



## Dog Park Closed Saturday



The Bear Creek Dog Park will be closed all day Saturday due to the street-sized slip 'n slide planned for 21st Street.

See Page 2

## Tennis with a Star



Venus Williams shared insights during a local visit.

See Page 5

## Equine Therapy Expanded



New center offers increased horse-assisted mental health services on the west side.

See Page 3

# Back-to-School without the Shopping

## Fees Replace Supply Lists in School District 20



Part of getting ready for the school year included decorating lockers for these students at Timberview Middle School this week. What students in D20 are not doing this year is gathering academic supplies detailed on lists from the schools.

By MELISSA ROLLI

School supply lists are out and fees are in as Academy District 20 welcomes students back to class next week.

For the first time, each D20 school is now charging a school supply fee of no more than \$35 and another “consumables fee,” also of no more than \$35 per child. It’s part of a growing movement to charge student fees, according to the American Association of School Administrators, and emotions are mixed in D20.

“It’s ridiculous, especially the high school fees,” said Melissa Youngs, a parent with students at both Ranch Creek Elementary and Pine Creek High schools.

“I’m fine with the fees and thankful I don’t have to go find and buy all the arbitrary things on the school supply lists,” said Amanda Warehime who has kids at both Chinook Trails Elementary and Rampart High schools.

“After researching this process and realizing that efficiencies will increase and the net cost to parents would decrease, this procedure has been implemented with the adoption of the 2015-2016 student fee schedule,” said a District 20 statement issued last spring to announce the shift from supply requests to fees. “Students and parents benefit from the tax exempt status and volume purchasing power of the school district. Teachers can purchase the exact supplies they use and the school can retain and reuse supplies that are useful for multiple years,” according to the announcement.

“This is the practice in many other school districts and while we have heard from some parents who don’t like this approach, we have also heard from others who appreciate it,” said the district’s public information officer, Nanette Anderson, about the new supply fees.

State law allows school districts to

charge and collect fees as long as the fees do not interfere with a child’s constitutional right to a free public education. Fees must also be clearly identified as mandatory or voluntary, and consequences for not paying the fees should be stated. While certain transportation, activity and class fees are not new, D20 is now posting a comprehensive list of fees on its website at [www.asd20.org/Pages/Fees-and-School-Supplies.aspx](http://www.asd20.org/Pages/Fees-and-School-Supplies.aspx).

The district identifies fees as “mandatory for participation” but “participation may be voluntary.”

Anderson confirmed that “certain fees may be reduced or waived for students eligible for free or reduced-price meals under federal poverty income guidelines” with the proper paperwork. Other fee reduction or waiver questions are being handled directly through each school’s principal.

“Instead of requesting small

Continued on page 8

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# Bear Creek Dog Park Closed Saturday

## Water Slide Will Also Close 21st Street between Argus and Lower Gold Camp Road



El Paso County is closing the popular Bear Creek Dog Park for one day on Saturday, Aug. 15 because of the water slide closing 21st Street in front of the park that day.

By **PATTY VOLZ**

The street-sized slip 'n slide that is coming to 21st Street on Saturday, Aug. 15 means the Bear Creek Dog Park will be closed all day.

El Paso County announced the closure after finalizing details with Slide the City which just changed the location of its event slightly last week. Originally, the 1000-foot-long water slide was going to be on Cresta Road south of Argus Boulevard but to reduce traffic impacts to Skyway area residents, Slide the City got city approval to move the activity a bit north.

Now, the 20-foot-wide, cushioned-vinyl slide will run along 21st Street from just south of Lower Gold Camp Road to "where it flattens out" near Rio Grande Street, said Slide the City event director Brandon Jay by phone from Utah on Wednesday.

He just found out that morning that he received approval for closing the intersection of Rio Grande and 21st Street. "Twenty-First Street will be closed between Lower Gold Camp Road and Argus," said Jay, noting the late change in plans had resulted in a "huge back-and-forth" on such details. He said city event organizers who are authorizing the activity did not really want that intersection closed but he felt it was necessary for safety of the slide participants and drivers. Lower Gold Camp Road will still be open as will 21st Street north of Lower Gold Camp Road and south of Argus Boulevard.

Also on Wednesday, Jay was still trying to work out shuttles to help participants access the slide more easily. Parking will be limited in Bear Creek Regional Park where there will be a related festival with booths at the north-east corner of the park's

athletic field area on the west side of 21st Street. Jay said parking for the slide has been arranged at both Gold Camp Elementary and Cheyenne Mountain High schools. If shuttles are not available, Jay recommends people still park at the schools and walk to the slide.

"We estimate about 3,000 people will be sliding throughout the day with about 300-400 at any given time," said Jay, noting registration will be at the bottom of the slide so participants will need to walk up alongside 21st Street to the top of the slip 'n slide before riding down.

At the dog park on the west side of that street on Saturday, Aug. 15, county staff will be taking care of some maintenance while the popular park is closed. A news release and posted announcement said staff will be mowing, upgrading trails and repairing some erosion damage.

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# Therapeutic Riding Services Expand at Norris-Penrose Event Center

Ribbon-Cutting Marks New Equine Therapy Offerings



With the snip of a ribbon, the Pikes Peak Therapeutic Riding Center officially increased the equine therapy services it offers to people with disabilities through the new Dom Cimino Center at the Norris-Penrose Event Center on Lower Gold Camp Road. Heavy demand during a pilot program has led to the new facility offering three full days of services, including to military veterans. At last week's ceremony were, left to right, Bob McLaughlin of the Mt. Carmel Center of Excellence, Jay Cimino, Shannon Mitchell of the riding center, Dom Cimino, Marge Cimino, and Mark Scraba and Chris Valentine of the riding center.

By **WILLIAM J. DAGENDESH AND PATTYE VOLZ**

"Our soldiers are returning home messed up, and we're going to help them and put joy back into their hearts" said U.S. Army veteran Dom Cimino during a ceremony launching a wellness center bearing his name.

An extension of the Pikes Peak Therapeutic Riding Center of Elbert, Colo., the Dom Cimino Center at the Norris-Penrose Event Center provides equine-assisted services to active-duty military personnel and veterans, as well as others with disabilities. About 150 people attended the ribbon-cutting Thursday, Aug. 6 to support the expanded satellite location.

The center is named after Cimino of Littleton, Colo. for his work to help people through equine-assisted services, said riding center executive director Shannon Mitchell. Cimino served with the 10th Mountain Division in Alaska. In July 2013, the riding center started a pilot program at the Norris-Penrose center and high demand led to the now-open office space and three full days of services in the Cheyenne area.

"We use the horse to teach the veteran to work out their issues, and it doesn't take long to form a bond with the animal," said Mitchell about the mental health services offered to clients at the Dom Cimino Center.

Horses serve as an emotional mirror for humans, Mitchell said. Through interactions with

the animals, clients learn to understand their own emotions, body language and behavior. As trust develops, participants learn relationship and other skills that can be transferred to their life, she explained.

"Horses let you think you're nurturing them when in fact they're nurturing you," said Norris-Penrose Event Center general manager Johnny Walker.

"There is no question about the therapeutic benefit as it allows us to build on the foundation and reach out to people," said riding center board member Kevin Sonntag. He said having this center which is more convenient to those on the west side of town, including those at Fort Carson, "has a tremendous impact on lives." The Pikes Peak Therapeutic Riding Center's main facility is north of Falcon and offers both mental and physical health services through horses.

"It's all about helping our community and is a great idea," said Cheyenne area resident Marilyn Waites at the ceremony.

"This organization does a lot for people and I'm glad to be part of it," said riding instructor Deb Karber, also of the Cheyenne area.

Clients are assessed prior to participation and goals are developed to focus on their physical, cognitive or mental needs, Mitchell said. Sessions are conducted for one hour each week for eight weeks, and both Medicaid and private insurance are accepted. Riding center board vice president Mark Scraba said soldiers can now get equine therapy as part of their military health benefits.

Cimino's philanthropic work for service people began during Operation Desert Shield/Storm in the early 1990s. Along with his brother, Jay, Cimino created

Continued on page 8

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# OBSERVATIONS

BY HENRY WALTER

## Campaign Habit is Just “Kissing Up”

I'm sure, when I confessed I would not watch the campaign “debate,” which I didn't, many of my friends thought I was donning blinders. You know, those leather eye flaps that used to keep jackasses on the straight and narrow?

For years I watched, believing I was a good and concerned citizen. Then I read a book that defined debate. About that same time I learned that kissing babies for votes was not just an unhealthy practice. Far too often the practice leads to kissing babes.

Sure enough, after reading the reports, (unbiased??? Prolly not.) It seems to me the recent debate was pretty much in line with history; a dark alley where a man in an overcoat with his arms covered with wristwatches for sale. You don't know the quality until it stops running. I apologize if this sounds as if I don't believe in citizens voting. Of course I do, but I also believe one must have some pledge of fidelity before making statements such as “I will end wasteful government spending!” The last president I can remember risking such an undertaking was Senator Harry Truman and only because he was bored. (He traveled around in his own car exposing those military suppliers ripping off the government- the Truman Committee - in 1941).

He was later “forced” to accept the vice presidential slot with Roosevelt, a job he didn't want, but who later as President proved himself to be of the highest integrity, a seemingly lost art in politics today.

Ahh, I know you can't get elected these days without compromising your values to one extent or another, depending on the voters' greed and wanton self interest. But, unless I'm in a coma, I will not watch the unbridled prevarication so foisted in political campaigns.

Of course, governments work best when the people don't know really how much they are being robbed of through waste, graft, payoffs and switcheroos that the average human accepts—although unwillingly—as going along to get along. If not, government would probably be outmoded by the purpose test. Just imagine what might happen if rogue countries like North Korea and Iran were not paid billions to be honest without verification? Our pols are doing just that.

Re: the debate. Why are we so captivated by the vaudeville of the past and go agog over one of the performers' faux pas? Maybe it is because nothing else of the debate was as entertaining? Probably for the same reason the whole media is up in arms about a dentist killing a lion but not about the millions of people being killed, tortured, starved and enslaved by governments and rebels around the world.

A stripped-down nubile celebrity is celebrated for her immense stupidity for weeks but not very seriously. Forgiveness is the vogue for the young. A murdered cop gets about two short mentions by evening newsies.

Before I go any further, I'd like to quote William Dafoe: “It is better to have a lion at the head of any army of sheep than a sheep at the head of an army of lions.” Still, one worshipped lion killed accidentally, as some reports say, just don't equate with the reality of one man's inhumanity to man. Sure, I love animals, but I have a soft spot for humans, too.

What my rant boils down to is that I am really tired of Americans kowtowing to third rate countries. Appeasers believe that if you keep on throwing steaks at a lion, the lion will become a vegetarian. (Broun) Our leaders do that again and again despite proof to the contrary.

What this country needs is a leader who believes empirical evidence that the bullies of the world are more aware of America's leadership as being outgunned by transparent threats. They have nothing to fear from the past toughness of the U.S. Do we dare remove our blinders? Or have we lost the confidence to even think about “muscling up” before it's too late.

**Hc2walter@comcast.net.**

## The View from Academy

### A New Start



BY DR. MARK HATCHELL

Academy District 20 welcomes its students back to school on Aug. 17. We look forward to seeing all of our returning families and we extend a warm welcome to many new families

who will join our district for the 2015-16 school year.

Academy District 20 continues its commitment to education innovation by offering programs that blend the best of use of technology with the excellent classroom instruction our families have come to expect.

Last year, our district began discussions to invite a local charter school, Colorado Calvert Academy, to become a member of the Academy District 20 school lineup. This year, we are proud to announce the opening Academy Calvert K-8 Online School. The former school gave up its charter school status and is now housed in a building on the campus of Academy Endeavour Elementary School. Academy Calvert Principal Elizabeth Davis hopes to serve as many as 200 students in the school's inaugural year. Elementary and middle school students will have individualized learning plans using Calvert Education's curriculum which is offered nationwide and overseas.

Also new, all Academy District 20 high school students can take online or hybrid courses through the Extended Studies Program at the Academy Online High School. Students can extend their schedules with hybrid and fully online courses that they may not be able to fit in or access at their

regular high school. For most classes, dual high school and University of Colorado credits will be available. Academy District 20 teachers will help students learn in the non-traditional environment.

The Academy Online High School also is embarking on a pilot program for ninth graders. Students will have individualized curriculum with collaborative problem-solving activities. They also will conduct personal inquiry investigations under the supervision of Academy District 20 teachers. The blended program combining on-campus activities and at-home work will operate out of two modular classrooms at Pine Creek High School.

Kindergarten through eighth grade homeschoolers will be able to take new math and English language arts curriculum with academic support through the Home School Academy at the administration building, 1110 Chapel Hills Drive. Students also will receive instruction in visual arts and music. Parents will receive model lessons to support their student's learning goals and access English and math curriculum at no cost.

Our Central Registry department has been very busy registering new families. During one week in July, more than 220 new students enrolled. As always, human resources has been busy hiring teachers and our newest teachers have been through several hours of orientation before they move in to their new classrooms.

There is always an anticipatory feeling at the beginning of the school year. We encourage all of our parents to remain involved in their schools throughout the year. Have a great start and welcome back!

*(Mark Hatchell is the superintendent of Academy District 20. He writes a monthly column for the Woodmen Edition. You can follow him @markhatchell on Twitter. Like Academy District 20 on Facebook.)*

## Newly Born

**Joe Lizotte captured this photo after he witnessed the birth of three fawns in his backyard earlier this summer. “You don't get to see this every day, and when you see three fawns, it's like a miracle,” said Lizotte who said he wanted to get close enough to pet them but knew he shouldn't and didn't. “I let the camera get close instead. We've taken over their habitat, but they still keep coming back.”**



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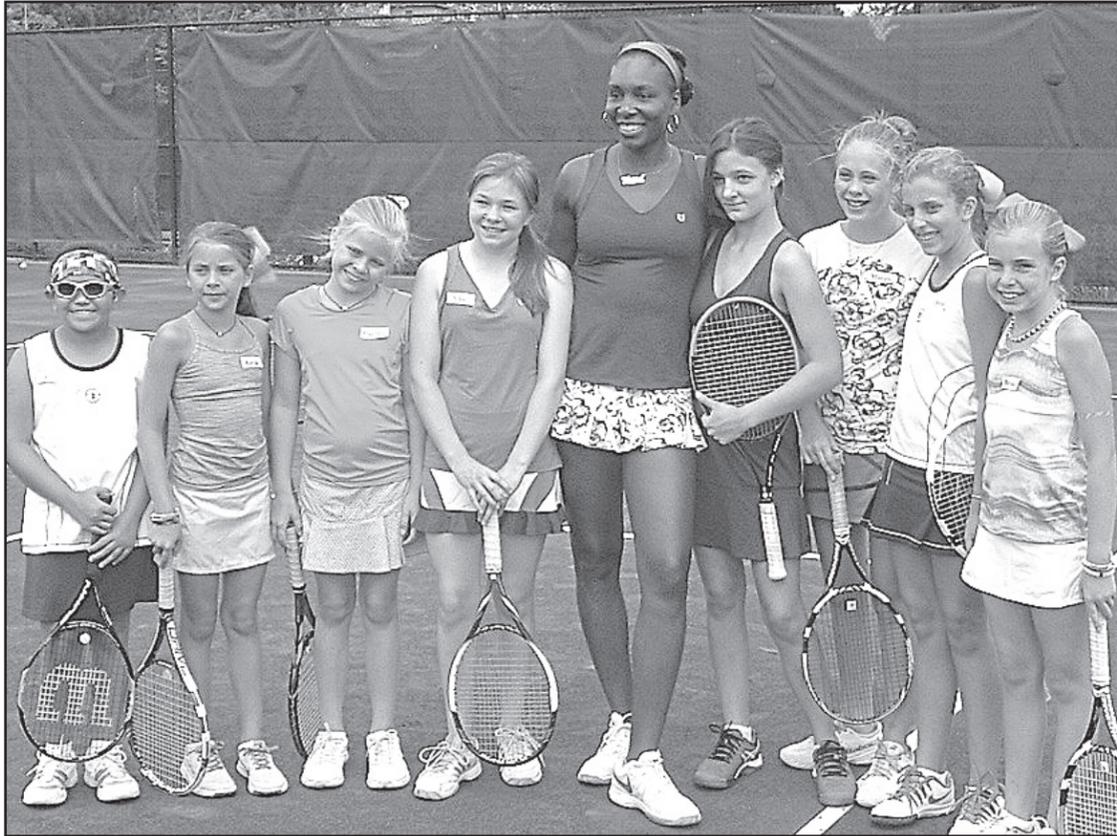
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# 'Heart' Can Be Key according to Tennis Champion Venus Williams

## Athlete Led a Local Clinic



Eight lucky youngsters posed with tennis great Venus Williams on Friday, Aug. 7 before getting a chance to play a few doubles points with and against her at The Broadmoor courts.

By **DAVE MOROSS**

Performing on the global stage for the last 21 years, Venus Williams has experienced ultimate success at every level imaginable in her chosen sport.

She's been ranked No. 1 worldwide by the Women's Tennis Association on three separate occasions since 2002 and has claimed 22 Grand Slam championships including five singles crowns at Wimbledon. She and her younger sister, Serena, also have claimed more Olympic gold medals than any female tennis players in history.

So listen up, aspiring young netters who may not believe you have what it takes to reach the top. According to Williams, a big heart often can carry you a lot further than your mastery of ground strokes and foot-

work.

"It's not always the best players and the most talented who make it to the final cut," she said during a visit to The Broadmoor on Aug. 7 for a tennis clinic she led. "It's about how much you're willing to give and what price you're willing to pay."

"So if you can have that, with some technical background and maybe a little talent, nothing can stop you."

Now 35, the Southern California native has compiled nearly \$31 million in career winnings. With another Olympic year right around the corner, however, memories of three previous Summer Games are very special to her – on par with sharing titles with Serena.

"You always say the Olympic moments are the best, because those were the moments that I hadn't

dreamed of (while) growing up," said Williams, who in 2000 (Sydney, Australia) became just the second player ever to win gold medals in both singles and doubles at the same Games. "When they happened, it was beyond cool. Those [were] beyond a dream-come-true for me – I would say that."

"And it's really awesome to win tournaments with your sister, too. It's a great feeling – not something you can replicate."

After dominating Kristie Boogert and Miriam Oremans of the Netherlands in the 2000 Olympic finals, Venus and Serena followed up with doubles gold medals at Beijing in 2008 and London in 2012. They've also partnered to win 13 Grand Slam events in ladies doubles – two each at the French and U.S. Open,

Continued on page 8



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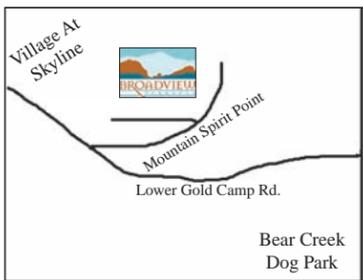


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## Venus Williams

from page 5

four at the Australian Open and five at Wimbledon.

But they're not always on the same end of the court.

The siblings have competed against each other in 25 professional matches since 1998. Serena, currently ranked No. 1 in the world, has prevailed in 14 of the 25, including a 6-4, 6-3 fourth-round triumph at Wimbledon earlier this summer.

Venus has enjoyed 11 victories of her own in the friendly rivalry, and admits she has felt bad for her sister after each one.

"But at the end of the day, you've got to give your best," she said, "You've got to walk off the court with no regrets, knowing that you did everything to win the match no matter who was across the net."

"We push each other to get better more than anything. When one of us is doing well, then the other one just gets more motivated. But I think Serena motivates almost everybody in this world!"

A resident of Florida since age 10, when her family moved there from the West Coast, Venus stays busy off the court these days as well as on the competitive circuit. In addition to a hands-on

involvement with her fashion line EleVen and the design company V Starr Interiors, she's taken up dancing in the last year.

It's a hobby she wishes she would have started earlier in life.

"Now, if you want to get to the next level, you have to work on your flexibility," she said. "That's hard on a body that's used to being tight, so I just have to ease into it, and it's slow going. I'm like an adult learner, basically ... There's a learning curve, but it's so fun. I love it."

In case you're wondering, she still loves tennis, too. Given a racket when she was four-years-old and told by her prophetic father that she would become the best player in the world, Williams happily would make the same choice again.

"Absolutely, yes!" she said. "I would definitely still choose this wonderful sport. I think I've been so fortunate to play it. I've been so fortunate to get so much from the game, and to learn so much. It's hands-down my favorite."

So don't be surprised to see her and Serena challenging for their fourth Olympic gold medal in Rio de Janeiro a year from now.

## Equestrian Program

from page 3

Operation Home Support to provide automotive repairs, discount-priced cars and roadside services to those with deployed spouses.

Cimino met with then-executive director of the Pikes Peak Therapeutic Riding Center, Jody Enget, about starting an equine-assisted program to serve veterans. Enget then met with Fort Carson's leadership and the center's work with military veterans began.

"Today isn't about me but our wounded warriors, and I can't thank enough the people who helped make this come true," said Cimino.

To learn more about the center, its services or volunteering, call 495-3908 or see www.pptrc.org.

## D20 Supply Charge

from page 1

amounts at multiple times throughout the year, the recommendation was to collect at the beginning to make it easier on parents," said Anderson about the focus on fees now.

She also explained that both the core academic supplies fee and the consumable supplies fee will be set by each school each year as needed, provided it falls within the district's limits. For instance this year, Prairie Hills Elementary School fees are \$50 per child (\$35 supply fee and \$15 consumable fee) while Explorer Elementary School fees total between \$50 and \$70 depending upon a student's grade level. Timberview Middle School supply fees are \$65 per child (\$35 for core supplies and \$30 for consumables.)

Publishing all the fees and collecting them at the beginning of the school year may be drawing more attention to the charges and causing some parents to become upset.

A Discovery Canyon Campus parent, Erin, said she was appalled that there were additional fees for Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) classes and exams. "I'm forced to figure out how to pay these fees or sacrifice pushing my children to excel academically and setting them up for greater success in life and college," she said. Anderson confirmed that fees for AP and IB classes have historically been passed onto parents.

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