

RIO GRANDE COUNTY MUSEUM NEWSLETTER

MARCH-APRIL 2021



MISSION STATEMENT

Rio Grande County Museum and Cultural preserves Rio Grande County's memory as a teacher and champion of its heritage for the citizens of Rio Grande County.

VISION

The Rio Grande County Museum and Cultural Center enriches people's lives by helping them to understand Rio Grande County's past, to appreciate the present and to embrace the future.

There is hope on the horizon for a better year in 2021 than 2020. The museum will be looking forward to again being able to be open with less restrictions and have some events. The "Holiday at the Museum" 2nd Annual art show was successful and planning for the 3rd Annual art show is taking place. There were fourteen artists in the show, two of whom were students. The art show had more sales this year than last. People were shopping at home and helping to support the local artists and the museum. We are all thankful for that support. On January 26th the museum was featured as the program for the Monte Vista. A great opportunity to let the community know what we are doing.

As we look forward, the focus on student and young people is continuing. April 28th the second annual Del Norte School art show will open with work from Kindergarten through High School being shown. The reception may have to be modified to be within Covid guidelines, but the show will go on!! It will run for two weeks so there will be time for parents, families and the community members to drop in and see what our children are doing.

A young man from Del Norte will be working with the museum staff to put up the World War II exhibit. He will bring an aspect to the exhibit which will not only show his art work, but bring a different perspective as a young person interested in the history of this period of time.

JOSEPH HUNTER TRUJILLO



My name is Joseph Hunter Trujillo. I was born on the 27th of October, 2006 in Alamosa, Colorado to Leroy J. Trujillo and Kathryn Trujillo. I was born with a full head of dark hair and brown almond shaped eyes. I was a whopping 8 ½ pounds which shocked the doctor and the nurses especially because they had told my mother they

were sure I was going to be a 6 pound baby. I am a native to Del Norte, Colorado as is my father. My mother was born and raised in Albuquerque, New Mexico before marrying my father and coming to Colorado. My family has a rich history in the San Luis Valley and dedication to the country. Raymond Trujillo is my great - great uncle and his name is on the brass plaque in the Rio Grande County House and in the story of the military deaths in Rio Grande County done by the museum staff. Both of my great grandfathers are buried at the local cemetery with military headstones. My mother's father with his seven brothers all served in a different branch of the service and were discharged with honors.

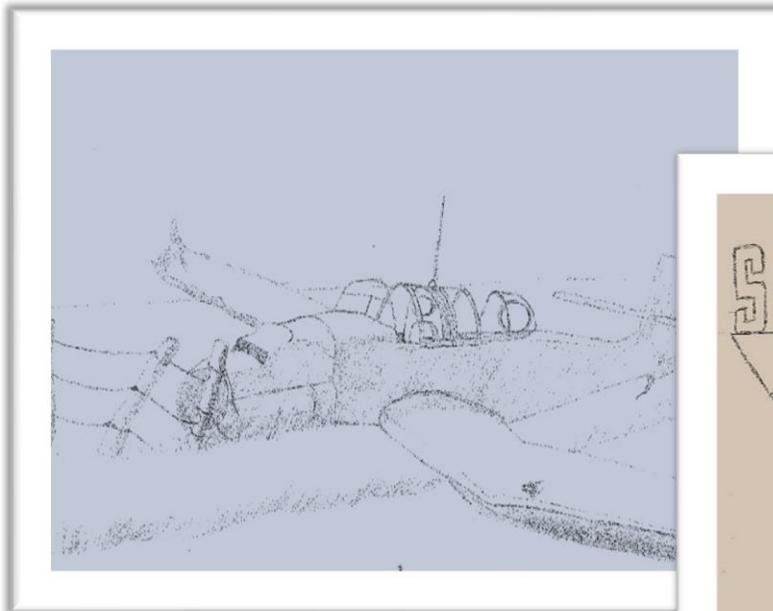
I was born a middle child with an older brother who took after my grandfather and father with the name of Leroy. My sister, Julia, is 3 years younger. She was named after Julia Roberts who my mother loved since she was a child. I started enjoying and creating art at a very young age. I attended the Del Norte Head Start at the age of 3. I wasn't content being at school so arrangements were made for me to attend half days. I was lucky enough to have a stay at home mother at that age and I was glad to be home with her the rest of the day. I began building with blocks,

drawing and painting. I found that I was pretty good at it and it gradually turned into a passion of mine.

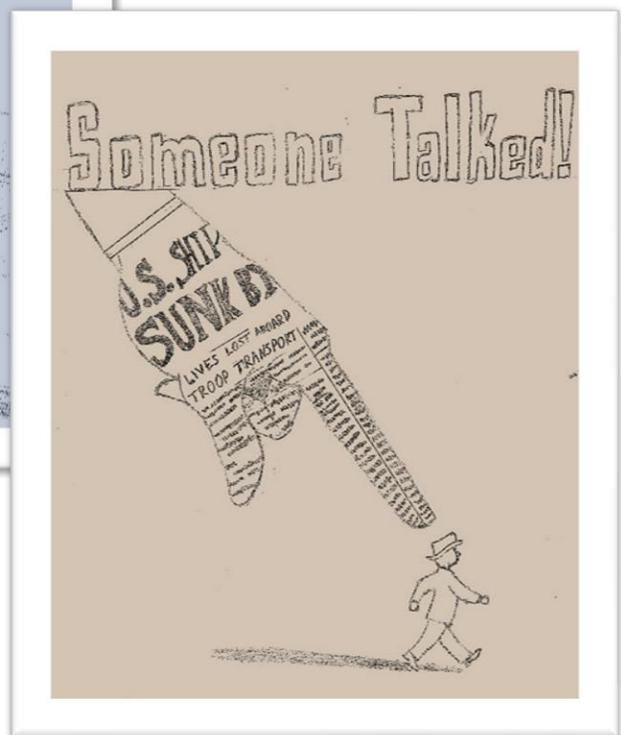
I don't remember the first time I drew a picture about the military or how my fascination with the service started, but I have quite a collection of artifacts at home. I would beg my parents for airplanes, plastic army men and tanks to play with as young as age 5. I told anyone who listen that I was going to join the Army and I dressed up as a service member for Halloween for at least nine years. My drawing has continued and expanded into painting, wood work, stop motion movies and 3D printing. I have volunteered for the VFW to help hand out pin wheels for the 4th of July Parade, visited at Home Lake and still have intentions of joining the service.

I am grateful for the opportunity to showcase my work at the Rio Grande County Museum in Del Norte. I have only previously had my art on display during the school art show. In 2017 I won 2nd place in the San Luis Valley Conservation poster

contest which consisted of ten schools in the valley competing to win the contest.



The WWII Tribute at the museum is more meaningful than any other art presentation I have participated in because of my passion for the subject. I hope this inspires other to pursue their pass and live life to the fullest.



GIFT SHOPPE

The Gift Shoppe has been expanded with the addition of two artists who showed with the “Holiday at the Museum” art show. Craig Lehman who has some of his sculptures of stone and metal. Craig studied biology, archaeology and art and sculpture at Adams State College, now University. He worked at Shidoni Foundry in the Santa Fe area. He shows in various galleries throughout the area.



Martha Kennedy has shown her note cards in the Gift Shop for several months. The photos are copies of paintings that she has done and are available as note cards. Ms. Kennedy has worked with the museum with a book reading on her books which include *Savior*, *The Brothers Path* and *The Price* which is a trilogy of a family saga in the 13th, 16th and 18th centuries. She also has written *As a Baby Duck Listens to Thunder* which is about her experiences from teaching in South China.

ARCHIVAL WORK IN THE MUSEUM

Because of work done by the previous museum directors and the return of Suzanne Benton for a period of time this fall as interim administrator, \$9,900 of funds from previous fund raising was found and could be used as an archival project. The need for adequate shelving in the storage areas has been a long and ongoing project. With these funds, and no cost to the county or the Museum 501 (c) 3 board, shelving is being ordered in increments. Stan Montoya, the new head of the maintenance department, has four sets of shelves ready to order shortly. These will be the “home” for the extensive newspaper collection. It will put the 160 years of newspapers from Del Norte, Monte Vista and Blanca into one central location. We do have an interesting newspaper, *The New York Herald* which is an excellent history on World War I with stories, photographs and painting reproductions.

We are also working with Mr. Montoya to take some of the existing shelves, rework them with wheels for easier moving in the case of a disaster where evacuation may be needed or in rearranging the storage area as the need for more space arises.

Once this phase of the new shelves and reworking the old shelves is done, we will proceed with the next phase of shelf purchases. This way we can see what needs to be done next and not overwhelm the workers or the space needed to complete the project.

The storage area will be set up as to categories that will follow the categories in the PastPerfect program that will be used to control the inventory in storage and the items on display as well as store the interviews that are in the archives.

Donations and membership to the Rio Grande County Museum, Inc. 501 (c) 3 have also helped to make many of our projects become realities. For this, we are quite grateful to our many members over the last twenty-five years.

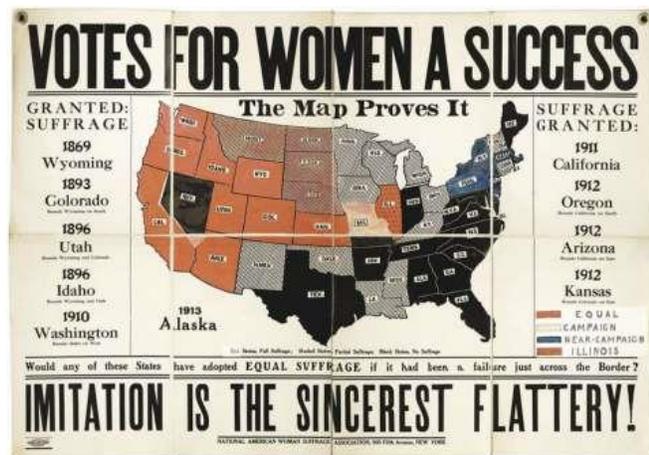
Garment bags are being made by Kathy’s Fabric Trunk to place over all the garments that are out and hanging. This will help to protect them from dust and the chance of damage from light.

THE SUFFRAGE EXHIBIT

Last August was the 100th anniversary of 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote. We did an exhibit that opened in February last year, only to have to close the museum for Covid. The exhibit was taken during the holidays. Kathryn Trujillo and her son, Joseph, helped to put the exhibit back into place.

The exhibit shows national women and women from the fourteen states who worked to get the right to vote the prior to the passage of the amendment at the national level. Colorado male voters gave women the right in 1893 making it the first state to give the right by means of an election. Wyoming was the first territory to give the right and this was in 1869, followed by Utah.

Suffrage in Colorado did start with the forming of the extralegal Jefferson Territory in that Constitution in 1859. This action then forced the United States Congress to do an Enabling Act with then formed the Territory of Colorado. From 1863 to 1873 several bids for statehood were defeated either by Congress or by public vote. Suffrage was not entertained or discussed at these.



When Colorado did gain statehood, suffrage was again left out of the Constitution, but it did allow for the possibility of suffrage in Article 7, Section 2 that the issue could be submitted to a vote of the people. Two men with very different backgrounds fought for the suffrage issue in the Constitution. Henry Bronwell and Agapito Vigil from Trinidad tried hard to get suffrage rights into the Constitution.

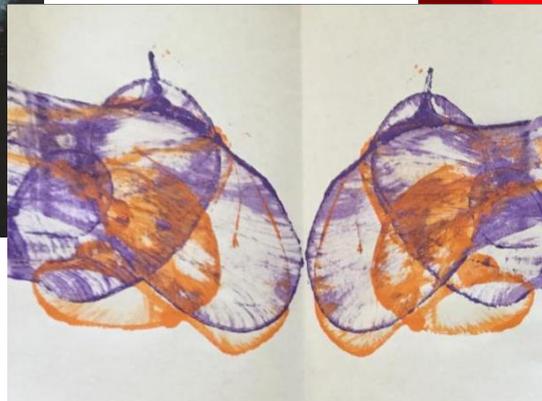
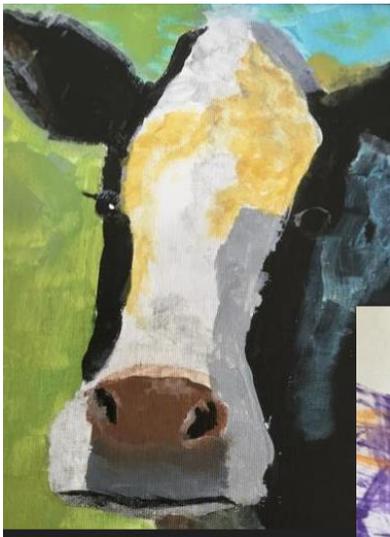
The first referendum vote was taken to the male voters on October 2, 1877. There was a major push by the suffrage leaders of the state and nation. Lucy Stone and her husband Henry Blackwell and Susan B. Anthony toured the state promoting the issue. All three spoke in Del Norte at the Methodist Church. Lucy Stone and Henry Blackwell spoke on September 11, 1877 followed by Susan B. Anthony on September 18. The issue was defeated and it took until 1893 for women to get the vote in the State of Colorado.

LAST YEAR'S SCHOOL ART SHOW

Last year the school art show had to be cancelled because the museum and school were both closed. However, Suzie Carrasco, the elementary art school teacher put together the students' work and emailed the results to the museum. Dan Roesch was also an instructor in photography. We worked with Patrick Shea and got each class into sections that were put on Facebook which were run one class a week until the entire show was featured. Steve Nicolais then took the emailed work and put them into a program that can be shown in the museum. It is still available for viewing.



The work was amazing from kindergarten to sixth grade. While they didn't get to show and visit in person, their work can still be seen in the museum and will be running again at the time of this year's show.



THE SWISS IN AMERICA

One of the exhibits and programs that got put on hold in 2020 was a program that Martha Kennedy was researching. She has her own story of her Swiss ancestors and was combining this with some of the Swiss families in Rio Grande County. In her program, Kennedy will give her story of her Swiss heritage through book readings on two of her novels. As with many of us, our genealogy seems to take turns that are not always true. Believing that she may be Pennsylvania Dutch, she didn't think about a Swiss ancestry.

On New Year's Eve 1997, she and a friend went to the small town of Appenzell, a rather remote Canton in north-eastern Switzerland with the reputation as being eccentric and their culture "primitive" and a little strange. It is a town of about 5,000 people. Here, she was told that a characteristic dish is "Apler Magaroni" which she ordered. The dish was the way that her grandmother made macaroni and cheese. During this stay over and over, she tasted her grandmother's cooking. From this, her research on her Swiss heritage led into a series of historical novels.

The books will include *The Brothers Path* and *The Price*. In *The Brothers' Path* the story takes place during the world-shattering tumult of the Protestant Reformation in the Schneebeli household when Rudolf Schneebeli is born two months early and dies a few minutes later without being baptized. Named for the well trodden tracking linking the Schneebeli farmhouse to the old Lunkhofen castle, the story is set in a Swiss village near Zürich between 1524 and 1531. It chronicles the lives of the six Schneebeli brothers, Heinrich, Hannes, Peter, Conrad, Thomann and Andreas. Each brother navigates his own path through, around or directly into the deadly drama of the Protestant Reformation. Two hundred years after the events recounted in *The Brothers' Path*, thousands of immigrants, mostly Mennonite and Amish, left Switzerland to America looking for safety and freedom that they could not find at home.

The Price tells how Hans Kaspar Schneebeli is enthralled by William Penn's words describing an Eden where there is land for all, and everyone is free to worship as they please. It tells of how Verena Dups, his long-time love eventually consents to go to America. It is a love story, a historical novel about a Mennonite family's emigration from Switzerland to Pennsylvania.

