It’s off-season! The town is quieter, the days are shorter and the peaks are already turning white.

Telluride and Durango choral societies performed “Requiem for Eagles” at the Palm Theatre in 2015. The choir will be accompanied by the San Juan Symphony for a concert that includes “Requiem” and compositions by Beethoven and Mendelssohn Oct. 8. Purchase tickets at telluridepalm.com or at the door. (Photo credit: photos.)

By LESLIE VREELAND

It is one thing to compose a work for instruments and chorus, a feat of musical imagination in and of itself. It is quite another to start with just a fragment of a musical score — something that is neither your own work, nor your vision — and turn it into a work of majesty, and beauty.

Dalen Stevens, the co-composer of “Requiem of Eagles,” which returns to Telluride near-ly two years to the day after its first, packed performance at the Palm Theatre, has done just that. Stevens literally breathed new life into ‘Eagles,’ which originally conceived by the late David Lingle, the much-missed, former artistic director of the Telluride Choral Society.

Before he relocated from Telluride to Texas several years ago, Lingle mentioned his desire to write a requiem to chalk society member Stu Fraser.

“We all thought the world of Lingle’s outsized talent, and kindness, and generosity,” Fraser said. His response was “Sure, David — whatever you want.”

After Lingle passed away, Fra-ser and his wife, Ginny — who, like many in this community, kept in touch with Lingle after he moved to Texas — began wondering, whatever happened to David’s requiem? (By then, it was clear, if the work still even existed it would be a requiem not only for eagles but also for the composer himself.)

By the time he died, Lingle was working with an all-male choir.

“I contacted everybody I could think of in the Alamo Men’s Choir to find out if anyone knew if he’d finished the requi-em,” Fraser said.

It turned out that Lingle’s ex-wife, Jill, had “all the remnants of the requiem,” as Fraser put it — the score and the notes. “She mailed the papers off to me in a packet.”

Just receiving the packet turned out to be an emotional experience. Lingle was beloved by many, and hugely talented. The result, briefly, was paralysis.

Said Fraser: “When the pa-pers arrived, I didn’t know what to do with them.”

He and Ginny decided to contact Deb and Dalen Stevens, also choir members and great friends of Lingle’s.

“We went over to their place, and showed the papers to them,” Fraser said. “Dalen said he would like to try to finish it. We were so curious to hear what it sounded like — what the voices would sound like. You don’t know when the choral director (who was also the composer) isn’t there.”

Stevens didn’t have much to go on. “It was about five-to-seven minutes’ worth of music, if you were to play it on the piano,” he recalled.

What Stevens did have was the cherished memories of a long friendship — and his own not inconsiderable talent. He drew on both to transform “Eagles” into a fully-fledged composition, inspired by long walks he used to take in the mountains.

The Telluride Choral Society of San Juan will present “Eagles” this weekend. For tickets visit telluridepalm.com, call 866-440-4000 or see the Palm Theatre box office.

COMMUNITIES THAT CARE

Coalition administrators survey to local youths

W e can take heart that a majority of our students do not use alcohol, cigarettes or mari-juana, and a substantial majority of them believe that both their parents and their friends feel it would be wrong for them to use these substances.

On the other hand, our laws, the availability of these sub-stances, and adult use of these substances send mixed message to our youths, a news release from the Tri-County Health Net-work says.

Last winter, TUNetwork won a competitive grant from the state Department of Public Health and the Environment to start a community coalition aimed at reducing adolescent substance use. In the process, the Commu-nities that Care model, a nationally recognized and evi-denced-based community change framework, was engaged.

This grant, funded through state marijuana sales-tax revenue, helps bring together community members around a common cause, one aimed at supporting youth growing up in Telluride.

As a part of the Communities that Care process, a group of leaders and more than 40 dedicated community mem-bers — ranging from parents to coaches to school staff — were connected to bring members of the Communities that Care coaliti-on. The coalition, with support from TUNetwork, will identity, launch and evaluate programs and initiatives aimed at promot-ing protective factors and reduc-ing risk factors associated with substance use and abuse among youths, the release states.

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take with Lingle. “He was always pointing up to the sky and asking, ‘What kind of raptor is that?’ Is it an eagle?” Stevens recalled. “Much of Da- vid’s earlier career was spent near the Cherokee Reservation in Oklahoma. He had a very strong affinity for Native Ameri- can folklore and spirit creatures. The eagle is a spirit guide not only important to native belief systems, but to him.”

Now Stevens has channelled Lingle’s spirit, creating a piece for female voices as well as male, and adding musical instruments. He kept the raptors’ cry — “one of the musical motifs is the sound of bird calls,” Stevens said — in a rapturous composition. The result was “a true requiem,” as Telluride chorus member Ginny Fraser put it, both a com- memoration of the loss of the soul of the dead, in Roman Catholic parlance, and a work of remem- brance and reverence.

Durango Herald writer Ju- dith Reynolds, who reviewed “Requiem for Eagles” two years ago when it was first performed by the Telluride Choral Society with the Durango Choral Society and a small orchestra, dubbed it “splendid,” “a momentous, deep- ly moving concert.”

The collaborative perfor- mance received the Chorus America/ASCAP Alice Parker Award, which described “Re- quiem” as a work that “blends the traditional requiem format with Southwestern influences, overlaying ancient texts with indigenous chant, rhythm and “orbitalization.”

The award was conferred for “recently composed music that expands the mission and challenges the chorus’s audience in new ways.”

“Requiem for Eagles” returns to Telluride for a one-afternoon-only performance Oct. 8 at 3 p.m. at the Palm (call 970-728- 0982 for more information). This time, the San Juan Symphony Orchestra, under the baton of Thomas Heuser, will be in tow, in addition to choruses from Tel- luride, led by Rhonda Mucker- man, and Durango (directed by Linda Mack Berven). In addition to “Requiem,” according to the concert flyer, Beethoven’s “Pas- toral” Symphony and “Felix Mendelssohn’s first-hand rendering of Fingal’s Cave in the Scottish Hebrides Islands” will also be performed. The choruses have been in rehearsal for the past three months: Alpine Bank has provided $5,000 to help cover the costs.

Next week’s concert is sure to be intensely emotional, in effect summoning David Lingle’s spirit, which is what all great compon- ers’ works do. (“There are two parts during the performance where I’m afraid I will cry,” Gin- ny Fraser confessed). “There’s a reason for doing this, and it has nothing to do with us as individuals,” Stu Fra- ser said, his voice breaking. “It has to do with the impact that David left upon our lives. You’re going beyond. You’re looking for something really special to buy part of your life … and you’re fortunate enough to find some- thing.”

ARTS, from page 32

The Art of Personal Finance: Tackling Debt (and Finding Ex- tra Money!).

The group will make recom- mendations about specific pro- tective and risk factors to help Telluride youths successfully navigate their way through ado- lescence. In addition to the student survey, the coalition will send a survey to district parents to explore their views on adoles- cent substance use and to gain their perspectives on family and community supports for young people.

If you are a parent with a child in grades 6-12, keep an eye out for this survey in early October.

WELLNESS, from page 32

On Oct. 16, TCINetwork, along with the Colorado De- partment of Public Health and the Environment, will host a two-hour training for parents and community members titled “Positive Youth Development,” a key element in the Communi- ties that Care model. This class includes information about youth development and gives participants the tools to have dif- ficult conversations with youths around substance use, growing up in the social media age and other challenges of adolescence.

The class will run from 5:30-7:30 p.m., at the Telluride Elementa- ry School second-floor cafeteria, 447 W. Columbia Ave. Pizza will be served and free babysitting is available by reservation. Call 970-708-7886 if you are interested in free babysitting services. Also, the coalition is looking for new members to join our ef- forts — in addition to parents, we are particularly interested in community members who work with youths as coaches and men- tors, or who may be involved in the life of an adolescent in our community. For more information or if you have questions, call Paul Reich, Behavioral Health Program manager at TCINet- work, at 970-708-7886.

Formed in 2009, Tri-County Health Network is committed to improving the quality and coor- dination of health and health- care services in the tri-county region by increasing access to healthcare and integrating health services at lower costs through collaboration and in- novation. Visit www.tchnetwork. org to learn more.

Ah Haa’s fall offerings

If you’ve taken Ah Haa’s Be- ginning Ukulele class, or if you just have a uke laying around your home, put it to good use in Ukulady Jacqui McCormick’s Learn the Uke intermediate class, scheduled for Wednesdays from Nov. 1 through Dec. 6 at 6-8 p.m. Finally, get ready to impress all your co-workers at your next holiday party by learning to swing dance with Lance Waring and Lara Colbert on Thursdays in addition to choruses from Tel- luride, led by Rhonda Mucker- man, and Durango (directed by Linda Mack Berven). In addition to “Requiem,” according to the concert flyer, Beethoven’s “Pas- toral” Symphony and “Felix Mendelssohn’s first-hand rendering of Fingal’s Cave in the Scottish Hebrides Islands” will also be performed. The choruses have been in rehearsal for the past three months: Alpine Bank has provided $5,000 to help cover the costs.

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