

TRUE STORIES

COLORADO BEAR CROSSES THROUGH RACE

Some runners didn't expect to see a bear on their Colorado race route.

Donald Sanborn says he was about 5 miles into the Garden of the Gods 10 Mile Run on Sunday when the bear ambled across a roadway near Colorado Springs.

Sanborn says the animal seemed to be trying to decide whether to zip across the road filled with runners when a large enough gap finally emerged for the bear to get through.

He says he's encountered other interesting wildlife on training runs, but hasn't seen an animal like this in a race.

OHIO JUDGE ORDERS DUI DEFENDANTS TO DOWNLOAD APPS

An Ohio judge known for handing down unusual sentences is requiring convicted drunken drivers to download ride-hailing apps on their phones as part of their punishment.

Municipal Court Judge Michael Cicconetti in Painesville in northeastern Ohio also requires defendants to enter a credit card number on the Uber and Lyft apps as a condition of probation.

In the past, Cicconetti has told a drunken driver to view crash victims' bodies at a morgue.

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The View

Region shows it cares

If you are like most voters in Colorado, you probably wonder where the nearly \$200 million in state tax revenues are going from the \$1.3 billion in cannabis sales statewide in 2016. Some think it is going to our schools. Perhaps you think it is going to help educate youth about the risks of using cannabis when their brains are still developing. Or maybe you think it is going to balance the state budget. In fact, all of those are right.

Locally, there is a new energy in the community and it is all around efforts by community members to work with, engage and support the youth in Telluride, and these efforts are funded by state cannabis sales tax dollars. Early this year, Tri-County Health Network received a state grant to help develop a community coalition, known as the Communities That Care, to help support youth as they grow up in Telluride.

While the ultimate goal of the grant is to reduce substance use among Telluride adolescents, the program is so much more than that. According to Erich Lange, community engagement supervisor at Tri-County Health Network and a member of the community board, "The Communities That Care process really focuses on what youth are saying about growing up here — what are the great and positive things and what are the challenges, and works with youth and existing organizations to build on those positives and reduce the negative things."

During the spring, Tri-County Health Network facilitated several meetings with local leaders and community members to begin to organize the coalition. Elected officials, law enforcement, leaders of youth serving organizations, and the school district, among others, met in late April to discuss the challenges facing our community in better supporting our youth. Over 20 leaders committed to being a part of the steering organization for the coalition.

According to Hilary Cooper, a San Miguel County commissioner, "This is important work for our community. We want to support our youth as they grow up here so that they can become engaged and productive members of our community — this coalition will help in that effort."

More than 25 other community members, including parents and staff from the library, school, nonprofits and social services, have met to start forming the

coalition. Over the course of 10 hours they worked to understand the issues around prevention, and developed a vision statement for their coalition that embodies hopes for the future. That statement reads as follows: "A community that empowers our youth to be healthy, productive, resilient and engaged."

According to Emily Osan, a prevention educator at San Miguel Resource Center, in crafting the vision statement the group endeavored to envision

what kind of community and what kind of youth we'd like to see in Telluride in the years to come. "There was a tremendous feeling that we wanted all youth to experience the best aspects of growing up here, knowing that today not every youth has the same opportunities or experiences."

The coalition is in its infancy and it will be working over the next 12 months to identify the issues, analyze what organizations are currently doing to support youth, and identify any gaps that may exist. With youth at the table, it will identify the best evidence-based programs the community should consider to support its youth.

Jenni Ward, a member of the Telluride school board and parent of three children, said at a recent coalition meeting, "This is a long-term process that could provide much needed resources for our younger children and their families. We are using a more proactive approach and discussing how we can develop a support system for all our youth. We tend to think of these types of efforts as only involving our high school parents — but we are talking about influencing the community and building in supports that will benefit kids that are born today, but won't graduate from high school until 2035. It is important for parents of young children to be involved."

If you would like to be involved in the work of the coalition, please contact me at pmbh@tchnetwork.org, or by calling 970-708-1012. We would love to have more people engaged as we look at the local statistics, talk to and learn from our youth, and plan for future initiatives.

Remember the vision for our community and help us to achieve it: "A community that empowers our youth to be healthy, productive, resilient and engaged."

Paul Reich is behavioral health program manager for the Tri-County Health Network. He can be reached via email at pmbh@tchnetwork.org.

PAUL REICH
GUEST COMMENTARY

The coalition will identify the best evidence-based programs the community should consider to support its youth.

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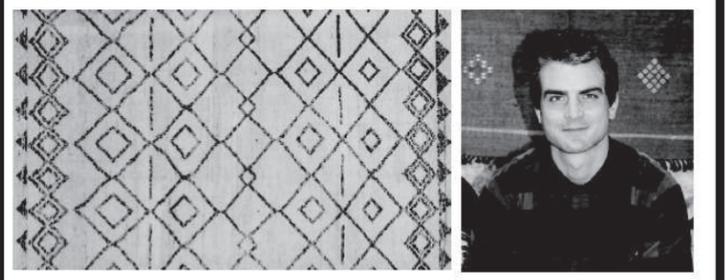
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WEDNESDAY ORGANIC FRIED CHICKEN DINNER 6 - 10:30pm

Birds & Bubbles
Fried Chicken Dinner
with Glass of Champagne
\$35

Bucket of Fried Chicken and
Free Sides To Go
\$45

Sun Brunch 8am - 2pm
Mon 7am - 4pm
Tues-Sat 7am - 10:30pm

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