

CNCC Welcomes Tytus Coombs as Head Men's Wrestling Coach



BY JESSE AITKEN

Colorado Northwestern Community College (CNCC) is thrilled to announce Tytus Coombs as the new Head Men's Wrestling Coach. The Spartans will relaunch their men's wrestling program in Fall 2025, marking the return of a sport that holds deep historical significance at CNCC. Wrestling was previously part of the college's athletics offerings from 1969 to 1997, during which the Spartans achieved four NJCAA National Tournament appearances and national rankings as high as #6.

A Rangely native and Colorado native through and through, Coombs brings a unique blend of personal experience, academic accolades, and coaching expertise to the role. He is a proud graduate of Colorado State University Pueblo, where he competed in wrestling for the ThunderWolves. During his time at CSU Pueblo, Coombs earned the distinction of being a 3x Academic All-American and a First Team All-RMAC Academic honoree.

Though his athletic career was cut short due to injury, Coombs remained deeply involved in the sport. He graduated with a degree in Exercise Science, specializing in Strength and Conditioning, and holds a CSCS (Certified Strength & Conditioning Specialist) certification accredited by the National Strength and Conditioning Association. Most recently, Coombs designed and implemented postseason and offseason strength and conditioning programs for the CSU Pueblo wrestling team, further honing his skills as a coach and mentor.

"I am honored and excited to lead the relaunch of CNCC's wrestling program," said Coach Coombs. "As a Rangely native, it's a privilege to bring this sport back to life at my hometown college. I know what it takes to succeed at a high level in wrestling, and I'm committed to helping our student-athletes reach their goals both on and off the mat. CNCC wrestling has a rich history, and I'm ready to help write the next chapter."

Athletic Director Zach Stevenson expressed his enthusiasm for the hire, stating, "We are thrilled to welcome Tytus Coombs back to Rangely as the leader of our men's wrestling program. His passion for the sport, personal connection to CNCC, and strong academic and coaching credentials make him the perfect fit to guide our student-athletes in this exciting new era. Tytus understands the values of

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Rangely District Hospital CEO Corner

BY KYLE WREN

As the holiday season draws near, I want to take this opportunity to wish everyone in our wonderful community a safe, happy, and healthy holiday season. The end of the year is a time for reflection, gratitude, and celebrating the connections that bring us together. At Rangely District Hospital, we are grateful for the opportunity to serve our community, and I'd like to share some exciting updates and recent achievements.

First and foremost, I am thrilled to share the progress of our MRI Suite construction project. This is an initiative we are especially excited about, as it will bring advanced imaging services directly to our facility and eliminate the need for long-distance travel for many of our patients. The construction is moving along smoothly, and we are right on track for an anticipated opening the end of March 2025. This addition will enhance our diagnostic capabilities and is part of our ongoing commitment to providing top-notch healthcare close to home.

Investing in our team and their professional development is another top priority at RDH, which is why we were so pleased to host Angelina Salazar in October for a Reality-Based Leadership Workshop. This event brought together department leaders and staff for an engaging session on leadership styles and effective management. Our team gained valuable insights on handling various situations, improving communication, and fostering a positive work environment. We believe that by investing in our employees' growth, we're not only strengthening our team but also enhancing the quality of care we provide to our patients.

Additionally, I am proud to highlight RDH's participation in the Career Pathway Summit held at Colorado Northwestern Community College on November 6th. It was an honor to be part of this event, which brought together students and professionals to explore future career opportunities. I want to extend a special thank you to Tammy Dorris for organizing such a fantastic summit. The turnout was impressive, and I believe we had the privilege of meeting some future healthcare professionals among the attendees. It's always inspiring to see young people considering careers in healthcare, and we look forward to supporting them on their journey.

Finally, community members might be aware of a housing shortage in the area. When we are hiring/recruiting this becomes and has been an issue. There are limited options to choose from and sometimes candidates turn down offers because they can't find some temporary housing until they can buy. Also, at times we place contracted workers in the hotel or other short-term rentals in town. Currently, the hospital owns two houses on Stanolind, they are occupied by our weekend doctors and some traveling nurses as needed. The predicament has come up several times in the past few years in board meetings. The opportunity arose recently when three houses became available on White Avenue. The hospital board approved to purchase the houses with the addresses of 102,104 and 108 along with two empty lots. We will be fixing the delayed maintenance with all three properties and then renting them out until the need arises. I'm excited to have flexibility for staff and future employees.

At Rangely District Hospital, we are constantly working to bring specialty services directly to our patients. We understand that traveling long distances for care can be a burden, so we strive to make healthcare as accessible as possible. Whether through the addition of new services, enhanced facilities, or partnerships with specialists, our goal is to ensure that our community has access to high-quality care right here at home.

None of these achievements would be possible without our dedicated team. The employees at RDH are truly the heart of our hospital, and I want to acknowledge each and every one of them. From our healthcare providers to our support staff, every individual plays a crucial role in keeping our facility operational and ensuring our patients receive the best possible care. I am deeply grateful for their hard work, compassion, and unwavering commitment to our community.

As we move into the holiday season, I want to extend my sincere thanks to the entire Rangely community for your support and trust. It is an honor to serve you, and we look forward to continuing our mission of delivering compassionate, high-quality care. On behalf of everyone at Rangely District Hospital, I wish you a joyful holiday season filled with warmth, health, and happiness. May you enjoy this special time with loved ones and create cherished memories that will last a lifetime.



Our Friend Buzz Davis

BY JEANNIE CALDWELL

Buzz Davis loved Rangely! He discovered Rangely on Facebook and liked what he saw. Of course, this was during the COVID crisis, and he was afraid, due to his age and health, to travel to Rangely. A few residents even wore shirts that said Bust Out Buzz!

In September 2020 he finally made his way to our town. He came during SeptemberFest and rode the purple golf cart in the parade. He came back the next year as well to visit.

We are sad to announce that Buzz passed away on Wednesday, October 9th. We mention this because, while not a resident of Rangely, he loved Rangely with all his heart. His wife, Sandi, when notifying us of his death stated, "He never stopped talking about Rangely. He wanted to come back but with his health declining he could not make it. He loved you guys." He was a "real" Rangely enthusiast.

RIP Buzz Davis. You will always be a resident of Rangely to us!



Did You See It?

BY JEANNIE CALDWELL

Tsuchinshan-ATLAS Comet was very prominent in the dark skies over Rangely! The comet was visible in the western sky for about 45 minutes after sunset. October 14 to Oct. 26 were the viewing dates. Tuschinshan-Atlas will not be visible again for 80,000 years.

The photos were taken by James Caldwell on October 15th around 7:30 pm off Dragon. We hope everyone got to enjoy the view!



Thank You From the Lancaster Family

BY AMORETTE HAWKINS

The family of Nick Lancaster would like to thank the Panther Football coaching staff; Head Coach Keenan LeBleu, Jeremy Lohry, Andy Kracht, Dalton Gartrell and Kasen LeBleu and the entire 2024 Panther football team for honoring Nick at the 7th Annual Nick Lancaster Memorial Game. Keenan- Nick would no doubt be so pumped that you are the Head Coach of his beloved panther football team and he would be so proud of the passion that you have for the game and the values that you are trying to instill in your players. Thank you for all that you do for these young men and for helping us help them. Coach Lohry-we can't say enough about the field. Others might not see the late nights that you spend meticulously caring for it-but we do and it shows!!!! The Lancaster brothers would be so honored to have their number painted on it! A huge thank you to Justyne Dembowski of Heifer Gang Clothing for designing and Sylvia Dembowski - owner of Get Your Stitch On for making the game swag and for generously donating a portion of all merchandise sales to the Bleed Green Lancaster #17 Foundation seven years in a row! You ladies are a fantastic duo that put the swagger in our swag!!! Also, thanks to Jerry LeBleu for delivering Nick's family's message in his brother's absence-it is important to us that it come from someone who had a connection to Nick-you no doubt have your own Nick stories to tell! We appreciate your support and all that your family does for this community! A special thanks to Gary and Kathy Staley of Sweetbriar for selling Bleed Green Lancaster #17 merchandise in their store. Thank you does not seem, an adequate enough sentiment, to Beth Schofield for all the work that she does for the Foundation whether it is in person or from afar! You always have the best ideas and are the first one to jump in and help! We would also like to give David "Kramer" Carlson a shout out for making sure that the firepits are taken care of and that we have plenty of firewood to help create a celebratory atmosphere and keep the panther football fans warm! An additional thanks to Jesse McCann for shooting our events including tonight's game. You have a knack for capturing things that we probably would not otherwise see. We are also grateful to Mike and Nick's Uncle Terry Lancaster for delivering the game ball. He is a Rangely High School alumni and former panther football player.

We wanted to take this opportunity to thank the family of the late Matt Grenfell for choosing to have their loved ones contribute to the Bleed Green Lancaster #17 Foundation in Matt's honor to help younger kids in our community be able to participate in youth sports. They have pledged to continue to donate to our Foundation for 10 years!!!!

A final Thank You to all the businesses, friends, family, extended family, classmates and panther football fans who have donated to the Bleed Green Lancaster #17 Foundation. The support and generosity of this community and the way it gives back by investing in our youth is truly remarkable! Bleed Green!

The Family of Nick Lancaster and the Bleed Green Lancaster #17 Foundation

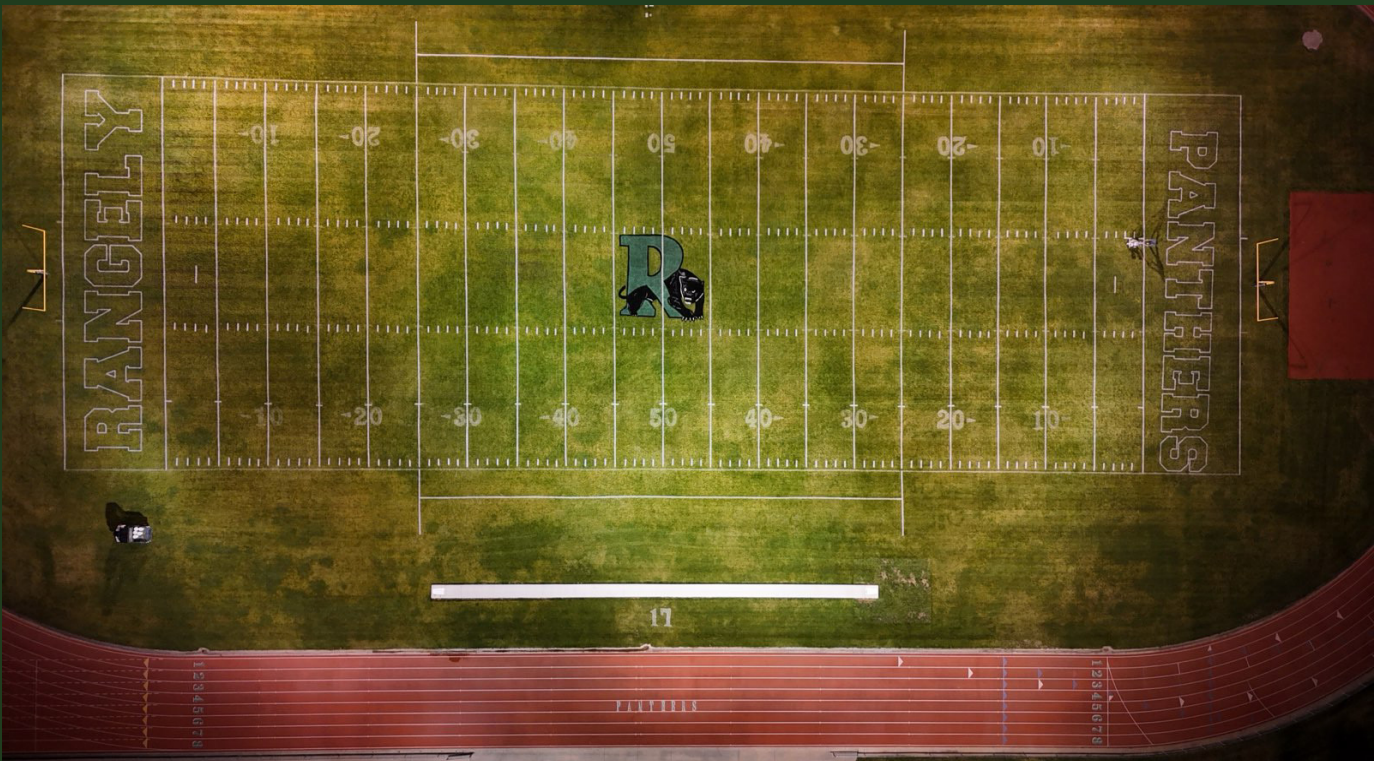


Photo Credit: Matthew Morgan

Rangely Animal Shelter Update

BY TIRYNN HAMBLIN

A Pawsitive Impact: The Indispensable Role of our Animal Shelter

Often overlooked in broader discussions of animal welfare, small-town shelters like ours play a vital role in our community. In our tight-knit town, where everyone knows their neighbors, animals are cherished members of our families. But even in the most caring communities, unfortunate circumstances can leave pets homeless and vulnerable.

A Sanctuary for the Lost and Lonely

Just as in larger cities, our animal shelter faces the heartbreaking reality of stray and abandoned animals. These creatures, often victims of neglect or unforeseen circumstances, find themselves lost and alone. Our shelter provides a safe haven, offering food, shelter, and much-needed veterinary care.

Reuniting Families, One Tail Wag at a Time

One of the most heartwarming aspects of our shelter's work is reuniting lost pets with their loving families. Leveraging the power of social media and word-of-mouth, our dedicated staff scours the community to spread the word about missing pets. By maintaining detailed records and collaborating with our local veterinarian, they increase the chances of a happy reunion.

Fostering Responsible Pet Ownership

Our shelter is more than just a place to house animals. It's a hub for promoting responsible pet ownership. Through educational programs, spay/neuter initiatives, and adoption counseling, we empower our community to make informed decisions about pet care. By encouraging spaying and neutering, vaccinations, and proper care, we work to reduce the number of unwanted animals in our town.

Building a Stronger Community, One Paw at a Time

Our shelter fosters a sense of community and compassion. Volunteers, staff, and adopters unite to create a supportive network for animals in need. By participating in fundraising events, volunteering their time, or simply adopting a pet, community members contribute to the well-being of animals and strengthen the bonds that tie us together.

A Beacon of Hope

Our animal shelter is a testament to the compassion and kindness that defines our town. It's a beacon of hope for animals in need, offering them a second chance at a loving home. By supporting our shelter, we not only help animals but also enrich the lives of people and strengthen the fabric of our community.

Saving Camp Kids History

BY GAILA HATCH BELL

I will always remember the first time I saw Rangely, Colorado. I was a young 6th grader riding in the back seat of our family car. It was late at night and past my bedtime, but I didn't mind because our family was moving to Rangely, Colorado. I was excited because I would be away from the isolation of spending spring, summer and falls in the isolated Utah Bookcliffs and I could start having a real social life. As we topped over Mellen Hill Rangely appeared to be a huge city. There were lights everywhere. I was excited and that excitement stayed with me until the next day when my young mind realized that most of those lights were connected to the oil field and the town itself was smaller than my beloved Vernal, Utah.

During those first two months of living with my beloved Aunt Mona Brady and her family, Rangely started to get embedded deep into my heart. There was something special about Rangely. Now 55



see Camp on pg 9

Fall Semester Wraps Up

BY LISA JONES

It is hard to believe that our Fall semester is winding down already and that 2024 is coming to a close. We often ask where the time goes while at the same time wishing for the day to be over. This thinking often comes from having a lot to accomplish in one day and over time. As I look at what we have achieved over this semester, I can see why the College team and our students are looking for a much-deserved break.

Along with hosting our first CNCC Homecoming and State of the College events, the College engaged in the following projects/initiatives:

- We launched our first every bachelor’s degree program in Dental Hygiene, enrolling more than double the students originally projected.
- We hired behavioral health professionals in both Rangely and Craig, in response to the growing developmental, adjustment, and mental health needs of students.
- We hired and onboarded a new Assistant Director of Marketing and launched the College’s new and improved website.
- We collaborated with Rangely Public School leadership and local employers to host a wildly successful career fair for middle and high schoolers
- We completed a highly successful visit from our nursing program accrediting body. Our nursing students can feel pride in the fact that they continue to learn from a program which receives strong support from our accrediting agency.
- We were approved to receive \$5.9 million dollars to improve the external appearance, and energy efficiency of key buildings in Rangely. These funds will also support the repair of sidewalks on this campus keeping in mind safety, ADA compliance, and aesthetics. Work for these two projects will begin in May of 2025.
- Student Achievements:
 - » The CNCC flight team excelled this fall in the Regional National Intercollegiate Flying Association (NIFA) Competition and have earned a spot at the National NIFA Competition this coming summer. Important note: CNCC emerged as the top two-year flight school in the region, even surpassing one of the four-year programs! We are incredibly proud of the team's dedication and hard work.
 - » Our Women’s Soccer Program experienced its first national ranking this year and the first national ranking among any CNCC athletic programs. Additionally, this team was the first ever to qualify for post-season games.
 - » Women’s soccer team goalkeeper and freshman Jasmine Hernandez was honored as the NJCAA National Player of the Week. Though we have had many outstanding conference players of the week, Jasmine is our first nationally recognized player.
- Approval to add two new sports beginning Fall 2025
 - » Cross-Country- CNCC approved and hired a coach to launch our new Cross-Country Program in 2025. The coach is hard at work coordinating this program and recruiting a team.
 - » Men’s Wrestling- CNCC recently hired its new wrestling coach who will begin recruiting for the Fall 2025 competition.

On the horizon, CNCC has applied for funding to support the renovation of program, community, and student engagement buildings in Rangely as well as for multi-use housing in our Craig location. Though not secured, we are hopeful and committed to the ongoing pursuit of resources to continuously improve teaching and learning, student engagement, support, and institutional sustainability.

To close out the year, we look forward to the annual Community Christmas Party at the Craig Campus on Friday, December 13, 2024, from 4-7 p.m. This event is for everyone in the community and a free dinner will be provided at 5 pm.

Grades are due on December 13, 2024, which also marks the last day faculty, and students will be on campus. Additionally, both campuses will be closed December 25, 2024, through January 1, 2025, and will reopen on Thursday, January 2, 2025.

We hope each of you spend time participating in the community events that we all know of and love during this holiday season and enjoy spending quality time with loved ones. We look forward to seeing everyone in the new year and wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season.

CNCC Flight Team Qualifies for National Competition

BY JESSE AITKEN

The CNCC National Intercollegiate Flying Association (NIFA) Flight Team has achieved a remarkable feat by securing an invitation to the national competition in May. The team's exceptional skills and outstanding performance across various categories have earned them numerous top ten finishes and a total of 311.5 points, resulting in a highly respectable fourth-place finish overall.

"I'm extremely proud of what this team has accomplished, and I can't wait to see what the future holds". says Nathan Hardin Aviation Technology Program Director

The competition was fiercely contested, with teams from prestigious flight schools across the region vying for the top spot. However, CNCC emerged as the top two-year flight school, surpassing even some of the four-year programs. This remarkable feat highlights the program's expertise and the team's unwavering commitment to excellence.

In addition to the team's outstanding performance, individual achievements were also celebrated. Top Pilot Brayden Isaacson, a member of the Flight Team, placed 4th overall, scoring an impressive total of 83.5 points, further solidifying the team's success.

"People told us it couldn't be done, but all they did was give us an opportunity to prove them wrong." said Brayden Isaacson

To support the Flight Team's participation in the national competition, the team will be resuming their fundraising efforts. In exciting news, a See's Candies sale has been announced just in time for the holiday season. Whether you're looking for stocking stuffers or delectable treats, a wide selection is available at the team's online storefront: [https://www.yumraising.com/secure/coloradoncc_cncc_flight_team39/NatHar4681/candy].

The Flight Team extends their sincere gratitude to everyone who has supported them thus far. The unwavering encouragement and support from the CNCC community have been instrumental in fueling their passion and driving them towards excellence. With the upcoming national competition, the team is excited to represent CNCC and showcase the program's expertise on the national stage.

The CNCC Flight Team's qualification for the national competition is a testament to their hard work, skill, and dedication. As they gear up for the upcoming challenge, the CNCC community stands behind them, ready to support their journey towards excellence.



WRESTLING *continued...*

hard work and determination, and we are confident he will build a program that makes our community proud.”

The reintroduction of men’s wrestling at CNCC is part of the college’s ongoing efforts to expand its athletics offerings and provide students with exceptional opportunities for growth and achievement. The Spartans are poised to once again become a competitive force in the NJCAA wrestling landscape.





**Colorado
Northwestern**
Community College

WELCOMES

**TYTUS
COOMBS**

Head Wrestling Coach





CAMP continued...

plus years later I realize how lucky I was to have had my parents choose Rangely to call our permanent home away from the ranch.

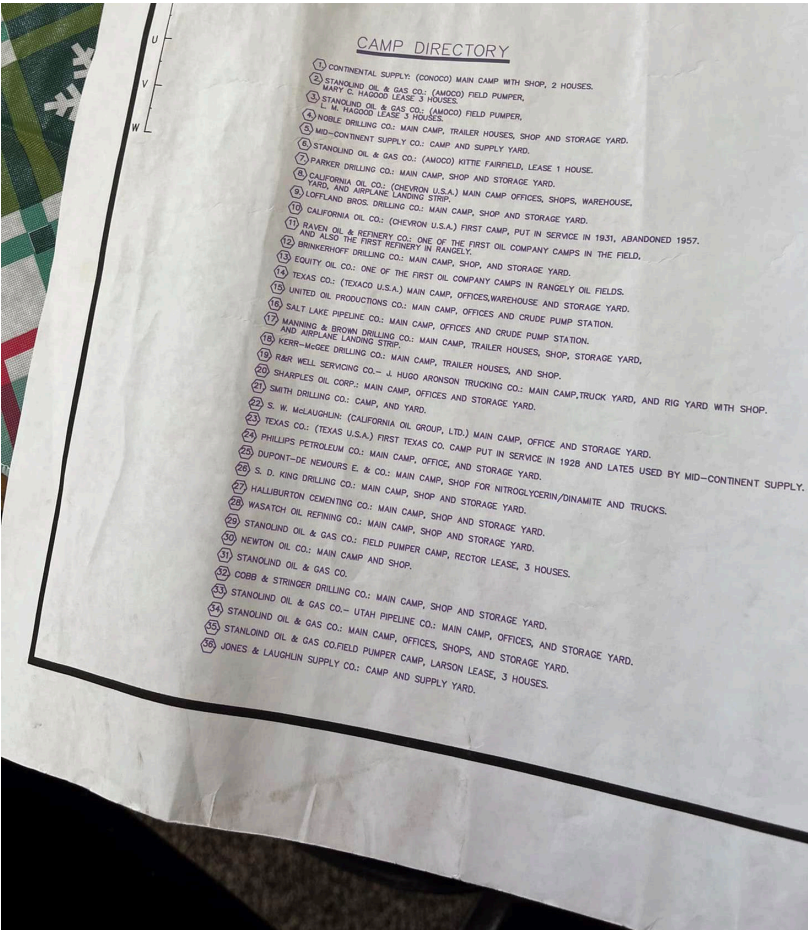
It didn't take me long to explore the many camps and become lifelong friends with the awesome people that lived in those camps. During that era, we all got to live the history of a boom town and the unique lifestyle of living in a camp. My parents never lived in one of the camps, but I sure spent a lot of time with friends in those camps.

Not long ago, I went to a History Colorado workshop and started talking about my friends who I referred to as camp kids. The term camp kids caught the attention of some Historians and thus begins project Saving Camp Kids History.

Our local museum has done a wonderful job of collecting and preserving a lot of history but now we believe it's important to have the camp kids tell their stories. In the picture you will find a list of 36 camps that were located in and around the Rangely oil field. We are going to start with camp number 1 and try to find someone who lived in that camp with hopes they will share their memories. Camp 1 was located at the base of Mellen Hill on the south side of Highway 64. It was Continental Supply (Conoco) with shop, 2 houses. In the 60's it was bulldozed. If anybody remembers it, please share.

At the present time, my husband Robert Bell who worked in the oil field with his father and later became a Chevron CVX and his cousin Roy Cramer, who was born in Rangely and worked as an engineer for over 40 years and still works in the field, are the ones who are the experts, who know the field. Tommy Collins has told me countless stories that I have recorded.

Please share your stories me or on the "This Was Rangely" page on Facebook. We all grew up in such a free but safe environment. We were lucky kids. Love the history of Rangely where ranching, fossil fuels, archeology and paleontology coexist together. You can use the QR Code to take you to the This Was Rangely Page on Facebook.



New Benches on Main Street

BY JEANNIE CALDWELL

We are very excited to announce that TREAD, Rangely’s Main Street Program, received a grant from AARP, which was distributed through the Colorado Main Street Program, for additional benches for our Main Street. The benches were installed during the month of November.

The beautiful benches are consistent in appearance with the benches installed in the Courtyard between Town Hall and the Rangely Regional Library. Our hope is to remain consistent when additional benches are installed.

When walking our very long Main Street be sure to check them out. They are located on Main Street near the Gathering Place and the Fire Hall.

Thank you to the Colorado Main Street Program and AARP for the grant to beautify our Main Street! We appreciate you!



- DOWN
1. Bonneville and Hoover

2. Substitutue for the unnamed

3. Birthday party centerpiece

4. Ball of thread

5. Chicken____king

6. Track season events

7. Park and Madison (Abbr.)

8. Mousse, for one

9. Arm of the North Atlantic

10. Find attractive

11. Floating above ground

12. Lowly laborers

15. _____-carotene

17. Unfairness

18. Fresh information

22. _____ hoop

23. Musician's speed

24. St. Louis gridders

25. Beehive State

26. Construct

27. Appealed, as for mercy

28. Dance requiring a pole

30. Takes as spoils

31. "_____ Island" (Jodie Foster film)

32. Doctrines, informally

33. December air

34. Poker pay-in

36. Audacity

37. Get, as profits

41. Rug-buyer's concern

42. Kachina doll makers

43. Apexes

44. Lewis and Lamb Chop

45. Rice beverages

46. Range section

47. Center

49. Winery choices

50. Draw with acid

51. In _____straits

52. "Whole Lotta Shakin' _____ On"

53. Ultimate purposes

55. Lead-in for "Branco" or "Bravo"

56. Garfield, for one

PRODUCTION COMPANY

By Rob Lee

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9			10	11	12
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57						58					59			
60						61					62			

ACROSS

1. Classic recording label

6. Christmas kings

10. Car juice

13. Even a bit

14. "...happily_____after."

15. Trunk of a tree

16. Waste no time in traveling to

19. Great deal

20. "_____a beautiful morning"

21. Detonate

22. Gives birth to

23. Foils

24. Commotion or type of

room

28. A smaller amount

29. Beatles song "Any Time_____"

30. Citrus flavor

31. Singer Simone

35. Do the apples-to-oranges things

38. Small farm building

39. Vagabond

40. Colonizing insect

41. It can get into a jam

42. Give a hard time to

43. Categorizes

47. Deck swabber's need

48. Labor organizer

Cesar

49. It may be written in stone

50. Move little by little

54. Emulate

Nostradamus

57. "Happy Days" actress

Moran

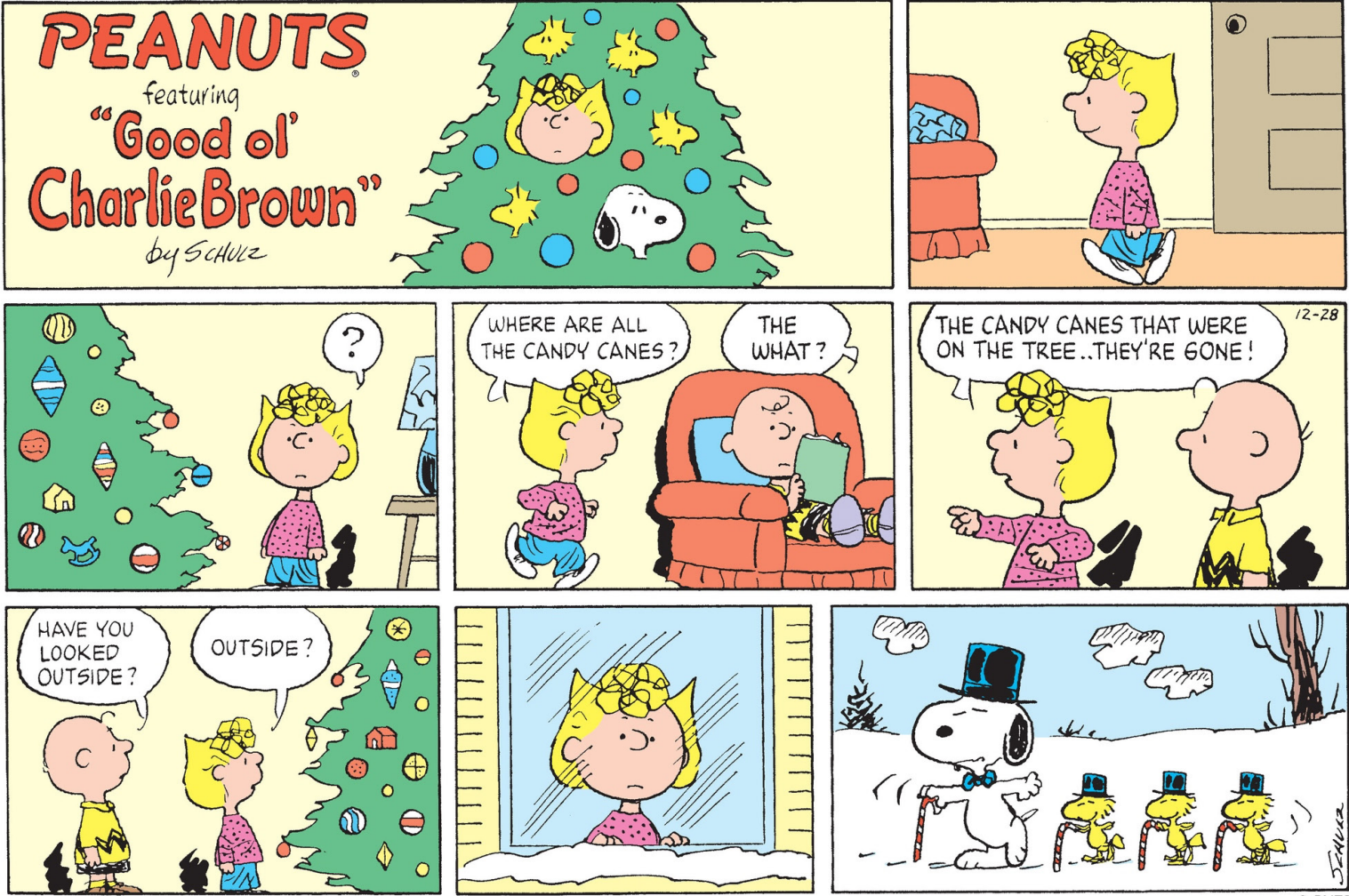
58. Pitches in

59. Bitterly pungent

60. Female sib

61. Run the party

62. If-_____(computer routines)



Natural Curtailment in the Colorado River Basin

BY JEFF MEYERS - YAMPA-WHITE-GREEN BASIN ROUNDTABLE

The Colorado River Basin in the midst of a 23-year drought. Reduced precipitation, mostly in the form of snow in the western mountains, has caused water administrators at the federal, state, and local level to seek ways to cut back usage. But many of us in the high country do not need water managers to tell us to reduce usage. Mother nature kindly, or unkindly, does that for us.

With limited storage at higher elevations, snowpack is the source for virtually all water on the West Slope. As the Basin experiences a steady decline in precipitation, West Slope water users, especially irrigators, find that in many years, they are subject to ‘natural curtailment’. Less snowpack means less water.

Snowpack is a shared resource in the Mountain West. The water from snow melt that feeds the West Slope also feeds the Colorado River. The Colorado serves Lake Powell and then Lake Mead, and ultimately consumers in the Lower Basin (AZ, CA, and NV.) With minor exceptions, all Colorado River water used in those states is stored in the Powell/Mead reservoir system, insulating them from the near-term impact of reduced hydrology up river from Powell. That has led to a common belief that the Upper Basin states (CO, NM, UT, and WY) can mitigate drought-induced problems in the Lower Basin simply by sending more water downstream. Unfortunately, data indicates that during times of hydrological shortfall, the Upper Basin is already naturally experiencing reductions.

Recent history provides a high-level example. In the 5 years from 2016 to 2020, usage averaged 4.6 million acre feet (MAF) in the Upper Basin. In 2021, a low precipitation year, that figure fell to 3.5 MAF, clearly demonstrating the natural curtailment effect. During the 2016 to 2020 period, Lower Basin usage averaged 10.7 MAF, an amount which, rather than falling, actually climbed to over 11.0 MAF for 2021. As a benchmark, the 1922 Colorado River Compact optimistically allocates 7.5 MAF to each basin.

In dry years, natural curtailment impacts nearly everyone on the West Slope. Ranchers and water users on tributary creeks often have to choose which headgates and ditches to operate. Even irrigators on the mainstem of the White River have years when, in late summer and fall, they are required to use far less than their adjudicated rights. Fishing, rafting/tubing, recreational and other beneficial uses on the White River are often restricted, while water districts experience cutbacks during late season low flows.

Meanwhile, solutions to Colorado River shortages have been elusive, and difficult discussions continue. Politics and public messaging have played a major role; Lower Basin organizations have used every major media outlet to build public sympathy for their argument that they should not be the only ones to ‘sacrifice’. Natural curtailment in the Upper basin has been, until very recently, far outside of public perception. But it exists, and water users and organizations of the Lower Basin must acknowledge and understand it as a key component of future operating agreements. We in the Upper Basin need to make natural curtailment a part of our story, and tell that story loudly and clearly. Raising public awareness of this elemental fact can help us to defend our rights in the Colorado River.



COMMUNITY EDUCATION



OLDER ADULTS AND HOLIDAY STRESS

The holiday season presents unique challenges for older adults, particularly in how these factors affect their well-being. This time of year, often associated with joy and togetherness, can be a stark contrast for many older adults who face increased feelings of isolation and loneliness. The festive atmosphere, filled with reminders of family gatherings and social events, can serve as a painful reminder of their own solitude, especially for those who live alone or are geographically distant from loved ones. As a result, the holidays can amplify these feelings, leading to a deepened sense of loneliness and sadness.

Understanding the specific ways holiday stress and loneliness impact seniors is crucial for providing the necessary support and care. It is not uncommon for older adults to experience a significant decline in their mental and emotional well-being during this season. Feelings of isolation can have far-reaching consequences, contributing to the onset or worsening of mental health conditions such as depression and anxiety. These emotional struggles can, in turn, lead to a decline in cognitive function and other health challenges, further exacerbating the challenges faced by aging.

SUPPORTING OLDER ADULTS DURING THE HOLIDAYS

- **Encourage Connection:** Facilitate opportunities for older adults to connect with family, friends, and community members. This can be through visits, phone calls, or virtual gatherings.
- **Promote Healthy Routines:** Encourage maintaining healthy habits, including regular exercise, balanced nutrition, and adequate sleep.
- **Offer Emotional Support:** Be available to listen and provide emotional support. Encourage them to express their feelings and validate their experiences.
- **Involve Them in Holiday Preparations:** Find ways to include older adults in holiday preparations and traditions, adjusting activities to accommodate their abilities.
- **Seek Professional Help:** Ensure they have access to mental health professionals if needed, to address feelings of depression, anxiety, or grief.

By recognizing and addressing the specific impacts of holiday stress and loneliness on older adults, we can help them navigate the season with greater ease and joy.

WE CAN HELP.

Our hospital-based outpatient program is designed to meet the unique needs of older adults experiencing depression and/or anxiety related to life changes that are often associated with aging or a chronic diagnosis. Anyone can make a referral to our program, including self-referrals, provider referrals, or community consultations.

Call us today at: **970.675.8002** Email: ewiley@rdhosp.org

Advertise in the Rangely Review

Non-Chamber Members

- Full Page - \$295
- 1/2 Page - \$150
- 1/4 Page - \$90
- 1/8 page - \$55

This pricing includes an ad in the Rangely Review ONLY.

Chamber Members

- Full Page - \$200
- 1/2 Page - \$100
- 1/4 Page - \$55
- 1/8 page - \$40

This pricing includes an ad in the Rangely Review as well as one month utility billing advertisement.

Winter Assistance Relief Management - W.A.R.M

BY WENDI GILLARD

Rangely, Colorado is located on the Colorado Plateau, with potential extreme temperatures both high and low, and generally a small amount of precipitation. The reported average high temperature is 43.6 degrees and average low temperature 16.3 during fall, winter and spring seasons combined. Rangely residents struggling to make ends meet during the colder months have the benefit of seeking help through government-funded utility assistance as well as local community based utility assistance.



The Winter Assistance Relief Management (WARM) Program is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization governed by a board of community members who volunteer to serve residents within the Rangely School District boundaries, in need of assistance paying utilities such as gas, water, electric, firewood and sewer bills during the months November-April. The board also considers providing emergency assistance during other months if necessary. According to the program’s bylaws, applicants do not have to fall into a certain income criteria to qualify. This was especially helpful in late 2023 when the community saw an unexpected rate hike, and the WARM Board was able to assist households that do not normally require extra assistance to make ends meet. Depending on available funding, the Board will provide partial or full assistance requested. Each application is considered on a case-by-case basis, without discrimination based on race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex, or religion.

In order to be considered for WARM assistance, Rangely community members must:

- Ensure applicant(s) are the name(s) in which the utilities are registered under OR provide proof of responsibility for the payment (renters agreement or letter from landlord).
- Currently reside at the address where assistance will be provided at the time of the application.
- Be in a current financial situation, that renders them unable to pay their utility bill. (This can be temporary and unexpected!)
- Be past due on their current utility bill.
- Apply for LEAP (acceptance into LEAP program is not required, only application).
- Provide copies of past-due utility bills the applicant is requesting assistance for.
- Provide proof of payment plan set up with the utility company.
- Fill out the WARM application in its entirety.

The Town of Rangely's Gas Department is unique compared to other natural gas companies, as it is one of only a few municipalities that operate its own gas company in Colorado. A highly beneficial benefit of this is, the Town’s Gas Department budget allows for substantial contributions to the WARM Program for gas utility assistance directly to its customers. Funding for the WARM Program comes from the Town of Rangely (gas only), grants, and tax deductible community member donations. Community members have the ability to donate through several different avenues:

- Adding a donation amount to WARM when sending in their Town of Rangely utility bill. Some community members round their bill up to the next dollar, this kind of donation does add up and is easy!
- Mailing a donation to W.A.R.M. PO Box 770, Rangely, CO 81648.

The WARM Board thanks those who have generously donated, encourages community members to consider donating, and hopes that this article gives important information to Rangely community members in need of utility assistance this season. For questions or more information regarding WARM, contact the Town of Rangely at 970-675-8476. For questions, more information, or assistance in applying for LEAP contact Rio Blanco County Department of Human Services at 970-878-9640.

Special Session Recap: More Property Tax Relief

BY DYLAN ROBERTS

Victories for Colorado’s Water Future

As the State Senator for a large portion of the Western Slope, protecting Colorado’s water is one of my top priorities. We secured several landmark legislative and funding victories this year to ensure Colorado’s headwaters, rivers, streams, and wetlands are supported for years to come. I was proud to serve as a prime sponsor on several major pieces of bipartisan water legislation. Here is a recap of the year’s most important efforts in water.

Implementing the recommendations of the Colorado River Drought Task Force

I worked closely with legislative and community partners in 2023 to create the Colorado River Drought Task Force, and after their hard work, Republican Senator Perry Will and I introduced a bill to implement their recommendations. SB24-197 creates new protections for water used by our agriculture producers, increases water funding and creates incentives for more river flows to protect the natural environment.

One other key section of the bill will be especially important for Northwest Colorado’s economic transition. This new law will protect Yampa River water from abandonment as Tri-State and Xcel pursue future energy development opportunities in the area. We want to keep energy generation jobs in Northwest Colorado and securing these water rights is a crucial part to do so. I worked with key stakeholders in Moffat and Routt Counties as well as water partners across our region to ensure that those water rights stay here on the Western Slope and benefit generations of Coloradans.

Protecting Colorado’s wetlands and rivers

Last year, the United States Supreme Court overturned federal wetlands protections in Sackett v. EPA and kicked protection of these crucial waters to the states. We stepped up in Colorado this year to do just that. Thanks to the leadership of Speaker Julie McCluskie, also from the Western Slope, Colorado was the first state to restore these needed protections. It was a privilege to carry HB24-1379 along with Republican Senator Barbara Kirkmeyer. This bill is the result of feedback from dozens of organizations and individuals across the state, and works to protect our wetlands, streams, and rivers while still allowing industry, agriculture, and development to function smoothly.

Funding Colorado Water Projects

Each year, the legislature passes a bill to fund water conservation board projects. This year, we fought to ensure that bill contained the investment our water future deserves. We directed unprecedented funding levels to meet our state’s water needs in HB24-1435. We funded several projects and programs, including increased funding for our successful turf replacement program, which helps individuals transition from water-sucking turf and Kentucky bluegrass to native, water-wise landscaping.

This bill also made a crucial state investment toward protecting the Shoshone water rights on the Colorado River. Led by the Colorado River District, the state, counties, and local governments in the region partnered to secure half the funding necessary to protect Shoshone water rights, which would permanently preserve crucial water flow that supports agriculture, outdoor recreation and the environment. I recently worked with colleagues at the state legislature to send a bipartisan letter to our federal delegation, calling on them to secure the additional support and funding necessary to protect this water. Just last week, Colorado’s US Senators and many of our US Representatives announced their support for federal funding.

Other common sense conservation measures

SB24-005 builds on the turf replacement program by prohibiting the installation of new nonfunctional turf. This means that we will stop installing water-sucking grass that is never used or walked on except



CNCC's Fall 2024 State of the College

BY JESSE AITKENS

Colorado Northwestern Community College (CNCC) held its first State of the College and Wreath Auction Event on November 8, 2024. The event provided an opportunity to recognize the college's achievements and express gratitude to internal and external leadership for their support. Over the past year, the college has made significant progress towards achieving its goals.

Thanks to state grants and support from the Rangely Junior College District Board, the college was able to complete repairs of the Hefley building roof and replace the gym floor, both projects totaling \$1.5 million.

Investing in technology, CNCC has completed \$2.8 million in IT upgrades, providing students and employees with an enhanced teaching and learning experience. These improvements align with the college's commitment to delivering high-quality education in a technologically advanced environment.

CNCC has also excelled in various other areas. The Department of Education ranked CNCC first in the state for the successful transfer of financial aid students among community colleges. Additionally, according to PayScale, CNCC is ranked fifth in the country for graduates who earn the highest salaries among public community colleges since 2021. The colleges successfully launched the Dental Hygiene Bachelor's degree program which includes a service abroad component, contributing to a well-rounded education.

The college's aviation program has gained recognition, with Fly Magazine which identified CNCC as the best program in Colorado for producing workforce-ready pilots. CNCC's student flight team also achieved success at the Regional National Intercollegiate Flying Association (NIFA), surpassing four-year programs and securing a top two position among two-year programs.

CNCC continues to prioritize student achievements and success in athletics. The Women's Soccer Program received its first national ranking, becoming the first CNCC athletic program to achieve this milestone. The college has also approved the launch of a Cross-Country and the rebuilding of the wrestling program. Cross-country will begin competition and wrestling plans to field a men's team in Fall 2025.

Looking ahead, CNCC's strategic plan for 2025-2026 and beyond focuses on the following six key areas.

Enrollment growth. This includes expanded recruitment of full-time, degree-seeking students and intentional work on student retention and completion.

Student success and engagement. This means that the college will be focusing on being student-ready, improving the student experience while they are here, and listening to their concerns and responding to them in a timely and effective manner.

Infrastructure improvement, in alignment with the college's facilities masterplan. CNCC will continue efforts to improve the longevity and aesthetics of its grounds and facilities, inside and out.

Outcomes and accountability. Like any major organization, Colorado Northwestern must show evidence that its students are learning and are prepared for transfer and the workforce. CNCC must also comply with state and national standards in its operations and meet a variety of financial and safety thresholds. They have consistently experienced clean audits but know that continuous improvement is always important.

Innovative business models. This involves innovations on how and what Colorado Northwestern teaches along with program and service models that meet the needs of the workforce and its students. Examples include programs that contribute to a diverse economy in the community and the implementation of tools such as A.I.

Talent management and succession planning. CNCC will continue our focus on employee retention, professional development, and guidance toward growth within the college.

CNCC expresses gratitude for the ongoing support from local communities and stakeholders. The college remains committed to serving its students and working towards their success.

For more information about CNCC and its programs, please visit <https://www.cncc.edu>

Colorado's Safest Cities

Special to the Review

Colorado is home to many safe communities; however, based on research by www.SafeHome.org, Rangely is one of the safest. Rangely boasts the lowest property crime rate, according to a new analysis of FBI crime data. Research was conducted by researchers at SafeHome.org.

The analysis of U.S. cities with the lowest and highest rates of both property and violent crimes, as well as state-specific data, are available at the links below

<https://www.safehome.org/safest-cities/> (Utilize blue QR Code to view)

<https://www.safehome.org/safest-cities/co/> (Utilize blue QR Code to view)



Roberts continued...

when mowed, in any new commercial, industrial, and government construction. It was a privilege to lead this commonsense conservation effort with Republican Senator Cleave Simpson.

HB24-1362 works to encourage streamlined graywater use. Graywater, which is gently used water from sinks, showers, and washing machines, can be safe and beneficial when used for yard irrigation and it reconnects our households with the natural water cycle. Previous law required that the governing body of a municipality vote to authorize the use of graywater. Under HB24-1362, which I was honored to carry with Democratic Rep. Meghan Lukens and Republican Rep. Marc Catlin, graywater will be legal to use unless a local government chooses to opt out. This shift will dramatically simplify opportunities for graywater use, giving families and communities one more tool to use in conserving water and saving money.

I am proud to have worked on these new laws, all of which have bipartisan sponsorship and support from across the state. The state legislature is more committed than ever to protecting and conserving our precious water resources, and I look forward to continuing these efforts in the coming year. As always, you can contact me directly at SenatorDylanRoberts@gmail.com or 970-846-3054.

Dylan Roberts is the State Senator for Clear Creek, Eagle, Garfield, Gilpin, Grand, Jackson, Moffat, Rio Blanco, Routt and Summit Counties

CNCC Teams up with TalkCampus

BY JESSE AITKENS

Colorado Northwestern Community College launches innovative mental health service TalkCampus to support students. CNCC has taken an important step in bolstering its student support services and joined other leading institutions globally by partnering with student mental health support platform, TalkCampus.

TalkCampus is an online community of students who support each other through their daily struggles, all within a clinically safeguarded environment. CNCC students will get access to a community of millions of students from across the world where they can express themselves authentically, in their own language, on a mobile phone, any time of day or night. The platform is a safe and anonymous place for students to share, with 24/7 moderation and escalation performed by a global safety team of trained peer supporters and a professional staff team.

CNCC has chosen to add peer support to their mental health offerings to better support students throughout their academic journey. Peer support is a well-evidenced form of support that provides instant, ongoing connection wherever a student might be, directly through their phones. A 2023 survey found that since using TalkCampus, 86% of students find it easier to ask for help when they need it and 79% find it easier to cope with life.

A lot on your mind? We're here to listen

Download TalkCampus for free, anonymous, 24/7 peer-to-peer student support.

[Find out more →](#)





CNCC now provides TalkCampus as a proactive and preventative mental health solution that is inclusive to all students, whether on campus or studying remotely. We know that TalkCampus will be a valuable addition to our existing wellbeing suite, and we are proud to be able to give our students access to this global community.

“TalkCampus is a next step for us as a college to provide mental health support to our students in a way that is extremely accessible. Students can engage with the platform at any time of the day, when they need it most, to find support from peers who understand their experiences most.” - Brett Caskey, Vice President of Student Services

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October Crossword Solution

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As a once-dominant industry fades into the past, Craig, Hayden, and Rangely diversify their economies for a resilient future

BY RACHEL WOOLWORTH

Northwest Colorado stands on the brink of economic transformation. After experiencing economic upswings and downturns tied to gold prospecting, uranium mining, and oil

drilling throughout the last 150 years, municipalities across the region are now grappling with the sunset of coal and the subsequent need to reinvent their economies.

Since the 1970s, Northwest Colorado’s two coal-fired power plants and four coal mines have propelled cities and towns like Craig, Hayden, and Rangely, providing supply chain spending, high-paying jobs, and plentiful tax revenue for local governments.

But in 2019, Gov. Jared Polis published a roadmap to 100% renewable energy by 2040, formalizing the State of Colorado’s movement away from fossil fuel production. Though the region’s coal industry was already in decline, Polis’ 100% renewable commitment served as a catalyst for local governments in Northwest Colorado to confront the sunset of coal proactively.

Five years later, the region’s coal industry is on its last leg. Craig and Hayden Generating Stations, the region’s power plants, are set to close by 2030 and the region’s four coal mines, Trapper, Colowyo, Twentymile, and Deserado, face uncertain futures. and 79% find it easier to cope with life.

According to a Colorado Mesa University study, the sunset of coal across Northwest Colorado will roughly equate to a 20% loss of regional GDP and more than 2,000 lost jobs. Various counties and special districts across the region expect to soon lose 40 to 60% of their property tax revenue due to the power plant and mine closures.

Though municipalities are generally less dependent on property tax than other local governments, cities and towns across the region are also bracing for the impacts of coal’s decline. Municipalities will face depleted supply chain spending, job loss, and reduced severance tax and federal mineral lease royalties.

To combat these challenges, municipalities across Northwest Colorado are working to transform the regional energy industry, broaden manufacturing opportunities, and strengthen tourism and recreation assets to create new spending, jobs, and municipal revenue opportunities.

“There is a tremendous sense of urgency around this work. Economic diversification usually takes decades, but we are trying to do it in a matter of years,” Christine Rambo, project manager for Northwest Colorado Development Council (NWCDC), said of the region’s planning efforts. “It takes a lot of resources, partnerships, and capacity building.”

REIMAGINING ENERGY PRODUCTION

The coal industry has helped build a highly skilled workforce across Northwest Colorado, from heavy equipment operators to engineers to

electricians. Such high-dollar employment opportunities in the energy industry are not easily replaced by tourism and recreation jobs, which are typically lower paying.



Coal continued...

“It’s important to realize what you have and build upon that,” said Shan-non Scott, economic development di- rector for the City of Craig. “We are asking ourselves what types of indus- tries can utilize the existing skill sets of our workers. Often, that looks like new forms of energy production.”

In an effort to preserve high-paying jobs, municipalities are collaborating with the region’s coal plant and mine companies to reimagine their roles throughout Northwest Colorado. Cit- ies and towns are also working to bring new renewable energy projects to the area.

In June, Craig and Moffat County reached a settlement agreement with Tri-State Generation & Transmission stemming from the accelerated clo- sure of Craig Station.

The city and county will each re- ceive \$22 million in direct benefit pay- ments to place in a community eco- nomic development trust fund. Craig

and Moffat County are the first coal communities in Colorado history to receive direct benefit funding for eco- nomic development.

“The intent is to keep that money local and reinvest it in programs to address job loss and property tax loss,” Scott said.

The settlement also calls for mini- mum backstop property tax revenue payments of up to \$48 million be- tween 2028 and 2038, incentivizing Tri-State to reinvest in the communi- ty through different types of energy production. In fact, the agreement in- cludes a commitment from Tri-State to solicit bids only in Moffat County for a new natural gas power plant.

The Town of Hayden also plans to negotiate with Xcel Energy, the owner of Hayden Station, to secure financial assistance and reinvestment in the community in the wake of the power plant’s accelerated closure.

“Xcel seems to be set on redevelop- ing the site,” said Mathew Mendisco, Hayden’s manager. “For what, we will find out in the coming months.”

Various renewable energy projects, including solar, biomass, geothermal, and hydropower, are in the works for the region.

Craig is home to a 20-acre solar ar- ray constructed in 2023. The Town of Rangely is retrofitting its municipal buildings with solar and geothermal energy. Hayden hopes to run geother- mal as a municipal energy utility in the near future. A pumped storage hy- dropower project is also proposed on a site between Craig and Hayden.

Instead of walking away from the energy industry, municipalities across Northwest Colorado are in- centivizing coal companies to rein- vest while also developing their re- newable energy assets.

MOMENTUM IN MANUFACTURING

While energy remains a key focus, economic diversification efforts extend beyond the sector. Leaders in North- west Colorado are looking toward man- ufacturing as an area of growth due to the region’s skilled workforce, industri- al parks, and access to freight rail.

Though the region is already known for several outdoor recreation manu- facturing companies, such as Good Vibes River Gear in Craig and Head- hunter Bow Strings in the Town of Meeker, municipalities are hoping to bring other types of manufacturing to the area through the construction of industrial parks.

“A huge part of ecosystem building for the manufacturing industry is con- structing industrial parks,” Rambo ex- plained of recent projects in Hayden, Craig, and Rangely. “To have shovel- ready sites that existing businesses can expand to or businesses outside of the region can move to is huge.”

Hayden broke ground on the North- west Colorado Business Park, a 58-acre site across from the Yampa Valley Re- gional Airport, this spring after years of planning. The park offers two- to five-acre, shovel-ready lots for indus- trial and commercial use with easy ac- cess to multimodal transportation.

Three of the park’s 13 lots are already under contract. The future tenants, all of which are expanding regional businesses, include a bever- age wholesaler and distributor, a coal storage company, and a start-up spe- cializing in camper and van retrofits.

More than \$6 million in state and federal funding, including grants from the U.S. Economic Development Ad- ministration and Colorado’s Office of Just Transition and Energy/Mineral Impact Assistance Fund,

Coal continued...

made the project possible. Hayden also plans to install a geothermal heating and cooling network at the park, thanks, in part, to a grant from the Department of Local Affairs.

In Craig, the manufacturing and agricultural industries intersect with the construction of a new meatpacking plant. Though ranching has long served as a backbone of Northwest Colorado’s economy, ranchers have struggled to produce value-added meat products like sausage and jerky — items that come with a higher return on investment than selling animals whole — due to a lack of processing facilities.

Fitch Ranch Artisan Meats recently received a \$7 million grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to build a 40,000 square foot meat processing plant across from its current facility, which is much smaller. The company estimates the new plant will bring 65 jobs to the Craig community.

“Agriculture is a historic strength in the Yampa Valley,” Rambo said. “That is exactly why we are leaning into that strength with a mindset for innovation.”

The region’s Union Pacific Railroad line, with spurs in Hayden and Craig, serves as a unique incentive for manufacturing companies looking to set up

A sign marks the Rangely Airport.

shop in the region. Thanks to the state’s recent creation of two income tax credits for businesses utilizing the rail line, rail use is now more compelling than ever.

TOURISM AND OUTDOOR RECREATION GROWTH

Like many rural areas of the state with historic ties to mining, Northwest Colorado is growing its tourism and recreation industries through downtown revitalization efforts, small business development, enhanced river and trail accessibility, and cultural site promotion.

Municipal programs across the region, like the Craig Small Business Grant Program and Rangely Facade Renovation Program, have helped small businesses invest in capital equipment, restore historic facades, and redo sidewalks and landscaping. Business pitch competitions, like those seen in Hayden and Craig, have assisted in fostering an entrepreneurial spirit among locals.

Craig also offers tax increment financing (TIF) to businesses in the downtown corridor, which is part of the city’s urban renewal authority. One of the city’s TIF recipients, Bad Alibi Distillery, was started by two locals employed at Craig Station and Trapper Mine, looking to transition out of the coal industry.

Already known as a mecca for hunters and anglers, municipalities across the region are trying to broaden their appeal to outdoor recreation lovers.

Rangely is constructing public access amenities along the White River, thanks to a \$400,000 grant from the Office of Just Transition. At the same time, Craig is hard at work building a whitewater park on the Yampa River to attract rafters, kayakers, and river surfers. Hayden grooms a Nordic ski track throughout the winter, and Rangely offers an expansive network of off-highway vehicle and dirt bike trails in the summer.

Promotion of cultural tourism is also gaining momentum across Northwest Colorado. From petroglyphs and pictographs created by the Fremont and Ute peoples near Rangely to the Museum of Northwest Colorado in Craig and Carpenter Ranch Preserve outside Hayden, the region offers an array of cultural assets to attract tourists.

PLAN FOR THE WORST, TAKE THE BEST

When speaking to municipal leaders and economic development professionals across Northwest Colorado, a consistent theme emerged: when uncertainty abounds, plan for the worst-case scenario.

“We started putting in the work early to control what we knew we could control,” Mendisco said of Hayden’s economic diversification efforts. “Town council was brave enough to say, ‘We need to start working on this transition now,’ back before others were doing so.”

Economic resilience is a team effort. Craig, Hayden, and Rangely have benefited from partnerships with local and regional economic development organizations, such as NWCDC, that offer technical assistance, grant writing, and business consulting services. The state and federal government have served as important partners, awarding millions of dollars in grant funding to municipalities in the region in recent years.

Such collaborations, along with the forward-thinking mentalities of municipal officials, are bracing Craig, Hayden, and Rangely for a new era — one defined by economic diversity and durability.

Paleontologists Discover Colorado 'swamp dweller' that Lived Alongside Dinosaurs

BY DANIEL STRAIN

A team of paleontologists working near Rangely, Colorado, has uncovered a new (or, more accurately, very old) state resident—a fossil mammal about the size of a muskrat that may have scurried through swamps during the Age of Dinosaurs.

The researchers, led by CU Boulder's Jaelyn Eberle, published their findings Oct. 23 in the journal PLOS ONE.

Eberle and her colleagues named their discovery, which they identified from a piece of jawbone and three molar teeth, *Heleocola piceanus*.

The animal lived in Colorado roughly

70 to 75 million years ago—a time when a vast inland sea covered large portions of the American West. (Fittingly, “*Heleocola*” roughly translates to “swamp dweller” in Latin).

“Colorado is a great place to find fossils, but mammals from this time period tend to be pretty rare,” said Eberle, curator of fossil vertebrates at the CU Museum of Natural History and professor in the Department of Geological Sciences. “So it’s really neat to see this slice of time preserved in Colorado.”

Compared to much larger dinosaurs living at the time like tyrannosaurs or the horned ancestors of Triceratops, the new fossil addition to Colorado might seem tiny and insignificant. But it was surprisingly large for mammals in the Late Cretaceous, Eberle said.

She’s also glad to see Rangely, which sits in the northwest corner of the state not far from Dinosaur National Monument, get its due.

“It’s a small town, but, in my experience as a paleontologist, a lot of cool things come out of rural environments,” Eberle said. “It’s nice to see western Colorado have an exciting discovery.”

Land Meets Water

That cool discovery helps to paint a more complete picture of a Colorado that would be all but unrecognizable to residents today.

Paleontologists John Foster and ReBecca Hunt-Foster, co-authors of the new study, have been coming to this part of the state to dig up fossils every summer for about 15 years. Seventy million years ago, it was a place where land met water. Here, creatures like turtles, duck-billed dinosaurs and giant crocodiles may have flourished in and around marshes and estuaries, gorging themselves on vegetation, fish and more.

“The region might have looked kind of like Louisiana,” said ReBecca Hunt-Foster, a paleontologist at Dinosaur National Monument in Utah and western Colorado. “We see a lot of animals that were living in the water quite happily like sharks, rays and guitarfish.”

John Foster first remembers seeing the bit of mammal jaw emerge from a slab of sandstone that he collected from the site in 2016. The fossil measured about an inch long.

“I said, ‘Holy cow, that’s huge,’” said Foster, a scientist at the Utah Field House of Natural History State Park Museum in Vernal, Utah.

One Big Mammal

Eberle explained that before an asteroid killed off the non-avian dinosaurs 66 million years ago, mammals tended to be small—most were about the size of today’s mice or rats. She largely identifies them from the tiny teeth they left behind.

H. piceanus, in comparison, was positively huge. Eberle estimates that the animal, a cousin to modern-day marsupials, weighed 2 pounds or more, larger than most Late Cretaceous mammals. (It’s not



see *Swamp Dweller* on pg 24

Musicians Play with Echo in the Abandoned Water Tank in Colorado

BY EMILY ARNTSEN



In Rangely, Colorado, a small town in the northwest corner of the state, nestled in the middle of the Book Cliffs Mountain Range, musicians have turned an old water tank into a performance venue and recording studio.

Simply called The Tank, the space offers a unique sonic experience, with echoes lasting up to 40 seconds in the 65-foot steel cylinder.

The tank was originally supposed to store water in case of fires at a nearby electric company, but it was abandoned shortly after it was brought to Rangely in the 1960s.

From an engineering standpoint, the tank was a bad design. It never even held any water. But as a music venue, it's become a dream destination for a lot of artists.

"I don't think I'm going to write music the same way ever again," says Alan Mackwell, a composer from Boulder, Colorado.

Earlier this fall, Mackwell was an artist in residence at the Tank. The residency program started about a decade ago, after a group of musicians and Rangely locals saved the Tank from demolition. Over the years, they've been renovating it and turning it into the facility it is today: a concert venue, a recording space, and a place for musicians to experiment.

While he was there, Mackwell wrote a piece called Rail Dynamics that features a violin, a viola, and a cello, played by Jordan Grantonic, Emma Reynolds, and Peyton Magelheist, respectively.

Mackwell says that when composing the music, he had to take the sonic experience of the Tank into consideration.

"It's so hard to be able to approximate what will happen to the kinds of sounds that you make just because, you know, the acoustic properties of the Tank are so wildly different from anything I've ever experienced," explained Mackwell.

The acoustics of the Tank mean that all sounds can be amplified, even those that aren't part of a performance.

"Every single sound gets magnified, you know, a sneeze, a cough, a phone ringing, thank God that didn't happen. There's nowhere to hide," said Mackwell.

One of the appeals for musicians is the echo the space offers.

"A good amount of reverb can do a lot to make a sound feel a little bit more alive," said Mackwell.

The echo in the Tank can last up to 40 seconds. For comparison, the average echo in a concert hall is just two seconds. In a cathedral, it's around 9 seconds. The world record for the longest echo is 75 seconds.

What allows the Tank to create its unique echo actually prevented it from being able to hold water in the first place. The floor bulges upward and makes a slate dome.

"When they engineered it, they didn't put a cement pad under it, so it wasn't able to hold the weight of water on this hill," said the Tank's sound engineer, Michael Van Wagner.

"And we think that really has a lot to do with the convection in the floor, the way that the floor is bowed up, and that's kind of happened over time as the Tank has sank into the ground. Just seems to create a longer echo."

The Tank is now closed for the winter season and will open up again in May, 2025.

Swamp Dweller continued...

quite a record—another fossil mammal from the same period, known as Didelphodon, may have weighed as much as 11 pounds). Based on *H. piceanus*’ teeth, the mammal likely dined on plants with a few insects or other small animals mixed in.

While dinosaurs get all the glory, the new find is another reason why paleontologists shouldn’t overlook ancient mammals. Small or not, they played an important role in Colorado’s ecosystems in the Late Cretaceous.

“They’re not all tiny,” Eberle said. “There are a few animals emerging from the Late Cretaceous that are bigger than what we anticipated 20 years ago.”

Hunt-Foster said that the Mountain West is a special place for anyone who loves fossils. She also urged people visiting public lands to not collect vertebrate fossils, such as dinosaurs, they may come across while hiking to avoid disturbing important scientific information. Instead, they should note the location, take a photo and alert a representative from a nearby museum or public land agency.

“We have scientists that come from all over the world specifically to study our fossils,” she said. “We really are lucky.”

Older People in Rural Colorado Have Fewer Options for Assisted Living as Facilities Face Challenges

BY NELL LONDON

A senior living facility in Steamboat Springs will stay open after the community raised millions to buy it from the receivership.

Casey’s Pond was deeply in debt when Bellann Raile, managing director at Cordes & Company, an insolvency advisory firm, was appointed the receiver. Located near hotels and condos in a resort community, the facility seemed destined for a future in tourism rather than senior living.

“Casey’s Pond had already been marketed as a senior facility and it was unsuccessful,” Raile said. “So in my eyes, it was very likely to be sold for another use. It is at the base of a ski hill. It’s very attractive to a lot of other uses.”

The facility’s residents were told they might have to move. But then, the community rallied. A coalition including the Yampa Valley Community Foundation, the city of Steamboat Springs, Routt County, and a host of individuals, raised millions of dollars to purchase Casey’s Pond, and keep it open for seniors.

Raile said there was a lot of excitement about saving a place for older residents in this mountain town.

“It’s really part of the community,” she said. “Their moms and dads live there. Or they’re intending to move their moms and dads there, or intending on living there themselves. So that was going to be a big loss for the community.”

Casey’s Pond is now run by Northwest Colorado Health, which also owns The Haven Assisted Living in nearby Hayden.

It’s a story with a happy ending in the Yampa Valley. But across rural Colorado - where one in five residents is over 65 - senior living facilities can be hard to find.

Fifteen percent of counties in the United States are aging and disability service “deserts,” meaning they have no senior centers, adult community centers, or social services organizations providing non-medical home care, according to a study.

“That means people have to leave their home to go find somewhere else to live, to get the care that

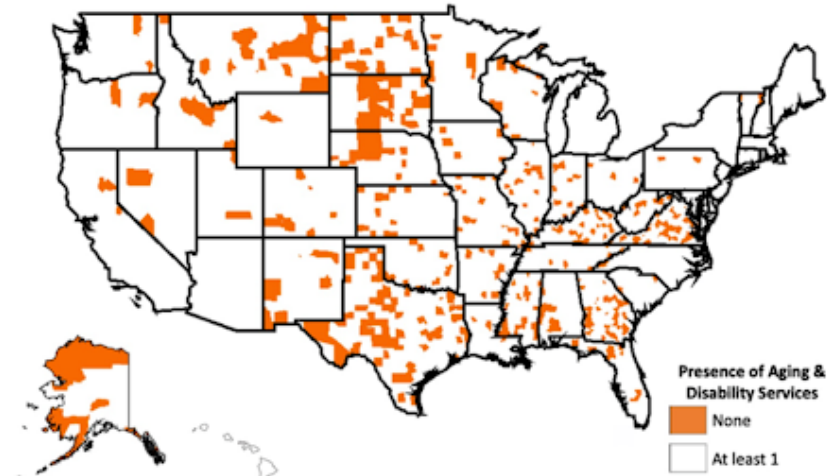


Figure 1: Location of Aging and Disability Services Deserts
Data Source: National Neighborhood Data Archive (NaNDA), 2017
Note: county-level counts of ADS establishments (N=3,142 counties)

Eagle Crest continued...

they need,” said Tammy Dunker, secretary and treasurer of the Colorado Rural Health Center, the state's office of rural health.

A town that values having a place for seniors, and is willing to pay for it

Dunker knows first-hand the challenges that face rural senior facilities. She’s the director of Eagle Crest Assisted Living in Rangely, a town in Rio Blanco County with around 2,400 residents. Dunker credits town leadership for seeing the need for this senior living facility, which has room for 20 and is affiliated with Rangely District Hospital, and for implementing financial support.

“If it were not for the mill levy that the residents of Rangely pay on their property taxes, Eagle Crest would not be here,” said Dunker. “It is a service we provide to the community and our seniors here.”

“So Rangely is very fortunate that we have what we have,” she said.

Most of the residents at Eagle Crest are from Rangely, Dunker said. Some even moved away from the town over the years but returned to live at the facility. Eagle Crest offers three meals a day, cleaning, laundry, and medication management. A sense of community can be key to good health.



“I mean, loneliness is a horrible thing and actually has been shown to lead to a higher risk for dementia. So I think we provide companionship, and they become our family,” Dunker said.

Even with tax support, there are challenges for rural senior care. Staffing is one

Hiring in the healthcare industry is difficult generally and that holds true in rural areas. Pay is a big issue; Dunker said some workers can earn as much or even more at local convenience stores and fast food chains. And the work requires empathy, caring, and the level of meticulousness needed to handle medication.

“So I feel like when we do find these special people that have that calling to care for the residents the way they do here in Rangely, I try to make sure that they understand how precious and important they are to our residents and to our administration,” she said.

Housing crisis complicates hiring

High housing costs are not just a problem in urban areas. Rangely can be hard for Dunker’s staff to afford.

“In fact, I just actually lost an employee that had to move because she could not find affordable housing. By affordable housing, I mean not \$2,000 a month. You can't pay people \$16 an hour and then charge them \$2,000 a month for rent,” she said. “So housing in this state is a huge issue.”

Dunker herself commutes 25 miles each way, from her home in Dinosaur.

Transportation to healthcare can require herculean efforts

Older residents at Eagle Crest are fortunate to have the Rangely District Hospital nearby for medical care. But to access certain specialists, they face a long drive.

“Transportation is a huge issue for anyone living rural,” Dunker said.

Rural assisted living facilities like Eagle Crest try to assist older people with transportation, but Dunker said if residents don’t have family nearby to help, it can really be a struggle. Older people in Rangely may need to go to Grand Junction for specialist care.

“It's about two hours over Douglas Pass. I don't know if you've ever experienced Douglas Pass, but in the wintertime, it can be - sometimes it's not even possible. It's closed down,” Dunker said. “So to get to the care you need, that's a huge challenge for all rural, not just our town.”

see Eagle Crest on pg 26

Eagle Crest continued...

Assisted living is expensive, even in small towns

One of the biggest challenges older residents in rural areas face when hoping to access assisted living is simply the expense. The average cost of assisted living in Colorado is \$5,000 a month.

“And that's just the average,” said Dunker. “Usually that's the base that doesn't even come with the services of medication management, or if they require some other specialty skill type level to care for them.”

For example, memory care costs more. It also requires special licensing, which Eagle Crest doesn't have. The facility can provide care for people with limited memory issues, but not once the condition progresses.

“So if they were a wandering risk, they would have to be placed out of our facility,” she said.

Towns with assisted living give older people options to stay in their rural communities

While everyone ages differently and makes different plans for where they want to live, Dunker emphasized that having an assisted living facility in town gives Rangely residents options.

Eagle Crest is a place where they can receive a higher level of support, maintain their independence, and stay in their rural community.

“It's just so neat to see everybody interacting together, like at holidays and stuff when all the families come. And I mean, it's a packed house,” she said. “Eagle Crest I think is just a very special place that I don't think you're going to find everywhere. I think rural areas have the best opportunity to create those special communities for their elderly.”

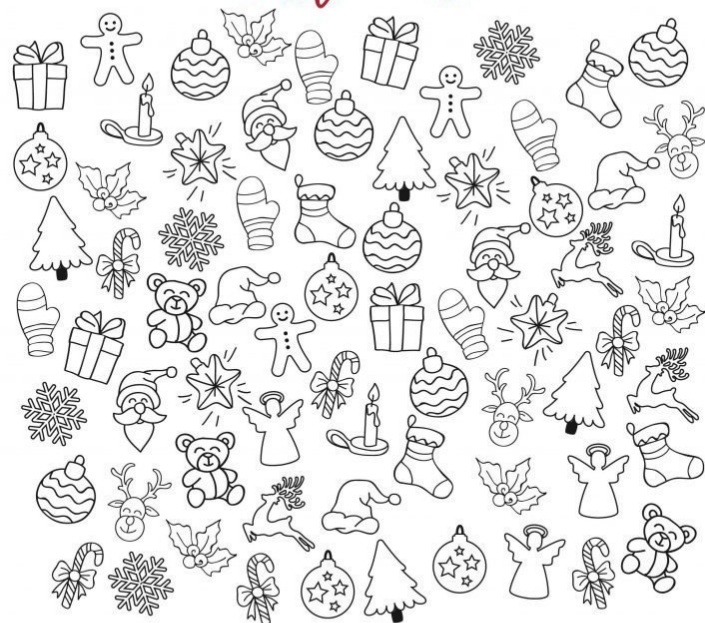


Kids Corner



art&soultxdesign

Christmas I SPY



FIND AND COLOR THE ITEMS



Christmas Word Search

H S G R E E T I N G S W O W C
F U Z Q Q Y C H R I S T M A S
P R P F Z L G B G G K R U H X
J S U F B L S N O W M A N P A
E J J I R O Z F X J C T Y R N
L F H J T H N T H F A S C C G
C C S V R C U V A M N P A G E
I Y H P E N A T W D D X N O L
C V P H T L H K A H L Y D N U
I D O S O T V S E A E L Y G G
R K E Z S L H E C P S I K G R
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CANDY
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CHRISTMAS
DASHER
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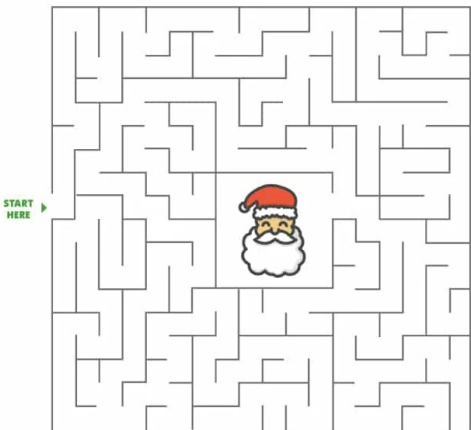
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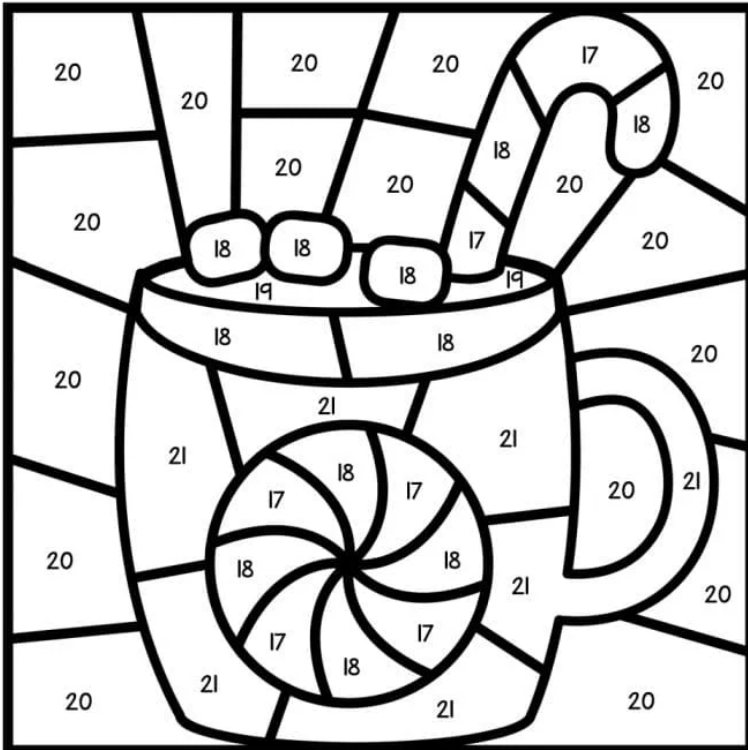
CHRISTMAS MAZE

Find your way through the maze to reach Santa in the center.

Merry Christmas!



COLOR BY NUMBER



Christmas Word Scramble

Unscramble the letters to find words which have to do with Christmas. Some of the words have religious meanings, others are secular in nature.

-
1. Groceos

2. Naclorig

3. Rats

4. Scunttshe

5. Porduhl

6. Naast

7. Skagceap

8. Dressephh

9. Gramen

10. Galen

11. Limesotte

12. Vaniyitt

13. Gotscink

14. Virasou

15. Traweh

16. Gisehl

17. Wamsonn

18. Ejuss

19. Stranneom

20. Scamsthir