



SPRING 2023

Aspen Mine Center, Cripple Creek, Colorado

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Community of Caring Teams With Others to Solve Child Care Needs

It's been a huge problem for Cripple Creek ever since it became a gaming town. Child care businesses inside the city have come and gone with regularity.

Bronco Billy's massive expansion project, Wildwood's king-size new hotel and serious expansion plans in the works for several other casinos require hundreds of new employees be hired either right now or within the foreseeable future. But the bottom line for this or any other city is: you can't draw what you can't support.

Must-haves for Cripple Creek to entice and retain employees seeking stability and dreading the thought of a crushingly long daily commute are available and affordable housing, a solid city infrastructure and, you guessed it...reliable child care very close to where parents live and work. Cripple Creek currently has no licensed child care facility in town.

It's time to take action, and Community of Caring is leading the charge to bring safe, affordable child care to our community. A project team has been assembled to explore the complex regulations and steps needed

services.

The state legislature has passed a bill providing hefty grants for facility construction to needy communities. The project team has created a short survey designed to gather

data for potential child care needs. The team will saturate working families and employers in southern Teller County and beyond to achieve maximum accuracy to determine correct facility size and probable demand. It's still early, but the stars seem to be aligned. Cross your fingers, we'll keep you posted. We're trying very hard to deliver what we need.



Butte Theater Partners with Aspen Mine Center for Cross-Promotions

We've always been huge fans of the Butte Theater and all it means to our community. And they have always supported us in many ways whenever we asked a favor.

We thought, "We're right across across the street from them! Why not help each other out on a permanent basis?" Just one short chat with Zack Sztanyo, Butte Theater Manager, made it happen. We became a

Butte sponsor, receiving mentions promoting our Gift & Thrift Shoppe at the beginning of every show. In turn, a Butte ad is now featured in every newsletter, increasing their outreach. And for openers, show us your Butte ticket stub at our Gift Shoppe and get a 10% discount off your entire purchase. Sweet! We're now working on ways Gift Shoppe purchases can get you valuable spiffs at the Butte.

See the Theater's current shows on page 5 of this issue and support the Butte!



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for this endeavor to succeed. The team currently consists of COC's Mary Bielz and Ted Borden, several consultants with long-term child care experience, Head-start teachers, local business leaders, a casino representative, Parks & Recreation leaders and leaders of several Teller County health and child

Help for Seniors: From Spotting a Potential Disease to Living a Long, Full Life

12 Early Warning Signs of Dementia

Dementia is a progressive condition that affects cognitive abilities such as memory, thinking, and reasoning. While it's important to consult a medical professional for an accurate diagnosis, here are 12 early signs that may indicate the presence of dementia.

- 1) Memory loss: Frequent forgetfulness, especially of recently learned information.
- 2) Difficulty completing familiar tasks: May struggle with routine tasks, such as cooking a meal or operating familiar appliances.
- 3) Confusion and disorientation: Individuals may become disoriented in time, place, or familiar surroundings. They may forget where they are or how they got there.
- 4) Challenges with language: Difficulties finding the right words, following a conversation, or expressing thoughts coherently.
- 5) Poor judgment: May exhibit changes in judgment or decision-making. May make unwise financial choices or overlook personal hygiene.
- 6) Problems with abstract thinking: Concepts such as numbers or handling money may become challenging.
- 7) Misplacing items: Losing belongings and struggling to retrace steps to find them is a common symptom. Often, people may put things in unusual or inappropriate places.
- 8) Changes in mood or personality: Shifts in mood, leading to rapid mood swings, depression, irritability, or increased anxiety.
- 9) Withdrawal from social activities: May start to avoid social situations or hobbies they previously enjoyed due to the difficulties they encounter.
- 10) Decreased or poor judgment in personal care: Neglecting personal hygiene, wearing inappropriate clothing for the weather, or failing to take care of oneself.
- 11) Difficulty with problem solving: Complex tasks, such as following a recipe or managing finances, can become challenging.
- 12) Increased confusion in familiar environments: Individuals may struggle to navigate familiar places, even ones they have been to many times before.

Remember, these signs can also be caused by conditions other than dementia, so it's essential to consult a healthcare professional for an accurate diagnosis.

8 Proven Tips to Help You Age Gracefully

You might think you have little control over how you age. Many factors affect aging, including genetics. But while you can't change your genes, you can change your habits. Healthy habits – along with managing stress and keeping a positive attitude about life – can lower the risk of age-related afflictions like heart disease, depression, and Alzheimer's disease, putting you on a path to a longer, fuller life.

1. Protect your skin

Over time, the sun may damage your skin in big ways – wrinkles, spots, dryness, an increased risk of skin cancer.

Wear sunscreen every day: SPF 30 or higher. Apply it to all exposed areas. Wear protective clothing when you're outdoors.

Apply sunscreen when you're outside: Indoors, too, if exposed to UV rays through windows. So use sunscreen whether it's sunny or cloudy, and even if you plan to stay inside. Re-up every 2 hours while outside.

Create a skin care regimen: Choose a simple routine – including a cleanser, moisturizer, and sunscreen based on your skin type and concerns – that you can stick with.

2. Move your body every day

Physical activity is critical for your health at every age, lowering your risk for heart disease, diabetes, high cholesterol and promoting longevity. Include these four types of exercise in your *weekly* fitness routine:

Aerobics: 150 minutes of moderate-intensity like brisk walking, cycling, or playing pickleball.

Strength training: 2 muscle-building workouts like lifting weights, using resistance bands, or doing body-weight exercises.

Balance training: 3 days of balance exercises like tai chi.

Flexibility exercises: 2 to 3 days of flexibility exercises like yoga or stretching.

Continued on Page 4

Director's Corner

by Ted Borden

One of the greatest parts of my job as Director of Community of Caring is working alongside some of the most amazing and dedicated staff I have ever known.

In our "all-staff" meeting this week, I was struck in a most profound way by their compassion and commitment. As many of you who are familiar with the services and mission of the Aspen Mine Centers know, at the core of everything we do is "building trusting relationships in order to create a better and healthier community." We experience, along with the families and clients we serve, the phenomenal positive change that takes place when relationships are forged from foundations of mutual respect and a commitment to positive growth.

As our case management team pointed out this week, sometimes all that clients and families need is steadfast support, encouragement and the tools to foster change. This foundation creates a stable base, a platform from which to build a better life. It is an action-oriented process. It requires commitment, hard work and often times, difficult change. In the end it is a client or family's perseverance, resilience and small successes that propel them forward and give them the confidence and momentum to continue on their journey to stability and success. It is inspiring for our entire team to witness and be part of this success!

Taking the first steps toward living a healthier and better life is often scary. I am proud of our staff for fostering courage in our clients, empowering them with practical tools and having the compassion to nudge them forward when they are stuck. Most times, it is not the doing that is difficult for our clients and families, it is the fear of change and the antic-

ipation of the task ahead that is stifling.

So in this issue I am celebrating the great team that inspires me every day through their unwavering commitment to the clients they serve, as well as the clients and families who find the courage to ask for help, and have the resilience to overcome barriers and obstacles in order to build a better and healthier life.

We know that the success and health of communities and neighborhoods all over the world depend upon the success and health of the families and neighbors who live there. In the end, we are all in this together...just good folks living in a great place, helping each other to be the best versions of ourselves and trying to build the best community in our corner of the world.



Ted Borden
Executive Director, Community of Caring

Remember this. Hold on to this. This is the only perfection there is, the perfection of helping others. This is the only thing we can do that has any lasting meaning.

This is why we're here. To make others feel safe.

— Andre Agassi, American tennis champion

NEW! Donate to COC on mobile devices! GIVE4TELLER to 44321

Make a contribution to Community of Caring today!

☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ Other \$ Or donate using PayPal, click here

PAYPAL

Name Address

City State Zip

Mail to: Aspen Mine Center, ATTN Veldean, PO Box 1587, Cripple Creek CO 80813 or online @ www.aspenminecenter.org

Help for Seniors

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If you're unsure where to begin, start small with 10 minutes of daily exercise. Then, gradually increase your workout time, building strength and stamina. According to one study, adding 11 minutes of daily moderate exercise to your life may reduce the risk of premature death.

Schedule short workouts throughout the day • Exercise at the same time every day • Find an accountability partner to join your workouts • Try counting steps during walks • Set reminders to get up and move for a few minutes every half hour

3. Eat more whole foods

A healthy, nutrient-rich diet can add years to your life, increasing brain/skin/gut health and more. Get serious about fruits and vegetables, whole grains, healthy fats, and lean or plant-based protein. Greater fiber intake is linked to lower rates of heart disease, Type 2 diabetes, and colorectal cancer.

You don't have to give up meat or dairy altogether. Instead, introduce more plant-based options into your diet. Cut back on processed foods like deli meats, soda, packaged sweets. They may be linked to a shorter lifespan. It's never too late to start making dietary changes that can increase your life expectancy. But the sooner you start, the better.

4. Log more — and better quality — sleep

Aim for 7 to 8 hours of sleep every night. And how well you sleep is just as important as how long you sleep. Without enough quality sleep, your health can suffer in many ways, some quite serious.

Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day • Turn off your TV, monitor and phone screens at least 1 hour before bed • Avoid caffeine, alcohol, and large meals before bed • Try not to nap after 2pm and keep naps under 30 minutes • Create a relaxing nighttime routine by listening to music, reading a book, or doing a few yoga poses

5. Keep stress in check

Chronic stress can harm your body and mind, causing symptoms like headaches, muscle pain, and mood changes. The toll stress takes may lower life expectancy and personal satisfaction. You can't avoid stress entirely, but you can improve how you react to it. • Prioritize your mental health by finding healthy ways to cope with stress and boost your mood.

Practice mindfulness with meditation, yoga or tai chi • Try deep breathing exercises • Take regular nature walks or stroll a park • Practice gratitude by keeping a journal or writing letters

6. Prioritize your social connections

Older adults are especially vulnerable to loneliness and social isolation. Building or maintaining relationships with friends and family offers mental, emotional, and physical health benefits:

Better mood, stress management, self-esteem, and life satisfaction • Lower risk of depression • Higher likelihood of recovery from serious stress • Increased longevity

It can be challenging to connect with others, especially as you age. These methods can help combat loneliness and keep you connected with others:

Plan visits with friends or loved ones • Volunteer with an organization you care about (the Aspen Mine Centers are an excellent choice!) • Sign up for a group fitness class

7. Nurture your curiosity

Nurturing curiosity isn't just for kids. The desire to learn new information or have new experiences may help adults cope with everyday stress and uncertainty. And it's been linked to healthy aging for older adults, with benefits such as improved memory. You can spark curiosity by:

Reading often and asking questions • Practicing mindfulness • Traveling to new places • Trying new hobbies or returning to an old one

8. Get regular checkups

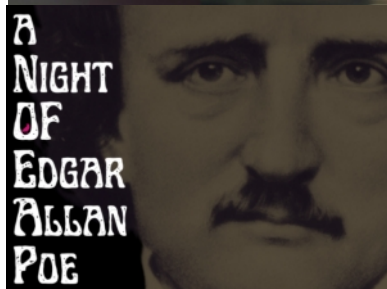
Can't say this often enough. In general, get an annual physical exam. See the eye doctor for an exam every 1 to 2 years. Visit your dentist 1 to 2 times a year and floss daily to prevent periodontal disease. Excessive bacteria in your mouth can travel into your bloodstream. As a result, you could be at greater risk for conditions like dementia, heart attack, and stroke.

The bottom line

Aging gracefully may mean something slightly different to each person. But at its core, healthy aging is about prioritizing your physical and mental health every day and sticking to it. Proven strategies can help you stay healthy and happy, enjoying your life immensely as you age, and looking forward to each new day.



For tickets and all show dates/times: www.buttetheater.com
Or call (719) 689-6402. If no answer, leave message with your phone number, we will promptly respond.



September 1, 2 & 3

Limited Engagement

Four Performances Only

Come kick Fall off the right way. One weekend only to catch a handful of Poe's most curious works brought to life on stage. A company of actors will bring the stories to life in an array of interdisciplinary formats. Lights, shadows, music, storytelling and Mr. Poe's works.



September 23

and

November 11

Colorado's best improv are bringing the laughs back to the Butte this September and November. Come see the magic of comedy and various forms of improv all on one stage.

THE PLAY THAT GOES WRONG

September 29-November 5

A comedy that portrays the Cornley Drama Society's attempt to stage a 1920s murder mystery called The Murder at Haversham Manor. The production is plagued by disasters, such as incomplete sets, unconscious actors and misplaced props. The show is a hilarious parody of the whodunnit genre and the challenges of amateur theater.

THE LEGEND OF SLEEPY HOLLOW

October 6-November 4

How dangerous is it when tales of our history are manipulated, and how can we learn to judge what's true and what's false? This one-man show is a marvelous new adaptation full of great humor and charismatic storytelling. Perfect for the whole family and fans of the beloved classic.

THE CHRISTMAS CRICKET OF CRIPPLE CREEK

November 24-December 31

It's a Christmas-themed story penned by Charles Dickens, but it's not a Christmas Carol. It's the story of a grieving young woman who's resigned herself to marrying a humorless miser; it's the story of a deliveryman whose sweetheart has been untrue; it's the story of a Santa Claus suit that needs a wearer; and not least of all, it's the story of a cricket that always seems to know just the right time to chirp.

What to Do If You Can't Pay Your Healthcare Bills: 10 Solutions

1 in every 3 U.S. adults has at least one unpaid healthcare bill. Medical bills are the nation's largest source of collections debt. Paying medical debt not only gives you peace of mind, but will also keep negative items off your credit report.

It's important to take action when you receive a medical bill you can't pay. Don't wait for the debt to become overdue. You want to avoid debt collectors, a negative impact on your credit score, and additional stress. Always remember that you have options. If you're having trouble paying your medical bills, here's help.

What happens if you don't pay your medical bills?

You may be contacted by a debt collector if your unpaid medical bill is so overdue that it ends up in collections. A debt collector's job is to get a balance paid in full. But in many instances, they're willing to negotiate. Be firm and offer to pay what you can afford. They may accept that amount to close the file. You also can ask about creating a payment plan.

It's important to know your rights in debt collection. To become knowledgeable, do an internet search for "how to deal with debt collectors". There are loads of sites providing comprehensive information.

Other serious consequences of unpaid medical debt beyond dealing with debt collectors include negative items on your credit report, decreased credit score, lawsuits, court judgments garnishing your wages or bank account or placing a lien on your home, even bankruptcy.

Does unpaid medical debt go away?

Unpaid medical debt usually doesn't disappear. Typically, outstanding healthcare bills end up in collections. Unpaid medical debt that is reported to the three credit-reporting bureaus is likely to remain on your credit report for 7 years.

10 tips for paying a high medical bill

If you have received a high medical bill, don't panic. But do take action before your account is past due or goes to collections. The key is communicating directly with the medical provider or facility billing you. The goal is to reduce your bill to affordable payments or wipe out the balance altogether. Here are some steps you can take to tackle a large medical bill.

1. Make sure the debt is legally due

By law, private insurers can no longer bill you extra for most emergency services — even if the services were out of network or did not have prior authorization. And you can't be charged extra for out-of-network services received at an in-network facility. Balance billing — which is when you're held responsible for the remainder of a surprise bill after your insurance company pays the in-network charges — is also illegal.

2. Verify the charges are accurate

Check the dates and services on your bill. Make sure the right charges have been assigned to you and that you have not been overcharged or billed more than once for anything. You can check the price of a service, item, or procedure at facilities in your area to see if you were charged fairly. If you have health insurance, make sure your plan has paid its share.

3. Request a discount

Don't be afraid to ask for a discount. This officially reduces the amount owed. If you don't have insurance or choose to pay out of pocket, ask to be charged at Medicare rates, which can lead to deep discounts.

4. Seek debt forgiveness or debt settlement

Debt forgiveness or debt settlement are other ways to reduce your medical bills. They differ from receiving a discount, which reduces the official amount owed. Debt forgiveness, also known as debt cancellation, is when a creditor no longer pursues a debt. The wiped-away debt may be reported to the IRS, and the amount could be taxed as income. Debt settlement or paying less than what is owed can impact your credit score, and the unpaid portion can be reported for tax purposes.

5. Ask about financial assistance programs

You may qualify for help paying bills and even medical debt forgiveness. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services maintains a state-by-state list of more than 100 financial assistance programs that help people with healthcare and medical expenses.

Many hospitals require you to apply for Medicaid to see if you qualify for government insurance for people with low incomes. Then, if you're not eligible for Medicaid coverage, you can apply for help with medical bills from the hospital. That application may include providing copies of pay stubs, bank statements, tax returns, and other financial documents.

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Paying Healthcare Bills: 10 Solutions *Continued from Page 6*

6. Ask about indigent care and charity care programs

Under U.S. law, nonprofit hospitals must provide charity care. Some for-profit hospitals also do this. These programs provide free and low-cost medical treatment — including emergency room services — for people who can't pay. Providing charity care allows hospitals to write off some or all of your charges.

7. Set up a monthly payment plan

If none of the earlier advice knocks down your bill, offer to make monthly payments directly to the healthcare provider. This is often a better option than potentially high-interest medical financing, paying the bill with a credit card, or not paying at all.

Although they may include a late fee, medical bills rarely charge interest. And in many instances, paying something monthly — even a fraction of the balance — can prevent the bill from being turned over to a collection agency or damaging your credit.

8. Find special help if you're a veteran

If you are a veteran, Veterans Affairs (VA) offers free debt counseling and may be able to help you find assistance for medical bills.

9. Consider debt consolidation

Debt consolidation can help you avoid bills going into collections and unpaid medical debt having a negative impact on your credit score. You can also avoid lawsuits and bankruptcy.

Medical debt consolidation could mean securing a personal loan, 401(k) loan, home equity line of credit, or credit card to pay off medical debt. You'll preserve your credit-worthiness and have more time to pay. But, this new debt might temporarily ding your credit score and likely means monthly payments will be added to your budget.

10. Use bankruptcy if you have no other options

As a last resort, bankruptcy may be the right option to address your medical debt. Chapter 7 can help you liquidate assets to wipe out your debt. Chapter 13 is a reorganization where you pay all or some of your debts in 3 to 5 years. Your credit score typically drops when you file bankruptcy.

How can charitable organizations help with a medical bill I can't afford?

Many non-profit organizations assist with medical bills; some can help with specific conditions and circumstances. Do internet searches to reach the organizations shown here and "charitable organizations helping with medical bills" to find others.

Healthwell Foundation - helps underinsured people pay out-of-pocket costs not covered by their health plans

CancerCare - offers copayment assistance for people with insurance

Leukemia & Lymphoma Society - offers financial assistance for people with certain conditions

Patient Access Network (PAN) Foundation - helps underinsured people with life-threatening, chronic and rare conditions

Patient Advocate Foundation - a good starting point to find grant programs for which you are eligible that can help you cover medical expenses

UnitedHealthcare Children's Foundation - offers grants of up to \$5,000 for specific medical costs

Upsolve - a free online community that helps people with debt, including legal help

This article is solely for informational purposes. Always consult an appropriate professional when you have specific questions about any insurance, financial or legal matter.

With thanks to GoodRx, article edited

If you just finished reading the article above, you probably realize we just might have done you one heck of a favor...not to mention saving you a ton of money.

Would you be good enough to pay that favor forward? We could use your help. VOLUNTEER! We can turn every hour you contribute into fifteen dollars of actual value in services we provide for our – and your – community. It's fun, it's easy, and you'll go home feeling very good about what you've done. Our reception desk will show you how.



IS A PROUD BRONC DAY PARTICIPANT. SEE US
ON SATURDAY AND COME SAY "HI Y'ALL!"

Ute Pass Chamber of Commerce Presents
Ute Pass, the Past, Present & Future!
**85th Annual
Bronc Day 2023**
Green Mountain Falls, Colorado



**Saturday
July 29th
7-3**

Barn Dance

with the
Ryders & Friends
at the Green Box Farm Stand

**Friday July 28th
7-9pm**

Pancake Breakfast 7-10 AM

Parade 10 AM

Pie Contest

Live Music

Mike Maddux & the Headliners

Food Trucks

Artisans & Vendors

FREE Kids Activities



www.BroncDayFestival.org

Success Story #1: A Good Ending That Gets Even Better

Early this year, a senior gentleman and his wife came into AMC to see Nancy Hartsfield, our Senior Advisor. He was seeking a gas voucher. We help folks out from time to time by giving them car fuel for emergencies or other difficulties. As part of our process when meeting a new client, Nancy had him fill out some general paperwork for our files – contact info, nature of request for assistance, and so forth.

Turned out this couple live off the grid on land they own in a rural spot outside of Cripple Creek. The voucher wasn't for their car; it was for the gas generator they use that provides electrical power to their home. Which was indeed critical, because the man has health problems requiring him to be on oxygen 24/7. In chatting further, Nancy realized that he might need a different type of oxygen machine than he was now using, especially useful during nighttime sleeping hours. After providing the voucher, Nancy went to work to see how we could help further.

Nancy and the client teamed up to research the new machine and costs. The unit cost several thousand dollars. The client said to Nancy, "I'm willing to pay for some of the cost, I just can't pay it all." A

deal with monthly payments was worked out with the oxygen company. AMC paid the first month's charge and for additional needed machine equipment. The new oxygen unit has worked wonders for him.

Here's the kicker to this story. Some time later, the couple reappeared with a letter they had received from the Carpenters Union which they didn't understand. The letter mentioned a small pension was available but showed no amount. In reading the letter, Nancy also caught the word "annuity".

She called the union and was told an annuity existed from wage deductions taken during the client's working years. The union rep told Nancy the annuity's value. After taxes, it amounted to an amazing \$11,000. Nancy looked at her clients, smiled broadly and said to them, "Congratulations! You just hit the jackpot!" When Nancy told them what they were due to receive, there was a shocked silence. Then they both cried.

The couple are using the money for home repairs and upgrades that will happily continue to keep them off the grid and quite comfortable. When he was a little younger, the husband had brought his skills to the Aspen Mine Center and volunteered on numerous occasions. What a wonderful thrill it was for us to now help those who had helped us so much in the past.

Success Story #2: "Man wishing to fulfill his dreams for himself and his child seeks local Dreamweavers to jumpstart the journey. Are you out there?" Yes, we are.

My name is Chris; I've lived in Cripple Creek all my life.

I would like to thank Denise Wilson, Job Coach at the Aspen Mine Center's Workforce Center, along with Annie Durham and the CC-V School District for putting together the Adult Learning Program. It has had a great influence on me to become more in many ways that will lead me to a satisfying and productive life.

I came to them seeking a more interesting job and one with greater financial rewards than I had managed to achieve so far. After carefully listening to my current situation and desires for improvement, they suggested that a position in our local gaming industry might be just what I was looking for. So, with their assistance, I attended one of the Gaming License presentations, which made me more informed on gaming procedures and offered valuable information regarding the gaming industry. It encouraged me to move forward and apply for a gaming license class.

They also assisted me with the entire application process and set up an appointment for the class. They even paid for the class fee. This was greatly appreciated as I am a single father working to support his daughter. The class was very informative and did not take up more than a couple hours of my day.

Living in such a small town as this one is, I am amazed at the large number of resources available here for people who need help obtaining a job or need help to create a better home life. Thank you to everybody at the Adult Learning Program as well as Denise and Annie for all that they do for our community.

And a special big shout-out to Denise Wilson for all her help and support.

Success Story #3: Career advancement hit a brick wall. AMC helped knock it down. Here's how, in our client's own words.

My name is Brandy. I am a single mom living in Teller County.

After the Cripple Creek Care Center closed its doors in June of 2022, I decided to advance my career and go back to school for a nursing degree. But during my first semester, I ran into a problem with paying for some of my tuition.

I went to the Aspen Mine Center for guidance and help with how to pay for the tuition balance I owed. At AMC's Workforce Center, I met with Denise Wilson, Job Coach operating out of the CC-V School District's Adult Learning Program in partnership with Annie Durham, a teacher at CC-V who represents the school's interests in the Program. The Program operates in a building directly across the street from CC-V High School.

After talking with Denise and then completing an interview with Annie, they went to work to solve my problem. They were able to help me by paying the full balance of what I owed.

I am truly grateful for this Program, as I wouldn't have been able to continue going to school to earn my degree without erasing this debt by the next semester. With my stress gone and my mind clear, I am currently passing my classes with A grades.

I can't thank Denise and Annie enough for their efforts. This Program is truly a lifesaver and I recommend anyone who is interested in furthering their education should go talk with these ladies. They know what they're doing, they are ready to help, and they will head you in the right direction on your path to success.

One of our own has a lifesaving message no one can afford to ignore

In 2021, the CDC's U.S. Preventive Services Task Force issued a new recommendation that colorectal cancer screening for people at average risk should start five years sooner. The change from 50 to 45 years of age was based on the trend of growing cases among younger adults.

Erin Patterson has been a treasured volunteer for the Aspen Mine Centers for 13 years. Her aunt is Mary Bielz, founder of Community of Caring and its Executive Board Chairperson.



Hello everyone! I'm Erin Christine Patterson. I was diagnosed with colon cancer on February 28, 2023.

Because recommended colorectal cancer screening had dropped to now include my age group, I went in for a routine colonoscopy. During that procedure, 2 polyps were removed and sent to a lab for biopsy studies. One of the polyps came back as non-cancerous. The other unfortunately turned out to be cancerous.

I was very fortunate to have family and friends there to support me when I received my diagnosis and all through the medical treatment that followed.

And an interesting coincidence happened when I first met my cancer doctor. He came into the room wearing a surgeon's cap with "St. Louis" stitched on it. I asked him if he was a St. Louis Cardinals baseball fan. He told my aunt Mary and I that he was from St. Louis, and it turned out that he went to the same college as my brother James and my sister-in-law Christin attended.

There were several procedures I went through prior to having my surgery. Blood was drawn for testing and evaluation, a CT scan was done, then an ultrasound scan of my thyroid and an MRI of my liver. My surgery was then scheduled for March 31st, and my parents drove to Colorado Springs from Idaho to closely support me for that event. During the operation, 18 inches of my colon and 25 lymph nodes were removed. The nodes were sent to be biopsied. Happily, they were determined to be non-cancerous.

I am writing this story in the hope that it reaches as many people as possible to make them aware that people as young as 45 are now advised to begin screening for colorectal cancer. It is also a reminder to everyone from 45 through mid-70s not to ignore periodic screenings for this disease. Catching it early makes a huge difference in achieving successful outcomes.

To everyone who provided love and support from my problem's start to its finish, I simply can't thank you enough for all you did for me. I know it kept my spirits strong and my attitude positive.

Students Win Big As New CC-V Building Opens

May 18th saw a ribbon-cutting ceremony that holds enormous promise for a number of CC-V High School students. A 7,500 square-foot construction trades building was dedicated and is now being filled with tools and materials that will change young lives for the better.

Targeting students at risk of dropping out due to family transiency or poverty or lack of engagement, the Career and Technical Education program offers real-world vocational training in a number of attractive fields. Hands-on instruction and extensive training in construction specialties like plumbing, electrical and carpentry, auto mechanics; culinary arts; nursing assistants; land issues and tourism; agriculture & forestry

Mary addresses crowd (you can even train to become a firefighter); animal science. Completing a chosen course is rewarded with full certification which enables that student to immediately enter that field as anything from a paid, part-time apprentice to an entry-level, full-time employee, likely at a very livable starting salary. It's a path to stability and a full, secure life,



Mary addresses crowd

using learned skills to achieve upward mobility. And leaving behind an uneducated person's constant fear of being stuck in low-paying, menial jobs forever.

The search to acquire a grant to bring this vocational dream to life began during the pandemic. Mary Bielz, Community of Caring's Chairperson of its Executive Board and president of the school board, led the way, fully backed by the entire CC-V school board. The state of Colorado ultimately awarded a RISE (Response, Innovation and Student Equity) grant of \$1.49 million, which funded the program's equipment and materials. Building construction was funded by numerous foundation and private donors, including the city of Cripple Creek. The RISE grant also allowed the district to launch the Technical & Education program and the Adult Education Center, across the street from the new building.

During the ceremony, Mary and Miriam Mondragon, CC-V superintendent, spoke about how important hope and support are for youngsters swimming in uncertainty and drowning in doubt. Two students who signed up early and are already involved in training felt accomplishment and applauded the involvement learning skills brought.

The event concluded with a powerful and majestic dance to bless the building by the Seven Falls Indian Dancers. It was a day to remember, and it's only the beginning.

AMC Seniors Treated to a Special Celebration

In 1963, after meeting with a senior advocacy group, President Kennedy designated May as “Senior Citizens Month”, the prelude to what is now known as “Older Americans Month.”


Back then, there were about 17 million seniors in the total U.S. population. Today, that 65 and older age group has swelled to greater than 56 million, and the percentage of seniors within the total population has more than doubled. As senior ranks continue to swell, their contributions to us all and their demographic importance also steadily increase. Teller County certainly reflects this as well.

To celebrate how much our local seniors mean to us, Aspen Mine Centers' Senior Advocate staff members transformed what would have been our normal free Wild Wednesday Lunch on May 17th into a very special day for all seniors present at the meal. Arrangements with the Butte Theater had been made, and following a delicious lunch those seniors were treated to a private showing of the 1936 classic film "Mr. Deeds goes to Town", starring Gary Cooper.


We received many warm compliments and appreciative comments from our senior friends who enjoyed their day. All of us at AMC are deeply gratified with the success of our efforts and plan to continue honoring our senior friends and neighbors with exciting events in the Mays to come.



Seven Falls Indian Dancers




**Primary
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Care**




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**NEW EXPANDED
HOURS**




Amblyr Hodkins, FNP-C
Family Nurse
Practitioner



Lisa Thompson,
AGACNP-BC
FNP-BC

Open
Monday - Friday
8:00 am to 5:00 pm

412 North C Street
Cripple Creek, CO
at Cresson Elementary
(North side of building)



CONTACT US
(719) 820-7740

CCVGORMANMEDICAL@GMAIL.COM

The Gift and Thrift Shop ROCKS!

NEW HIGH-END STORE LOOK, SAME TINY PRICES!

**NEW! DEDICATED ROOMS FOR FURNITURE,
MEN'S CLOTHING AND WOMEN'S CLOTHING!**

Open Tuesday-Saturday, 10am-4pm

Donations accepted Tuesday-Saturday, 10am-3pm

**AND HEY! CHECK THIS OUT! If you're seeing a show at the Butte Theater,
save your ticket stub. Come on in to check out our great offerings, show us your ticket
and we'll give you 10% off your entire purchase, *even on furniture!***

VOLUNTEER!

If it wasn't a great way to turn a boring day into something memorable,
we wouldn't be asking you to do it.
Call (719) 689-3584 or at reception desks



ARF! MEOW!
Please remember us.
We're hungry too!

THE AMC FOOD PANTRY NEEDS DONATIONS IMMEDIATELY FOR PEOPLE AND PETS!

It's been a long, cold winter. A LOT of hungry folks
and their pets need emergency assistance to survive.
Our reserves are depleted. The hungry are still out there.

*Bring canned and packaged goods for people and pets to us
for distribution to the needy, "Best if used by" date still fresh.
Open Mon-Fri 8-4. We and they thank you for your kindness.*

AMC Hosts New Sunday Church Service in Cripple Creek

Cripple Creek Community Church

Every Sunday morning at 10:00

Upstairs at the Aspen Mine Center,

166 East Bennett Avenue

Non-denominational.

*Offering worship, fellowship, teachings and
encouragement through the words and
messages of the Bible.*



Pastor Ryan Wickstrom





Forget-Me-Nots Grief Support Group

Join us for coffee, conversation, and companionship during the dark days of bereavement and beyond.

10am on the 3rd Saturday of the month at the
Aspen Mine Center Coffee Shop

166 E. Bennett Ave, Cripple Creek, CO 80813

Call Krys Arrick 719-661-3539 for more information

The Aspen Mine Center
Community Clarion newsletter
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Our Board of Directors:

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**When you enrich the lives of others,
You enrich your own as well.**

VOLUNTEER!

At reception desks or call (719) 689-3584

**The Aspen Mine Center
166 E. Bennett Ave.**

AMC West

**100 W. Bennett Ave.
Cripple Creek, CO 80813
(719) 689-3584**

www.cocamc.org

Open Mon-Fri 9-4

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**Ted Borden, Executive Director
Veldean Myers, Financial Services
Director**

**Lisa Noble, Client Programs Director
Angie Trelstad, Family &
Adult Advocacy Services Manager
Stephanie Egan, Senior Advocacy
Program Manager**

**Fill those quiet hours on chilly evenings
with a good book.**

**Our Lending Library is open
Mon-Fri 9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
We also usually have DVD and
VHS tape movies available.**

FREE bookmarks too!

A complete list of our services,
agencies, partners and affiliates
Is on our website:

www.cocamc.org

A comprehensive contact list of
helpful area resources is also found
there. Or call us for assistance.