



*MERRY CHRISTMAS  
AND  
HAPPY NEW YEAR*

As the year of 2020 comes to an end, it is time to thank those who have supported Rio Grande County Museum with financial donations, their taking time to visit and share their memories and see what the Museum has to offer over the past several years. We fail to mention the importance of the artifact donations that continue to be received. These items are what gives us the collections that can be utilized in displays and used to continue history. These donations become the archives that are so important to the history of the area.

Even though this year has not gone as planned as the events had to be cancelled and the museum had to be closed to our faithful visitors who have been missed, we are still here and with the dedication of the county commissioners to the museum's mission and the support of the public, we will hopefully be here for years to come.

During the period of time that the museum was closed, there has been many projects being done behind the scene. Finishing the work that Iris Wells had started, the book collection has been organized and a library has been set up. The library contains over a thousand history books that are available to read in the

museum. Many of these came from Jon Beatty, Basil Zeigler and the estate of Ruth Marie Colville.

The newspaper collection is now completely accessioned, cataloged and boxed. Newspapers from the collection donated by Barb Deacon open up the history of Monte Vista to research. The San Luis Valley News from Blanca, Colorado was a great find. They had been in the museum in a box that had no labeling. These papers were donated to the museum by the Colorado Historical Society, now History Colorado. They were not accessioned or cataloged, which is now done and they will be available for research. The late Bette Cook had donated a collection of The New York Herald Newspaper that gives a wonderful insight into World War I. These are now organized in boxes and labeled. After the first of the year, the shelves for their storage will be ordered and in place. The money for the shelves came from work that was done by the previous museum directors. The boxes were paid for by donations from the members of the 501 (c) 3 and donations from the Annual Ice Cream Social during Covered Wagon Days.

As the organizing work has proceeded in the storage areas, better knowledge of what is actually in the archives is being gained which will make the museum even more useful in research. If the thought that there is a silver lining behind every dark cloud is correct, being able to accomplish these tasks are just that, the silver lining of the situation.

The only show that was done this year is the current art show by local artists which will run until December 31. These artists include Jeannie Norwood, Albert Kahan, Craig Lehman, Kami Humphreys, John Patterson, Laura Lunsford, Evelyn Sprouse-Rowe, Martha Kennedy, Chelle Wiescamp, Mary Susan Eldridge, Kath Morin, Marian Schlagbaum, Darwin Thompson and Jayden Powell-Gates. To see the show, please check to see what our hours are and if an appointment is needed. Please call (719)657-2847. Their work would make wonderful, unusual, one of a kind presents in the gifting season.

The Gift Shop is still open with a selection of books, jewelry, crocheted pot holders, dish cloths and scrubbies for the kitchen by Jean Hanna and delicately crocheted doilies by Judy Nicolais. Wooden vases by Alex Colville and painted gourds by Byron Williams are available. Note cards include Martha Kennedy's of scenes from the San Luis Valley as well as Yvonne Halburian's cards depicting the comic side of the

Old Spanish Trail. Patty Poage has her beautiful jewelry creations as well. These artists show their work with a portion of the sales going to the Rio Grande County Museum non-profit organization to help support the museum. A purchase from them helps to support the artist as well as the Museum.

The Territorial Daughters of Colorado are working on cemetery tours for their meetings for next year. In September the meeting will be here in the San Luis Valley with the hope of doing tours through some of the local cemeteries. Tamara Estes, President, is working on biographies of some the charter members of the Territorial Daughters. This will be a very interesting project and hopefully the museum can supply information that she might need. We do have in our archives about five or six stories of these women.

We are looking forward to 2021 with the hopes that we all stay healthy and safe and the new year will be one of joy and love. We will have an exciting schedule of events for the upcoming year and some new exhibits. We will continue to keep all of you informed on our progress, our shows and our exhibits.

Again, thank you for your support and hope you have a great holiday season.

Thank you,

Louise Colville, Museum Director.