted McClure to focus more on her emerging art career. She graduated from New York's School of Visual Arts in 2020, four years after earning a bachelor's degree in art history from St. Andrews University in Scotland. In the wake of the pandemic, she and her husband Brian relocated to Niwot, where she has been perfecting her technique.

The artist is relatively new to oil painting, after spending much of her art life focused on drawing. She decided to make the transition after one of her early attempts at the new form opened up a world of possibilities.

"I've always thought painting was the next level above drawing, and I always wanted to be able to do it," she said. "At first I did copies of older paintings that I knew, and I was so proud of the first one that turned out okay. I kept searching for that feeling again. I wanted to make something that feels real."

McClure, who grew up in Golden, has been finding plenty of inspiration back home in Colorado, whether it's in big dramatic landscapes or smaller, intimate portraits.

"There are little moments that surprise you," she said. "I'm doing a painting now that's a little cotton bud, and there's color variation on the white of



Courtesy photo

"Take Us to the Stars," an oil painting by Niwot-based artist Mary McClure was one of the winners of the 2021 Kennedy Center portrait contest, marking the institution's 50th anniversary.

the cotton, and contrast with the sharp points, there's texture changes, and there's color changes. It's such a small thing, but it can be so beautiful."

McClure will be showing her work at Winot Coffee (7960 Ni-

wot Rd D13, Niwot) during the month of November. For more information and to see samples of McClure's other artwork, visit her website at www.marymcclureart.com.



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Sports

Gunlikson captures sixth place at state golf championships

By JOCELYN ROWLEY

The third time was a charm for senior Niwot golfer Christopher Gunlikson at the 2021 class 4A golf championships, held Oct. 4-5 at City Park golf course in Denver. Behind a sharp short game and smart shot-selection, the senior carded a two-round score of 143 to capture sixth place overall, his first top-10 finish after two disappointing state appearances as a sophomore and junior.

"I'm happy I had a big comeback, because last round was not the finish I wanted at all," Gunlikson said after winding up the two-day tournament with a 69 (-1), a five stroke improvement over Mon-

day's score of 74. "Yesterday was all right, but today I just stayed in the moment, and really executed every single shot."

That started with the opening hole, a 430-yard par-4 with a stunning view of the downtown Denver skyline from the tee box. Gunlikson hit the green in two, and then birdied with a long putt, setting the tone for what would end up being a very special round. He would go on to birdie four more holes, including the par-5 nine, which has a water hazard that claimed six Niwot shots the day before. But he also had four bogies on



Photo by Jocelyn Rowley

Senior Christopher Gunlikson played his final round in a Niwot uniform at the Class 4A state golf championships at Denver's City Park on Oct. 5.

Continued on Page 16

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Classen leads Niwot to road win over Skyview



Photo by Jocelyn Rowley

Captains Craig Wright, Bryce Nemece, Easten Leatherwood, and Thomas Carnagie call the toss for Niwtot on Oct. 1.

By JOCELYN ROWLEY

Junior quarterback Ben Classen was definitely the star of Niwtot's 42-13 win over Skyview on Oct. 1, but it was senior Bryce Nemece who had the most memorable moment of the game. With Niwtot leading 35-6 in the 4th quarter, the hard hitting lineman heard a play call he was not expecting.

"We practice once or twice a week that if we get close [to the goal line], then I would run it in," he said of his 2-yard rush for a touchdown, the first of his career. "I almost bob-

bled it, actually. I got a little nervous, but it was pretty easy, I kind of walked in."

Nemece's score extended Niwtot's lead to 42-6, and capped off an impressive night from the offense. Behind another multi-pronged attack by Classen, the Cougars scored seven touchdowns, and netted 356 total yards, with a season high 137 in receiving.

The junior started Niwtot's scoring off early, with a 58-yard run for a touchdown on just the second play from scrimmage, making it 7-0

Continued on Page 14



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FOOTBALL

Continued from Page 13

Cougars with less than a minute off the clock. Two possessions later, a fumble recovery by Cougar Thomas Carnagie turned into Classen's second passing touchdown of the year, a 67-yard catch and run to senior Craig Wright, making it 14-0 with 4:55 to go in the first quarter.

The Wolverines answered back with a touchdown to make it 14-6 at the end of the first quarter, but Classen started the second period in much the way he did the game, by scoring on a long keeper, putting Niwot back up by 14 points. A bad snap on a Skyview punt gave the Cougars short yardage on their next drive, which ended with a short run by senior Osman Ochoa for Niwot's third touchdown of the half.

Skyview gave up two more turnovers in the half, including an interception by Classen

that he turned into his third touchdown a few plays later, making it 35-6 Cougars. He would go on to have 268 yards on the night, including 131 in rushing, and 137 in passing, virtually all to Wright.

"It's just Ben Classen doing Ben Classen things, that always helps," Cougar head coach Nik Blume said afterwards of the junior's electrifying performance. "He just gets better every week."

Niwot's offense stepped on the brakes during the third quarter, as the coaches tried some new schemes and personnel, according to Blume. Nemeč got them back on the board, but otherwise it was a relatively quiet half, scoring wise.

"We want to get used to trying to use a long count and setups in motion," the second-year coach said. "And there's always some growing pains when you try and expand your offense. As a head coach,



Photo by Jocelyn Rowley

Senior Thomas Carnagie (1) recovers a fumble for Niwot during the first quarter against Skyview on Oct. 1.

I'm just excited to finally have a chance to let them get an opportunity on a big stage. And they came through and bowed

up at some good times." Both Blume and Nemeč said that a big share of credit for the win is owed to both the

offensive and defensive lines, which came in fully intact and

Continued on Page 15

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FOOTBALL

Continued from Page 14

well rested after last week's bye.

"They had a solid two weeks worth of practice behind them, and so we were ready to roll tonight up front on both sides," Blume said.

With the win, Blume and the Cougars moved to 3-2 on the year, but the coach said

the schedule for here on out will definitely test the improving program. That starts on Oct. 7, when Niwot will host league rival Fort Morgan, currently ranked #4 in Class 3A.

"We're going to be up against it and have our hands full every week. But this group really wants to be the group that gets over the hump, and tonight was a big step in that direction, because it puts us one step closer to our goals."



Photo by Jocelyn Rowley

Quarterback Ben Classen rushed for three touchdowns and threw another to Craig Wright in Niwot's 42-12 win over Skyview on Oct. 1.

STUDENT-ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

Jasmine Aldama

By JOCELYN ROWLEY

Through Oct. 3, Jasmine Aldama has put on the Niwot softball uniform a whopping 83 times in her career. The versatile senior cleanup hitter has been a valuable asset for head coach Bobby Matthews.

Aldama has primarily started at third base, but has also been an option in the circle during her career. Additionally, Aldama has recently played innings in center field, a position she was familiar with on her club team.

It's with a bat in her hands, however, that Aldama truly shines. Matthews said the four-year starter has found her stride at the plate in her senior season. Her .429 batting average with just two regular season games remaining marks a career best.

"She has had a breakout season," Matthews said. "She has come up with clutch hits in some big situations at the plate for us. I am very happy with the way she



Photo by Jocelyn Rowley

Senior Jasmine Aldama has been seeing time in the circle for Niwot as a senior, but has had the most impact with her bat, according to coach Matthews.

has stepped up in all areas on and off the field."

Aldama believes her offensive improvement could be attributed to having a better mindset and correcting her swing path.

"Last year I got in my head a lot," said Aldama, who has produced a career-high 10 extra base hits. "There's a lot of things that I

could have been working on and Bobby definitely helped me with that. Like my swing position, I just had to work on that... I've been smoking balls now."

When asked what she'll miss most about Niwot, her answer was simple: softball and coach Matthews. "He's made me an overall better person," she said.

As Aldama's final games loomed, she reflected on her time playing softball. While she hasn't completely ruled out continuing her playing career, she's still relishing these ultimate opportunities.

"It's a lot of emotions, especially because it's my last year playing softball," she said.

Niwot's 11-10 record through Oct. 3 puts the Cougars 25th in the Class 4A RPI rankings. If they want to be one of the 32 teams in regionals, Aldama said the Cougars have to come out more energized and play as a team.

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BOYS GOLF

Continued from Page 12

the day, including on the final hole, a slight smudge on an otherwise picture perfect performance.

"I'm so proud of Christopher," Niwot head coach Ed Weaver said of the senior. "He played probably the best round of his career today. He was steady and deliberate, especially at this level, and it was great, great execution."

For Gunlikson, the 18th hole was a bittersweet ending to the two-day tournament, but not because of the putt he left short. It was also the final hole of a high school career that spanned four seasons and had finally ended on a fairytale note.

"I was trying to hold in the emotions, and just trying to think of every shot, but it was hard," he said. "But I am happy with how I finished, and happy with the team that I played with for four years."

As for the rest of the team, the ending to their 2021 seasons also had fairytale quality,

and has Weaver anticipating a happily ever after. Between Monday and Tuesday's rounds, the team collectively improved by 26 strokes, a good omen for the three who will be returning to the lineup next season.

"I just told them now you know what the course is like, and what the pressure of the field is like, so go play your game," he said of his advice after day one. "I guess they listened."

Most improved in round two was junior Carlos Kipkorir, who carded an 89 (+12) on Monday, but came back on day two to shoot a 77, a 12-stroke improvement, and another round Weaver characterized as a career best.

"Carlos was in a much better state of mind today," he said of the junior's surprising performance. He ended with a final score of 166, and took 60th overall in the standings, up 12 spots from 72nd place on Monday. "He was much more deliberate in his shot selection."

Sophomore Emmett Shell took four strokes off of his score between the rounds, go-

ing from 78(+8) on Monday, to 74(+4) the next day, for a two-day total of 152, which was good for 26th place in the 84-player field, the best finish for a Niwot sophomore at state in at least five years.

"Emmett was much better at course management today," he said of the second-year varsity golfer, who was third overall at Niwot's regional tournament, on Sept. 21. "With him, it's all mental."

Also competing for Niwot was freshman Drew Stapp, who impressed Weaver with his resilience, though the course seemed to take its toll by the 36th hole. Nonetheless,

the newcomer boosted his score by five strokes on day two, despite a double-digit end to the tournament on the dreaded ninth hole.

The Cougars finished seventh out of 15 in the team standings, a result that doesn't entirely reflect his team's performance, in Weaver's estimation. But it does validate his players' strong performance at the regional qualifier, where Niwot finished just two strokes behind eventual Class 4A champion Riverdale Ridge.

"We had a great regional, and that turned into a great state tournament," Weaver said. "We're excited. I've al-

ways wanted to come here and build a program, not just a team. I think having a senior, junior, sophomore, and freshman compete here bodes well for the future."

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Niwot Individuals — 16. Christopher Gunlikson (74-69); 26. Emmett Shell (89-88); 60. Carlos Kipkorir (89-77); Drew Stapp (90-85)



Photo by Jocelyn Rowley

Junior Carlos Kipkorir tees off on the 10th hole at City Park during round 1 at the Class 4A state golf championships on Oct. 4.



Photo by Jocelyn Rowley

Sophomore Emmett Shell carefully studies the line of his putt on the ninth green during his second round at the Class 4A state tournament on Oct. 5.



Photo by Jocelyn Rowley

Freshman Drew Stapp walks across the green of the fifth hole at City Park golf course in Denver during the Class 4A golf championships on Oct. 4.

ARTS STUDENT OF THE WEEK

Rianna Rickford

By JOCELYN ROWLEY

Vocalist Rianna Rickford loves to perform, whether it's in Niwot's prestigious Evenstar choir, or in a theater department musical, such as Cinderella or Little Shop of Horrors. For choir director Laura Roberts, Rickford's dedication to her craft is nothing short of inspiring.

"She is probably one of the most improved singers in the choir program," Walters wrote of the senior, who is currently a member of the school's Evenstar choir, and is deeply involved in the fall musical. "She has the biggest heart. She is definitely respected and loved by her classmates...

She is upbeat, and motivated, and really gives the choir and theater programs her everything."

Rickford has been singing in choirs since elementary school, but became serious about performing when she got to Niwot. So far, her favorite role was in The Addams Family, but she has performed in nearly every theater production since her freshman year, and also lends her talents to backstage challenges.

"When we started doing



Courtesy Photo

Niwot senior Rianna Rickford is a dedicated performer at Niwot High, but also has an eye for costume design.

Addams Family, I was put in charge of helping with the makeup. And then when I became a student director for Little Shop of Horrors, they also put me in charge of helping design costumes."

It's a role she'll reprise for Niwot's upcoming production of "Peter and the Starcatcher," a musical set in Victorian England that adds elements of Oliver Twist to the legend of Peter Pan. It calls for period costumes, and Rickford is finding

inspiration from other shows and plays set during the same timeframe.

When she's not on or behind the stage for Niwot, Rickford enjoys listening to and singing show tunes. After graduation, she plans to attend Aims Community College and then UNC for an education degree. Eventually, she plans to teach high school, and continue lending her talents to community theater and student productions.




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