

THE MAIN THING

Celebrating
Our Unsung
Heroes

PIZZA PALACE
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**MEAL DAY
GIVE AWAY!**
*IF IN NEED OF A MEAL
PLEASE FEEL FREE TO
TAKE A BAG!
*ONE PER HOUSEHOLD PLEASE



COLORADO
Department of Local Affairs
Division of Local Government

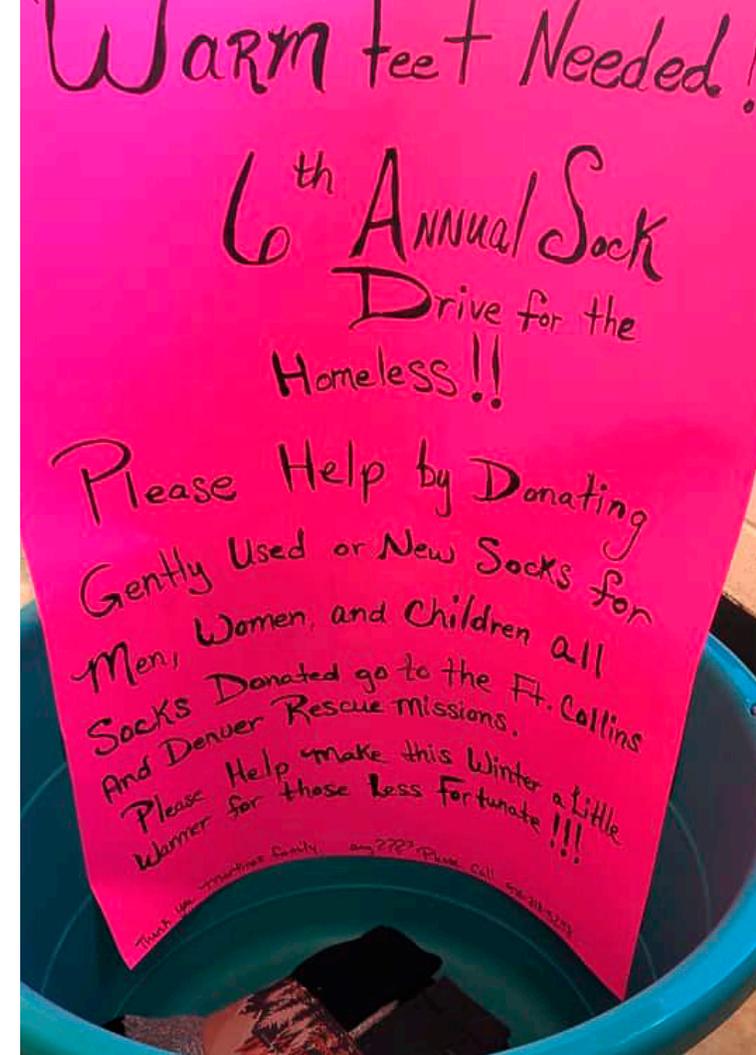


Many people this past year have gone above and beyond to be upstanding citizens and help their community in the most creative ways.

Our Main Street communities have many such shining and outstanding residents who gave their time, energy, and resources to help those around them. The case studies in this issue tell just some of the stories of individuals of varying ages, professions, and industries who are truly heroes. By working with the Main Street program and other local organizations, these people have made a lasting impact. We hope these new partnerships and their successes serve as inspiration to your community to accomplish more together.

Everyone reading this publication has folks in their community who stepped up and stepped out. Please be sure to thank them for their kindness and contributions.

Learn how to establish partnerships with the heroes in your community in our accompanying [How-To Guide](#).



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ABOUT THE MAIN THING

During these times, focus can be tough to come by. *The Main Thing* is a collection of resources compiled by **Colorado Main Street** to highlight innovations, give a thumbs-up to local practitioners, and encourage the spread of positive news.

WILDFIRE HEROES

GRANBY MAIN STREET

COORDINATOR: LAUREN HUBER,

CONTRIBUTOR: GREG WINKLER AND DUANE DAILEY

LOCAL HEROES: BRETT SCHROETLIN, GRAND COUNTY SHERIFF AND DOLA REGIONAL MANAGERS



DESCRIPTION



In 2020, the Troublesome Fire destroyed 555 structures and more than 200 homes in Grand County. Local heroes, including Grand County Sheriff Brett Schroetlin and the Grand County Fire Department, organized numerous volunteers and partner organizations. Community partners provided temporary housing, the Red Cross gave out temporary housing vouchers and established donation centers, Mind Springs and Grand County Human Services hosted virtual first aid classes and health checks, and FEMA provided services and federal funding to those in need. None of this would be possible without numerous generous individuals, including Brett Schroetlin, who helped keep everything flowing smoothly and in an organized manner. A special thanks to the DOLA Regional Managers and the Grand County Veterans Service Officer for endless support hours.

PARTNERS



- Granby Main Street
- Grand County Fire Department
- Grand County Police Department
- East Grand Fire
- Hot Sulphur Springs Fire Protection District
- DOLA Regional Managers including Greg Winkler, Clay Brown and Chris La May
- Veterans Service Officer Duane Dailey



“Brett Schroetlin and the Grand County Fire Department were instrumental in spearheading the evacuation efforts and organizing the numerous volunteers and organizations that were deployed to help.

— Greg Winkler, DOLA Regional Manager

CASE STUDY #1 (CONTINUED)

STATS



THE TROUBLESOME FIRE BURNED NEARLY 200,000 ACRES AND 15% OF LAND IN GRAND COUNTY



SO MANY VOLUNTEERS STEPPED UP THAT EVENTUALLY, SOME PEOPLE WERE TURNED AWAY DUE TO THE OUTPOURING OF KINDNESS



DISASTER ASSISTANCE CENTER SERVED MORE THAN 2,000 PEOPLE DURING THE PANDEMIC



20+ VETERANS RECEIVED COUNSELING WITHIN 3 DAYS FROM THE MOBILE CRISIS COUNSELING VETERANS CENTER

BUSINESS HEROES

WELLINGTON MAIN STREET COORDINATOR: KALLIE COOPER
LOCAL HERO: COLLEEN BABITZ, OWNER OF PIZZA PALACE



DESCRIPTION



The Town of Wellington's local hero comes in the form of a business: Pizza Palace and its owner, Colleen Babitz. Babitz, born and raised in Wellington, loves to give back to a community that supports her. Additionally, she loves to partner with the Main Street program and get involved. In the past year, her business hosted Meal Day Giveaways. Each week, they placed meal bags with slices of pizza or other food items in front of their building for those needing a hot meal. Pizza Palace collected school supplies for students, delivered pizzas to those displaced by the Estes Park fires, conducted a sock drive for those experiencing homelessness, and supported the family of a local high schooler who was in a car accident. Anytime Babitz sees a need in her community, she jumps into action.

PARTNERS



- Pizza Palace
- Wellington Main Street
- Town of Wellington



“Pizza Palace has never been the type of people to need recognition for what they did, but they continue to do it. And that makes them even more special.”

— Kallie Cooper, Wellington Main Street Coordinator

CASE STUDY #2 (CONTINUED)

STATS



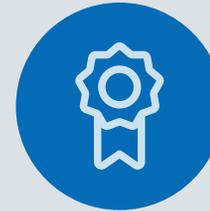
100
MEAL BAGS



15
STUDENTS SUPPORTED THROUGH SCHOOL SUPPLIES FOR THE YEAR



68
STUFFED STOCKINGS



WELLINGTON'S OUTSTANDING BUSINESS AWARD RECIPIENT IN 2020

EDUCATION HEROES

LA JUNTA MAIN STREET

COORDINATOR: CYNTHIA NIEB

LOCAL HEROES: TEACHERS AND STUDENTS OF LA JUNTA JUNIOR/SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL



DESCRIPTION



Jennifer Hall, a teacher at La Junta Junior/Senior High School, found value in having her students become involved with real-world problems. After meeting Cynthia Nieb, La Junta's Main Street Coordinator, the two created several projects that students could help with. It was a partnership that benefitted the community, the Main Street program, and the students.

Currently, students are applying for the Colorado Department of Transportation's Revitalizing Main Street grant to install bike kiosks and bike paths that will connect Otero Junior College to downtown La Junta. Otero students, many of whom are international and do not have vehicles, will have better access to shopping, the courthouse, food, and more. This project has the support of many groups in La Junta, including the Chamber of Commerce, which is handling marketing.

PARTNERS



- Jennifer Hall, a local teacher
- Alyssa Bullock and Shealie Schmidt, local students
- Koshare Youth Club Members
- City of La Junta
- Chamber of Commerce
- Main Street La Junta



“What’s most exciting about this is the partnerships that are built. It’s good to get people downtown and give them an alternate mode of transportation, but what’s cool is the input and integration with different community members. It builds leadership with the youth.

— Cynthia Nieb, **Main Street La Junta**

CASE STUDY #3 (CONTINUED)

STATS



16.2

MILES OF TRAILS WILL BE ACTIVATED IN LA JUNTA



1,546

OTERO JUNIOR COLLEGE STUDENTS CONNECTED



17.6%

OF POPULATION GAINS ACCESS TO DOWNTOWN LA JUNTA

HEALTH CARE HEROES

RANGELY MAIN STREET

COORDINATOR: JEANNIE CALDWELL

LOCAL HERO: KYLE WREN, CEO
OF RANGELY DISTRICT HOSPITAL



DESCRIPTION



If this past year has taught us anything, it is how to adapt and find solutions quickly to sudden changes. Kyle Wren, Rangely District Hospital CEO, is someone who mastered this early on. When the pandemic first hit, he moved quickly to put an incident command in place. He also oversaw the distribution of meals to the elderly and those at high risk of COVID-19. Many people are needed to deliver meals, set up drive-through testing, distribute supplies, and work to make it possible to keep students on campus. Kyle Wren was the person that worked to coordinate it all. His outstanding leadership and dedication kept everything running smoothly, even in a trying season.

PARTNERS



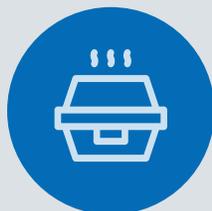
- Kyle Wren, CEO of Rangely District Hospital
- Rangely District Hospital
- Rangely Main Street
- Town of Rangely



“ Kyle is, by nature, a very caring individual and is always willing to step up and assist the community. He truly went above and beyond to make sure as a community, our medical needs concerning COVID-19 were met. The community is appreciative of all his efforts.

— Jeannie Caldwell, **Rangely Main Street Coordinator**

STATS



25
MEALS DELIVERED
PER DAY



5
DAYS A WEEK,
PROVIDED MEALS



75
THERMOMETERS
DELIVERED TO GROCERY
STORES AND SCHOOLS