Craft Distilling
Backwards Style
James Reeb
Rooted in History and Casper
Letting Nature Teach
Footprints
A publication of the Casper College Alumni Association
Published twice a year.

Alumni Board Members
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This Issue of Footprints is Dedicated to Richard Fujita
Casper College bids farewell to Public Relations Director Richard Fujita as he moves back east. Much of the success of Footprints magazine is thanks to his innovative vision and the creative environment he valued. Thank you, Rich for all your contributions to Casper College. We wish you the very best.
Dear Friends
and Fellow Alums,

Friends and fellow alumni, as I write this, we are at the culmination of another academic year. There were so many activities during the spring semester that it’s hard to fit them all in. At the annual Homecoming games on February 14, your CC Alumni Board not only provided free chili, but, balloons, and face-painting. Then in March, many members donated time to the scholarship “judge-a-thon.” We also awarded 11 alumni scholarships for next year.

Commencement 2015 was another great success with over 600 total graduates and 262 students crossing the stage at the Casper Events Center to celebrate the end of their matriculation, and joining the ranks of “alumni.” The celebration was bittersweet however, as Dr. Walter Nolte led his last commencement ceremony before his planned retirement this summer. His dedication and leadership over the past 11 years have been outstanding. He will leave large shoes to fill, I think. Dr. Nolte also doubled ably as keynote speaker giving a fine address about the importance of education in developing the flexibility, leadership, and informed citizenship that will be needed by both the new grads and by society. Once again we provided t-shirts with the graduate names for sale; all of the proceeds will go towards the Class of 2015 scholarship gift. Last year, two $750 scholarships were awarded on behalf of the previous graduating class.

There are already projects in the works for the future. On August 26, once again, we will be co-hosting the final Wednesday Night Live free concert at the NIC downtown. In the fall is our exciting new event; the inaugural T-Bird Trek scheduled for Sunday, September 20, with a half-marathon, a 5K, and a 2K fun run, plus lots of on-campus activities. It will be a great way to highlight our terrific campus and the new Jorgensen/Bryce Commons, which was dedicated May 18 in honor of longtime Casper College Foundation Board members, John Jorgensen and George Bryce.

All in all, a lot of activity for your CC Alumni Association and dedicated staff.

I hope you’re having a great summer.
Dear Ms. Nix:

It is always a joy to receive the Casper College Footprints learning of all the developments and expansion happening at Casper College. It is especially interesting to find articles about my former classmates. The issue for Summer 2014 really caught my eye due to the number of familiar faces found on its pages, such as the letters by Charles Spratt and Mike Davis.

What I am finally writing about is the article, “Multigenerational Remembrances,” by Jolyn Kraen Wynn (69). I still have the silly grin on my face that grew as I took a trip down memory lane after reading the article.

You see, I was a member of the nursing class referred to when Mrs. Wynn talked about her sisters, Janet Kraen Karski and Joan Kraen. I found myself seeing faces and trying to remember names that I knew so well some 50+ years ago. It was heart-warming to remember the time spent at Casper College.

I had forgotten that Janet Karski was a member of the 5-50 club. I still remembered, however, Joan Kraen’s long legs and distinctive walk. The family history of these girls and their family is truly inspiring.

I attended Casper College 1960-1961 after graduating high school in Worland, Wyoming, with the help of a scholarship and book grant. The Lions Club and Casper Service League Scholarships allowed me to continue at Casper College. Having no funds was scary, but determination was my middle name. A lot of part-time jobs, and free room and board from my grandmother, helped get me through the full two years.

While at Casper College, I grew and participated in everything I could manage: president of the Associated Women Students (Tommy Ann Eager, another classmate, was the student body treasurer); cheerleader for the Thunderbirds (I still have my T-Bird sweater emblem); member of both women’s and mixed choirs (Russell Schwejda was the BEST!!); vice president of the Student Nurse Association of Casper College (I think Janet Kraen Karski was the president); secretary of the Wyoming Association of Student Nursing (Hazel Peterson, another classmate was the president); and representative of Casper College at the National Association of Student Nursing held in Cleveland, Ohio in 1961. I was in the Casper College Outing Club, where I met my future husband, Gary Cole (’58) and was in the Casper College production of “South Pacific” until I had to quit due to my need to work. All of these activities were things that I am sure that I could not have done at any other institution but Casper College. There was opportunity and freedom that no other school could have provided for its students.

After going on to get my nursing diploma at the University of Wyoming in 1960, a Bachelor of Science Degree in 1970, and a commission as an Officer in the United States Air Force, I worked in nursing for 45 years and retired from the world’s most satisfying profession, thanks primarily to the opportunities and experiences afforded to me by Casper College.

All of the student nurses in my class participated in community activities such as the Nurses Bowl for Health Fund with doctors Phibbs, Clark, Holmes, Murphy and pharmacist, Oscar Ray. We also had luncheons with the hospital nurses who helped us all get the best well-rounded education possible.

Dorothy Putnam, along with Mrs. Harrington, was always there for all of us and added greatly to our educational and social growth.

It is with extreme thanks to you for this trip down memory lane, that I tell you how much pride and awe I feel when I see what has happened to the college. It has evolved into an educational experience second to none. (The HiFi Simulation Lab in the nursing department is simply awesome!).

Please know how much your publication means to everyone to whom you send it. Also, please accept my gratitude for this experience of reminiscence.

Judith Baker Cole (’62)
Breathe fresh Wyoming air during the T-Bird Trek Half-Marathon, 5K, and 2K races Sunday, September 20, 2015, sponsored by Bromley Real Estate. Courses showcase the transformed Casper College campus. The 2K is free. Proceeds from the event support alumni scholarships and projects. Celebrate education, health, and the Casper community during the T-Bird Trek. The first race begins at 9 a.m. Sign up today at caspercollege.edu.
Andre Bohren to Play for ARTCORE Concert

Andre Bohren (’01) returns to Casper on October 18 at 4 p.m. for a concert for ARTCORE. The classically trained pianist transferred from Casper College to Loyola University in New Orleans where he studied for an additional two years. After a 10-year break from formal education, he is putting the finishing touches on his bachelor’s degree in music studies at the University of New Orleans. Bohren founded the New Orleans funk-rock band, Johnny Sketch and the Dirty Notes, and mans the drums and percussion chair. They have released six albums and toured across the country for over a decade, playing such renowned venues as Red Rocks Amphitheater, the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival, and New York’s Knitting Factory. Last summer, they performed at the 2014 Beartrap Summer Festival on Casper Mountain. Bohren appeared in the HBO series, Treme. When not playing piano, Bohren can be found working with many artists around New Orleans, including JSOD, Dave Jordan, Rory Danger & the Danger Dangers, The Write Brothers, and his father Spencer Bohren. Next spring, watch for ARTCORE concert dates for percussionist Susan Powell (’90), another CC alumnuus.

Casper College Bucks the National Trend
College adds three new online degrees in year

At Casper College, distance education enrollment accounts for 25 percent of the total full-time equivalent (FTE) student numbers and it continues to grow. The Casper College Distance Education program has added three new online degrees to its existing five online degrees within the last academic year. The eight degrees are accounting, general studies, general agriculture, hospitality, agri-business, computer science, early childhood education, and fire science. “With technology enhancements and changes, creating and maintaining quality online education is vital,” said David Siemens, director of the digital learning department, who noted that the goal of the Casper College Distance Education program is to put students first.

Casper College’s online FTE over a 10-year period has increased by 10 percent. Within this last academic year Casper College’s distance education program had the second largest increase at two percent in that 10-year period. Siemens attributes this growth to the great faculty and the hard work of his team.

Footprints Salutes “Mick” McMurry

One of the namesakes of the Mick and Susie McMurry Mainstage, Neil Albert “Mick” McMurry (’65) passed away on March 10, 2015 in Casper. Known as an entrepreneur, businessman, and philanthropist with a caring heart, Mick and his wife Susie provided generously to many Casper College initiatives including the Jorgensen/Bryce Commons, renovation of the main theatre located in the former Gertrude Krampert Theatre Complex and computer-related infrastructure. Casper College is a better place because of Mick’s commitment to his community.
The Jorgensen/Bryce Commons, located outside the Casper College Student Union building, was recently dedicated.

“The commons was named in honor of John Jorgensen and George Bryce, who have led the Casper College Foundation for a combined total of more than five decades,” said Paulann Doane, executive director of the foundation. The focal point of the commons is the bronze statue “Best Friends” by Loveland, Colorado artist Linda Prokop, which was provided by Jorgensen and Bryce.

Casper College has selected Darren Divine, Ph.D., vice president for academic affairs/acting vice president of student affairs from the Community College of Southern Nevada in Las Vegas, to serve as the next president of Casper College.

The Casper College Board of Trustees selected Divine through a unanimous vote. Divine was one of three candidates who visited the campus in late March.

“Casper College is very fortunate to find such a qualified candidate as Dr. Divine. He has a passion for education and for the success of each and every student. He knows maintaining a superior college is an important element of a successful and vibrant community. His broad experience as an administrator bodes well for his success at Casper College,” said Susan Miller, Casper College trustee and chair of the presidential search committee.

Divine brings more than 18 years of higher education experience to Casper College. He has served as faculty for the University of Nevada at Las Vegas as well as the Community College of Southern Nevada. He has also served as department chair of biological sciences and associate vice president of academic affairs at the College of Southern Nevada previous to his last role at the school.

Divine holds a Ph.D. in biological science from the University of Nevada, a master of science in wildlife science from New Mexico State University, and a bachelor of science in biology from the University of New Mexico.

Divine began on July 1, 2015 and succeeds Walter Nolte, Ph.D. who retired June 30 after 11 years of service to the college and community.

Jorgensen/ Bryce Commons Dedicated

Left, John Jorgensen and right, George Bryce.
Nolte Recognized at Reception

Retiring Casper College President, Walter H. Nolte, Ph.D. was recognized in May with a reception held in his honor in the Chapman Lobby of the newly renamed Gateway Building. In Nolte’s honor the building is now known as the Walter H. Nolte Gateway Center.

1. Daughter and son present their dad with gag gifts for his retirement. 2. The reception allowed for guests to visit and enjoy delicious food. 3. A life-sized Dr. Nolte was available for attendees to pose with, complete with a white board for comments. 4. Jim Rose, Executive Director, Wyoming Community College Commission and Paul Young, Ph.D. Northern Wyoming Community College District President, present Nolte with a numbered lithograph of “The Presidents” by CC alumnus Zachary Pullen (’98). 5. One of three cakes created by CC Foundation Executive Assistant Becky Wise for the reception. 6. CC Art instructor Justin Hayward unveiled his portrait of Nolte. 7. CC Fire Science Technology students held a banner featuring the new name of the Gateway Building during the reception. Be sure to check out caspercollege.edu/alumni, “news and events” tab, for a humorous poem written by Ken Anderson in honor of Nolte.
Nursing Faculty Meets Governor

Casper College nursing students and faculty visited the Wyoming state legislature for Nurses Day on February 5, 2015. “We were able to sit as a group in the governor’s office discussing important issues such as the Wyoming Investment in Nursing program, death with dignity, child abuse, and several other topics. He was very receptive to our ideas, and he addressed each and every student by name,” said Marianne Madariaga, nurse educator. Pictured from left to right: Sarah Hurtado, Madariaga, Shana Pilny, McKenzie Miller, Chelsea Mock, Gov. Matt Mead, Mallory Wright, Rachel Wilson, Sarah Nicely, and Crystal Baughman.

CC Hosts Citizenship Ceremony

Casper College hosted 29 immigrants from 15 countries as they took their oath of allegiance and became U.S. citizens on Monday, May 11, 2015.

The ceremony took place in the Wheeler Concert Hall, located in the Music Building and was presided over by the Honorable Judge Scott Skavdahl. The 29 immigrants came from Brazil, Canada, Cuba, Czech Republic, Gabon, Mexico, Moldova, Morocco, Philippines, Poland, Russia, Thailand, Ukraine, United Kingdom, and Venezuela.

Included in the group were two connected to Casper College: former student Larissa Skinner (AA, ’14) from Brazil and Joann Colina, currently majoring in medical laboratory technician, from Venezuela.

Soup Labyrinth Raises Funds

The Casper College Foundation partnered with Platte River Trails for the first time this past February for a creative fundraiser called the Soup Labyrinth to raise funds for the Norma June Brown Art Scholarship for Ceramics at Casper College and The Bart Rea Learning Circle, a Platte River Trails project within Amoco Park on the North Platte near the Tate Pumphouse. Nearly 150 citizens, CC students, alums, and faculty attended. Local businesses and artists provided their creations or music including many CC alums. Mike Olson, Casper College ceramics instructor, taught everyone how to decorate their own bowls earlier in the month from which guests later ate delicious soup homemade by Jeremy and Libby Tedder Hugus and their soup group. In the end, $8,500 was raised and split equally between the two nonprofits. Bill Conte, Casper College theatre instructor, performed poetry.

Many schools and groups within the college plan to use the Bart Rea Learning Circle as an educational gathering area on the beautiful North Platte River. Named for Rea, the area also features a labyrinth and reflects Rea’s love for the outdoors, culture, the river, birds, and the Casper community. A bevy of Casper College alums and employees have donated their talents and time to make it happen. Construction on the project has begun with hopes of finishing by September 2015.

PTK President’s Project Completed

The Zeta Alpha Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa recently completed its “President’s Project,” the President’s Garden. Located outside to the south and west of the top floor of the Thorsen Institute of Business, the project features the repainted Thunderbird metal sculpture, a pathway, small garden, seating bench, and a marble plaque recognizing Casper College President, Walter Nolte, Ph.D.

Thank you...

There were just so many great stories for this edition of Footprints that we ran out of space for the “thank you to our donors page.” But, you haven’t been forgotten and will be included in the Casper College Foundation’s annual report to be issued this fall. Look for it in your mailbox.
They’re learning, really, they are. The four eighth-grade boys gave their own version of how not to behave in the outdoors in a laughter-filled skit, climaxing their three-day, two-night stay at Casper Mountain Science School (CMSS) in April. They acted out lessons learned about not tangling with wildlife, keeping track of each other, and avoiding hypothermia.

“I actually don’t like school,” one confided, “but this was fun.” It could be that he likes science after all; maybe he’s even good at it. He’s got the journal of science observations to prove it.

Learning in the outdoors, from college-aged teachers, was the dream of Casper College Life Science instructor Evert Brown, Ph.D. He leaped at the chance to use his sabbatical in 2007 to investigate if Casper’s unsung gem of an outdoor classroom – Casper Mountain – could host a special Wyoming science program. Bringing local middle-school students to Casper Mountain to learn science from Casper College students “can be a powerful benefit for both age groups,” he said.

For the college students, it “fixes what they know when they teach it to someone else,” Brown said. The middle-school students connect well to people just a few years older.

In Brown’s opinion, “It gives them a sense of, ‘Hey, I want to be like that.’” He is now living the saying, “Be careful what you wish for.” In the 2014-2015 school year, more than 1,600 young science students came to the Casper Mountain Science School that grew out of that sabbatical idea. It was a 300 percent jump in enrollment over three years.

Brown worked with Natrona County School District Middle School Science teacher Carolyn Jacobs (AS, ’85) to start a small pilot project bringing college students to teach science to eighth graders at the Girl Scout Camp Sacajawea on Casper Mountain. Soon, demand led to a
10-month program where the newly created Casper Mountain Science School rents Camp Sac from August to early June. Students stay in the camp yurts and spend their days tramping over the mountain acreage, gathering specimens for their journals and presenting the results of their research at night.

**It was the right program at the right time.**

Enthusiasm among Natrona County teachers led to an explosion of attendance at CMSS. Jacobs remembers the pilot program when, “It was so obvious after the first day what a wonderful thing the program was, and that it worked.” In the recent academic year ending in June 2015, more than 1,600 students of a variety of ages came to the mountain for the school’s brand of “Letting Nature Teach” (the CMSS motto). Helping students get over resistance to learning science is a major goal at the school. Jacobs knows from experience what that’s like: “I didn’t like science at all until I came to Casper College as a student myself and met Tom Clifford and Jim Milek,” she said. Now she takes what she learned as a student and passes the enthusiasm on to a new generation.

And the success isn’t only about science knowledge, said Jacobs, but also “the personal connections that they made with each other and the bond with nature, seeing what Casper Mountain can be in their lives.”

Time on the mountain with classmates changes students, said Poison Spider School Principal Tammy Kelly. She tells the story of middle school students who came back from their days and nights together on the mountain a transformed class. The rest of the 2014-2015 school year was far more productive and cohesive because of the personal changes and growth in the students after their September trip, according to the principal.

For a television report on this collaborative learning photographed on a beautiful September day, see the Casper Mountain Science School website caspercollege.edu/cmss/index.html.

**All seasons, all ages**

Part of the science school’s growth is because of the variety of students who attend. They range from age 5 to over 70. A new program in spring 2015 brought college students interested in teaching science to stay at the camp for three weeks, earning five college credits for science and education (LIFE 1020 and EDCI 1430). The students lived on the mountain and experienced an intensive immersion in teaching science in an outdoor setting.

From a one-week pilot project, CMSS programs now continue from September through June. The time at school changes dramatically in winter, when ground is covered by several feet of snow. Sets of snowshoes hang on the lodge deck, and students snowshoe up to several miles a day, learning about snow science and survival in cold weather.

They dig snow pits and measure snow levels, they build “snow babies” (tiny snowmen), and learn how to protect them from hypothermia. Meals are provided by the Casper College food service, Sodexo, and the winter students report that they’ve never tasted anything better than hot breakfast with hot chocolate on the mountain.

Jeff Willett, Carl Regis, and Trevor Foos tried out an old-fashioned style snowshoe on their visit to Casper Mountain Science School with Poison Spider School classmates in April, 2015. *Photo by Janice Bovankovich.*

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**Community support fuels growth**

It took a leap of faith and money support for CMSS to be born. The Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) embraced the school from the beginning. BOCES is a joint venture of Casper College and the Natrona County School District that underwrote the startup years and continues to support the school. Both Casper College and the school district pay expenses for many of the programs.

For Brown, the fast growth and increasing financial infusions mean more big ideas ahead. From his sabbatical research on the importance of educating science students “in place” outdoors, he hopes to extend the CMSS reach to more college courses and students beyond Natrona County.

For the Summit Elementary students who didn’t want to come into the lodge after their day outdoors, this offers promise. The last word from a second grader in September, “So we get to have even more fun?”

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**Brown Named STEM Educator of the Year**

Evert Brown, Ph.D. has been named Postsecondary STEM Educator of the Year by the Wyoming Department of Education for 2015. The award recognizes excellence in promoting and supporting science education in K-12 and beyond, and recognizes his accomplishment in directing the Casper Mountain Science School as well other activities.
People rarely connect Casper, Wyoming with the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s, but they couldn’t be more wrong. Fifty years ago this past March, lives were forever changed in Casper, in Selma, Alabama, and across the United States. A Casper family lost their son, father, and husband. The world gained a martyr and history was forever written.

James Reeb - Civil Rights Martyr:
A Granddaughter Remembers

by Leah Reeb
People rarely connect Casper, Wyoming with the Civil Rights movement of the 1950’s and 1960s, but they couldn’t be more wrong. Fifty years ago this past March, lives were forever changed in Casper, in Selma, Alabama and across the United States. A Casper family lost their son, father, and husband. The world gained a martyr and history was forever written.

My grandfather, James Joseph (Reeb) Rape was born January 1, 1927 in Wichita, Kansas to Harry and Mae (Reeb) Rape. Rape was the Anglicized last name of Reeb, however the family reverted back to Reeb soon after James was ordained. James was a very sick child and his early years were challenging. A debilitating battle with rheumatic fever forced much of his childhood to be spent laying flat on his back in bed to take pressure off his heart and lungs. Because of this, he had a frail frame and what some would say an awkward appearance when paired with thick glasses and slightly crossed eyes. His mother, having recognized his perceived physical disadvantages, was determined that he be given every opportunity to excel personally, religiously, and within his education ... and so he did.

The unstable economy and dwindling job market in Kansas led the family to Casper, Wyoming in 1942. Harry began working at Western Oil & Tool Manufacturing Co. (WOTCO) now known as Westech. James began his sophomore year at Natrona County High School (NCHS) in September 1942. His teachers and fellow classmates knew him as Jim and recall him as being a passionate, morally committed, well spoken, and above all, courteous young man. It was obvious that he had a knack for debate, often finding himself against the majority defending his beliefs. Many of these discussions were on local issues in Casper such as the poor community and welfare of the people. While at NCHS James quickly rose up the ranks within the ROTC and assisted with multiple youth groups.

As young as 15, James found himself drawn to the ministry. He’d often be found filling in for local ministers on Sundays. He found his
home within the church, discovering he had the capability to lead where he felt fully accepted. He was a familiar face within the churches of Winter Memorial in North Casper and the First Presbyterian Church near Casper’s City Park. He was also instrumental in the Casper Boys’ Club, a group dedicated to directing some of Casper’s young male population, many of which were minorities and with delinquent backgrounds.

He graduated in 1945 and soon after joined the U.S. Army where he served in California and Alaska before returning home in the winter of 1946. That previous year, Wyoming’s first junior college, later to be known as Casper College, was established and located on the third floor at NCHS. James enrolled in classes using his GI Bill to attend. During this time he met a beautiful young woman, a senior named Marie Deason. She would later become his wife.

In 1947, James enrolled at St. Olaf College, a Lutheran school in Northfield, Minnesota. His goal was to become a minister himself. To be taken more seriously, he opted to legally change his last name from Rape to Reeb. Two years later he and Marie were married in Casper.

In the fall of 1950, James began his studies at Princeton University majoring in theology. Summers were spent back in Wyoming where he enjoyed camping, hiking, and fossil hunting just outside Douglas. In 1952, my father John was born.

After graduation from Princeton and the years that followed, James and Marie welcomed three more children: Karen, Anne, and Steven. During that time he served as chaplain at the Philadelphia General Hospital where he dedicated much of his time to poor African American patients, ensuring they received necessary medical care as well as chapel services. This was followed by a youth director position at the local inner city YMCA where he abolished the racial quota system, implemented integrated busing, and created multiple family and youth organizations to set kids and their parents on the right track.

Social ministry became a passion for James. In 1959, the family moved to Washington, D.C. where he accepted the associate minister position at All Souls Church, again focusing on community development within blighted areas of the city.

In 1964, James moved his family to Roxbury, a ghetto neighborhood in Boston. He held a position with the American Friends Service Committee and worked on equalizing housing codes for the poor African American and Hispanic neighborhoods. The Reeb family was one of a few white families in Roxbury. The eldest children attended the local schools, as James had wanted it. He could not preach or create change if he himself did not experience the disadvantages.

On Sunday night, March 7, 1965, James and Marie watched the 11 p.m. news showcasing the Bloody Sunday attacks from earlier that day. Hundreds, the majority of them African Americans, attempted to peacefully march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge to

“I believe it is our job to say to each other that this life is unfair ... There is no rhyme or reason to it except the passion for fairness and justice that we can bring to it ... and the determination we can marshal to bring a fairness into life that isn’t naturally there."

— James Reeb, All Souls Church, 1964

Left: Memorial marker at location where Reeb was attacked.

Leah, and her father John Reeb in Selma, Alabama for the 50th Anniversary of Bloody Sunday.
Leah Reeb is the granddaughter of the Rev. James Reeb. She graduated from Casper College in 2004 and the University of Wyoming in 2008 with her master’s in public administration. She also served as Casper College student body president during her time at Casper College. Four generations of the Reeb family have attended Casper College. Leah recently returned to Casper with her husband, Jon, after living abroad in Costa Rica. She currently works as a travel consultant for Central America for the Costa Rican based company, NAMU. In her free time she enjoys travel, reading, spending time with friends and family, and anything in the great outdoors.
Kathy, Amber, Chad, and Bill Pollock stand in front of their custom-made kother still from Germany.
Starting a family business is a lot of things all at once. It is scary of course, as is any new venture.

It is trying at times, dealing with a combination of new business issues, family issues, and family business issues all at the same time. It is certainly exciting to take on such a big project, even more so when getting to share it with family members. Most of all, it is fulfilling. The opportunity to share a passion, an adventure, and an all-consuming endeavor with family is such a rare and valuable thing. The Pollocks anticipated some of this when they embarked on opening Backwards Distilling Company in Mills, Wyoming. The rest they learned along the way.

The light bulb moment for the business came in October of 2012. The Pollocks were eating dinner together, as they usually did, in downtown Casper discussing the state of Chad Pollock’s spirit collection. Chad had shown an interest in spirits from the moment it was legal for him to do so. By the ripe age of 23 he had already accumulated a formidable collection of spirits from gin to bourbon. His spirit of choice though, was absinthe. He had acquired all absinthe varieties to be had in town and had travelled around the country and internationally, adding to his collection along the way. Chad’s mom, Kathy, suggested he make his own. At this suggestion all four Pollocks took pause, wondering if such a thing was possible. The possibility of that jumped out to them as a very exciting prospect.

This suggestion kicked off a whirlwind of online research. They found that it was not only possible to make spirits, provided proper licensing, but also that small distilleries were booming in the United States. The “craft distilling industry” was trending upward, following a similar trajectory to that of the craft brewing industry. Armed with this knowledge and a budding excitement for the potential of starting a distillery, the Pollocks began to seriously consider the possibility of pursuing this idea. It seemed a perfect fit. Chad was already a spirits enthusiast, his sister Amber had a passion and penchant for great cocktails, Kathy was in need of a career change after nine years teaching elementary school, and his father Bill was looking for an alternative to retirement after 29 years working in and later co-owning a small business.

After an obligatory deliberation period, all four Pollocks decided to take the plunge. There was a short debate about whether to open the distillery in Casper or if it would be better suited to another location. Ultimately the Pollocks decided that a distillery could be a great addition to Casper and could contribute positivity to the vibrancy of the community. Also Casper had always been home to all of them. Bill and Kathy moved to Casper when they were young children and Chad and Amber were both born there. By January of 2013 they had secured a location for their distillery. There were many specifications for a location. The building needed to be in a somewhat industrial area but couldn’t be too far from downtown Casper. It needed 18-foot ceilings, ample storage space, and some sort of nonwarehouse space that could be converted into the tasting room. After a search around town, the Pollocks found a building that fit these criteria in Mills.

With a building obtained, the hard work could begin. The family was starting at the ground floor of the industry. There was much to learn and the learning curve was steep. Chad travelled the
country for the better part of a year, attending conferences, workshops, and apprenticeships to acquire a base knowledge not only about the process of distillation itself, but knowledge of how to set up a distillery, how to get licensed, how to source materials, and other necessities. Meanwhile, the Pollocks used their DIY skills, honed over years of remodeling their own houses and working construction, to remodel office space into the tasting room.

As months passed, the vision of the distillery came into focus. The process of opening the distillery had so many facets that there were always multiple projects going on simultaneously. As progress inched forward on the construction of both the distillery and the tasting room, the Pollocks waited for the still to arrive from Germany so they could take the next steps in recipe and process development. Their custom made Kothe still arrived at Backwards Distilling Company in February 2014, having travelled by boat, train, and truck all the way to Mills. They could finally begin working on the recipe for their flagship product, Ringleader Vodka.

Processes for mashing, fermenting, distilling, and filtering were tweaked over the course of the next few months. The goal was to develop a process that would yield a clean and smooth vodka that would get the brand off to a successful start. While they were developing the recipe, they were also busy developing the branding for the products. Since they were young, both Pollock children had cultivated an interest in juggling, unicycling, and other circus skills. Additionally the family sought out Cirque du Soleil shows all over the country and, as of this writing, have seen more than 15 shows.
prohibition-era circus sideshow theme seemed a natural fit for them and was appealing as a theme because there was so much imagery to attach to it. The product line they conceived included Ringleader Vodka, Contortionist Gin, Strongman Gin, and Sword Swallower Rum.

When the holiday season of 2014 was drawing near, the Backwards team worked nonstop to get the vodka ready for launch. Once the recipe was finalized, the first batch was bottled, labeled, and packed for shipment. They successfully launched Ringleader Vodka in November 2014 and opened the tasting room in December 2014. More recently, they launched Contortionist Gin and Milk Can Moonshine. They are currently working on Sword Swallower Rum.

The Pollocks have been excited to find ways to get involved with the local community as well as in other communities around the state. All four attended Casper College at some point. Both Bill and Kathy are graduates of the University of Wyoming/Casper College Center, now the University of Wyoming at Casper. Giving back to the community is an important part of the philosophy at Backwards Distilling Company. They have been involved with fundraisers for numerous local and statewide nonprofits including the Casper College Foundation, the Platte River Trails Foundation, and The Science Zone. They also focus on innovation in order to bring new experiences to their customers. Some of these include vodka infusion classes, spirits history classes, and cocktail classes. The family has been thrilled by the reception of the community and looks forward to continued growth throughout Wyoming.
Ola Belle (Smith) Burley (AA ’51), called the alumni office recently to ask about African Americans at Casper College and in Casper. Her call was prompted when she received the Winter 2015 edition of Footprints. Ola Belle was such a delight to talk to that we asked this Casper native if she would share some memories with Footprints.

Ola Belle is the second oldest of five children, consisting of three brothers, Calvin Smith (deceased 2003), Ervin Smith (AA, ’55), George Edward Smith, and one sister Marietta (Smith) Jones (AA, ’53) (deceased 2013). Ola Belle’s life in Casper was a happy one, filled with love and admiration from family and friends.

She attended Willard Elementary School and graduated from Natrona County High School in 1949. She grew up in a house on Burlington Ave. in east Casper and noted that the other African American families lived in north Casper.

Ola Belle’s vocal career began at the age of 9. During her junior year at NCHS, Ava M. Shields arrived in Casper and began formal singing lessons with Ola Belle.
Ola Belle was in the Madrigal Choir and remembers Ava Shields and Russell Schweda as instructors, and classmates Pat (AA, ’53) and Kathryn (AA, ’51) Tripeny, Dick Sedar, Mary Karantzas, and Louis Henderson (AA, ’51). While in Casper, she also sang with the City Band in Washington Park.

Later, through the diligent efforts of Ola Belle’s high school music teacher, Grace (Slind) Jacobs and Professor Archie Jones (University of Texas), an opportunity arose for her to audition for I.A. Jofe, the concert manager of the renowned contralto Marion Anderson. Ola Belle connected with Marion Anderson and her publicist/agent down in Denver. When she had lunch with the agent, Ola Belle was turned away from the lunch counter, something that had never happened to her in Casper. Ola Belle sang three songs: an aria, a classic and a spiritual for Mr. Jofe, who complimented her on the performance, and told her she definitely had the voice to be a concert singer.

At Casper College, Ola Belle studied under vocal instructor Schweda, who taught her ear training and sight-reading. She was a member of the Casper College Choir. Ola Belle also remembers English instructor Mrs. Ross from her CC days. Following her graduation from Casper College, Ola Belle moved to Denver where she had been accepted as a vocal student of Forrest F. Fishel, a professor at the University of Denver.

In Denver, Ola Belle was employed at the Air Force Accounting and Finance Center. She married, and subsequently became the mother of two sons (Michael and Brian). While in Denver, she also sang with the City Band in Washington Park.

In 1970 Ola Belle received a promotion to chief of the Coast Guard Allotment Branch, Department of Transportation in Washington D.C. She worked for the U.S. Department of Transportation and retired after more than 44 years of service as a travel regulations specialist having received the Distinguished Service Award for sustained and excellent service. While at the Coast Guard she worked with Doug Snyder, another CC alum.

After her retirement, she took a position with the Prince George’s County Memorial Library System for eight years and subsequently retired in 2008. Ola Belle particularly enjoys performing at events that benefit children. A few years ago, she organized a concert in Maryland to benefit the children of Rwanda. When she tells people she grew up in Casper, Wyoming they are skeptical, and tell her that there are no black people in Wyoming. She quickly corrects them. People also ask what schools she attended in Casper and she explains she attended the same schools as everyone else in town, laughs, and asks, “You think they’d have a different school for six African-American families?”

Some of Ola Belle’s other accomplishments:

- Appointed Black Affairs coordinator for Coast Guard Headquarters, Department of Transportation.
- Speech coach for the Ebony Ladies and Gents organization, which sponsored the Junior Miss Ebony pageant for 12 years.
- Performing soloist in the Concert Hall at the John F. Kennedy Center.
- Fulfilled numerous appearances at Mother of Zion, AME Church in New York City.
- Appeared as a soloist in Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia. Formerly the church pastored by Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Served as a volunteer with the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education (NAFEO) for over 12 years.
- Additional concert appearances have included New Orleans; Los Angeles; San Antonio; Durham, North Carolina; Baltimore; Detroit; and Knoxville, Tennessee.
April 2, 2015

Dear President Nolte:

While searching for the Casper College publication in which I was featured I stumbled across (literally) something much older.

In 1968, I borrowed the enclosed CC Music Department trumpet mute. Concerned that you might erroneously think it had been stolen, I am returning it to clear my reputation (and conscience). Perhaps some aspiring young trumpeter will find it useful.

Please accept my appreciation for this long-term loan, and let me know whether there is anything else I might borrow.

Best regards,
Donald Hardy

April 24, 2015

Dear President Nolte:

Thank you sincerely for acknowledging my voluntary return of the trumpet mute I “borrowed” almost half a century ago – and also for presenting a carefully crafted invoice itemizing the rather sizeable rental payment due. That you calculated it to the penny is most impressive.

In response to this, I am enclosing a copy of my “Shooting from the Lip, The Life of Senator Al Simpson” – which I signed, as did the Senator. In crafting the text, I worked six hours per day, five or more days a week, for five years. Estimating the value of my effort at the ridiculously modest rate of $20 per hour, my labor totaled $156,000, plus expenses. Since this amount is roughly six times what I owe for mute rental, I trust you will jump at the chance to accept the book – which was the Wyoming Historical Society’s biography of the year and won second place in a national competition – as payment in full.

However, if for any reason you are hesitant to appreciate the value of this limited-time offer, I have authorized myself to proffer an additional act of generosity. Since your music department seems in complete disarray, given that you are unaware of my harboring a second mute all this time, I will voluntarily return it as well – and at absolutely no additional cost to you.

Thank you in advance for closing the books on the case of the missing mute(s).

Most sincerely,
Don Hardy

PS: If you decide for some unfathomable reason to reject my offer, please return the book.

April 13, 2015

Dear Mr. Hardy,

Thank you for the return of the trumpet mute. Not being a musician, I was initially uncertain what it was, thinking a cup mute was some way of making a quiet cup of coffee.

After an exhaustive search of our files in the music department (three minutes) we determined that the rental rate for the mute was 5 cents per day. At 46 years and four months, this equals 16,910 days or so or $845.50. I then turned to our mathematics department to see if they could compute an accumulated rate of interest. Using a modest four percent, they determined that the outstanding balance was $28,436.43. You may send this amount to the Donald Hardy “Honesty in Music” scholarship fund, care of our foundation.

Thank you for returning the mute. As you can see, we have had a lot of fun with this lost artifact.

Sincerely,
Walter H. Nolte, Ph.D.
June 4, 2015

Dear Mr. Hardy,

Please accept my belated response and “thank you” for the copy of “Shooting From the Lip.” I am in the throes of planning and packing for my retirement from Casper College. Of course, Al Simpson is a Wyoming legend. I was sitting at Senator Simpson’s table at a roast for Dave Freudenthal and told him a joke. Next thing I know, he repeated the joke in his remarks about Governor Freudenthal, without attribution.

I accept your offer of the book in lieu of the rental/penalty charges on the returned trumpet mute, but must point out that rental and penalty charges for the second mute are still accruing.

It has been fun exchanging letters and best to you in the future.

Sincerely,
Walter H. Nolte, Ph. D.
Rodeo Championship

Men’s Rodeo Team Wins it Going Away

Rough stock riders and a red-hot ‘dogger propel Casper College to a regional championship

Assistant Casper College Rodeo Coach Jhett Johnson hooked a boot on the bottom rail of the gate panel and looked out across the arena. T-Birds were tying goats and practicing roping runs. At the other end of the practice pen, cowboys were getting horses ready to buck out. It was the day before the final rodeo of a season that started way back in September.

Rodeo number 10 would be the culmination of all that hard work and try. The Casper College men’s team was leading the team chase, but not by much. The team race had been a real donnybrook all year, a six-team pile up and the closest race in memory.

“I think we are going to have a really big rodeo,” said Johnson, the former world champion team roper, who for the past two years has served as Tom Parker’s assistant coach. “These guys are ready.”

Those were the words of the prophet, Johnson.

The following day and for the next two after that, the men in the red vests dominated at the University of Wyoming event. When the dust cleared, Casper College had racked up 620 points to win the Central Rocky Mountain Region title going away, outpointing formidable teams in Gillette, Chadron State, and the University of Wyoming. For good measure, Lacey Camp qualified on the ladies’ side in the breakaway roping. Nine red vests represented Casper College this year at the College National Finals Rodeo in June.

During Parker’s 25 years as rodeo boss, that’s the most ever. “I’m happy for the hometown fans,” the head cowboy said after the post-rodeo photo session. “And I’m happy for these kids. I’ve never had a team work harder to get where they are.”

Sunday’s finals at UW were nearly flawless for the red and white. Dantan Bertsch, Dylan Wahlert, and Neal Williams III went 1-2-3 in the bareback riding. At the end of the arena, freshman Jake Fulton was 8.6 on two head in the steer wrestling to win the short go and the rodeo. Fulton is one of the hottest cowboys on the college circuit, winning three of the last four rodeos to finish as the reserve champion steer wrestler. Drew Antone finished second in the bull riding at UW. The only disappointment for Parker was that his saddle bronc riding at UW. For the first time in Parker’s tenure, CC cowboys finished 1-2-3 for the season in their event. Cawl Braithwaite, Antone, and Williams were the top three bull riders in the region. Williams was also the fourth best bareback rider on the season and finished as the CRMR’s reserve all-around champion.

Williams did all that with a painful groin injury that plagued him throughout the spring. The Casper Natrona County High School graduate said he was looking forward to some rehab time to get ready for the CNFR. He will go down as one of Casper College’s all-time greats, the only four-time qualifier for the CNFR in program history. The National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association began allowing four years of eligibility at a two-year college just a few years ago. Still, Williams’ four-straight trips to the big event are impressive.

Williams and his bull riding mates dominated all year. Braithwaite, from Bluffton (a town of 50), Alberta, Canada, earned the championship buckle for Parker. Antone, from just up the road in Kinnear, Wyoming pushed hard all season and had a chance to overhaul his teammate for the regional title had he not bucked off on his final bull at UW.

Bertsch was outstanding all year. He led the bareback riding start to finish and is a cowboy folks will likely hear about in the years to come, maybe even in Las Vegas. Bertsch is another Albertan. Wahlert transferred to Casper this year from Lamar, Colorado when his parents moved to Wyoming, giving Parker a 1-2 punch in the bareback event, a specialty that Casper College has owned for the past decade.

Lacey Camp will make her second straight appearance in the CNFR after finishing runner-up in the breakaway roping.

For Parker, another flag, and the fourth team appearance in the last five years for the Casper College men’s team.
For the past 10 years Bill Landen (AS, ’76) has served as associate vice president of Casper College Student Services and athletic director. Prior to that, he served 20 years as the college’s public relations director. Landen graduated from Casper College and now serves in the Wyoming Senate representing District 27.

Five Questions
Landen Looks Back on a Labor of Love
40 years of Reflection

01. In those 40 years what stands out?
A: During my 40 years of association with Casper College, so many memorable events, moments and, of course, people stand out. I have been blessed to have worked with every generation of the college. I met and worked with our college founders like Harold Josendal and Dr. (Tim) Aley. I can’t name them all but people like Bill Henry, Dale Stiles, Swede Erickson, Tom Clifford, Jim Milek, John Brady, LeRoy Strausner, and Tom Empey are just some of the names that really bring a smile.

02. What has changed the most?
A: In my mind, two things have changed the most at Casper College. The culture has changed on college campuses everywhere and this one is no different. Social media and instant messaging, people on the go, and every student working means fewer conversations on the sidewalks. The second big change is the skyline. Casper College’s physical plant has grown tremendously and all those new spaces should really benefit our students.

03. Talk about your association with Casper College; how did it start?
A: I have always said that two phone calls brought and kept me at Casper College. One call I received from Arlene Larson, then the journalism instructor here. She wanted me to come to Casper College and be on the newspaper staff. I don’t think I would have attended college here had it not been for that personal phone call. I eventually became the Chinook editor, and loved my two years here. Not too many years later I was sitting at my editor’s desk at the Star-Tribune newspaper and Dr. (Lloyd) Loftin called me. He wanted to hire me to help create a professional public relations effort for the college. I accepted and was thrilled to come back.

04. You have served in several capacities in your college career. What are some of the memories you will take away?
A: I’m proud of the work we did to establish a professional public relations operation at the college. It was Dr. Loftin who supported the idea of an alumni association, so with the help of Norm Ball (former math and science instructor) I started one. Later we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the college, erecting the “Spirit of the Thunderbird” statue created by friend and alumnus Chris Navarro (’90). I actually taught journalism and advised the Chinook newspaper along with my role in public relations; it was a long year but the newspaper staff won a general excellence award in a regional competition. Of course there are a lot of fond memories of the athletic teams and times on radio, before and after I became athletic director.

05. What message do you leave with colleagues?
A: Don’t forget that every day you have a chance to make a difference in someone’s life. That’s what Casper College does.
Twenty Retire from Casper College

Casper College said farewell to 20 employees who accounted for a total of nearly 419 years during the 2015 Recognition and Retirement Banquet.

Rick Burgin started working for Casper College on August 27, 2001. He was an instructor for the Adult Learning Center at Casper College. When he began, the center was known as the Casper College ABE/GED Center.

Dick Burnett began his career at Casper College on April 2, 2007 as the power technology instructor. He left the college as the program director for the renewable energy, aviation, power technology, and process technology programs as well as the coordinator for the Perkins Grant.

Darlyn Clark began her career at Casper College on June 19, 1997 where she started, (and for the next 18 years stayed), in security working the graveyard shift.

Tom Clifford began his teaching career at Casper College on August 21, 1972. He was an instructor of biology during his entire time at Casper College. He also taught zoology for the University of Wyoming at Casper beginning in 1975.

Sissy Goodwin started his employment with Casper College on August 6, 2007 and was an electrical power technology instructor.

Arlis Handeland began working for Casper College on August 27, 1997 as the theatre and box office specialist for the Gertrude Krampert Theatre Complex now known as the Gertrude Krampert Center for Theatre and Dance.

Robin Johnson was employed in a number of capacities in the maintenance department. He began at Casper College on August 20, 1984. He ended his years at CC as the supervisor of building maintenance and operations.

Don King was employed as an enterprise database coordinator in the information technology department. He began working for the college on January 15, 2008.

Bill Landen began at Casper College on July 15, 1985 as the director of what was then known as the Office of College Relations at Casper College. When he retired from Casper College he was the associate vice president for student services and athletic director.

Beth Luers began her career at Casper College on November 28, 1978. For her first two years at the school she worked as an office assistant. For the last 34 years she was the secretary to the vice president of student services.

Jeanette Murrell started working for Casper College on August 19, 1991. She was the public services librarian at the Goodstein Foundation Library.

Walt Nolte joined the Casper College staff on July 1, 2004 becoming the seventh chief executive officer in the 70-year history of the school.

Deanna Schaff began as the director of the Math Learning Center at Casper College on August 21, 2001. During that time, she was also an adjunct instructor in the math department. When Deanna retired from the college she was the director of museums and oversaw both the Tate Geological and Werner Wildlife museums.

Kathy Snyder had been employed as a custodian at Casper College since October 7, 1982.

Gwen Stockham began her work at Casper College as a custodian on March 13, 2000.

Randy Waldron was an automotive instructor at Casper College. He began working for the school on August 19, 1998.

Vickie Weber began her career at Casper College on July 12, 1993. She was an accounting specialist in the accounting and financial management office.

Marla Wonser began working for Casper College on September 15, 1995 and was the program director for the Casper College Occupational Therapy Assistant program.

Todd Wykert began his career at Casper College on August 15, 1988. He left as the director of media services.

Kurt Zajic had been with Casper College since August 31, 1992 and most recently was employed as a grounds general maintenance II employee.

(Photo not available)
Marge Christiansen, Casper College nursing instructor, has been selected to serve on the Wyoming State Board of Nursing. She will represent education on the board. Marge is the first faculty member from Casper College to serve on this board.

Michael Deal, technical coordinator for the Digital Learning Center at Casper College and his wife Laura had a 7 lb., 7 oz. daughter on February 16, 2015. Addelyn Mae Deal was 21 inches long and her father reports that "She is a healthy, happy, and very active baby!"

Heath Hornecker, Casper College agriculture instructor, was selected as Wyoming Community College Faculty Member of the Year by the Wyoming Association of Community College Trustees. The Trustee Leadership Award was given to CC Trustee Kathy Dolan. Classified staff Melody Dugan, office assistant at the Adult Learning Center, and administrative staff Donna Sonesen, director of the Early Childhood Learning Center were also nominated for their exemplary contributions and service.

Lance D. Jones, director of security and judicial review and adjunct in the CC School of Social and Behavioral Science, has been named a Museum Teacher Fellow by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. Lance attended the first session of training for this fellowship in July 2014, and will complete the program at the museum in July 2015. Pursuant to the completion of this program, Lance submitted video of himself teaching one of his classes. He also co-facilitated a seminar for K-12 faculty on women and gender during the Holocaust remembrance at Casper College in October 2014.

Alaina Stedillie and Doug Hall married June 28, 2015, at the Joslyn Art Museum in Omaha, Nebraska. Alaina is the daughter of Michael and former CC communication instructor, Ebba Stedillie. Alaina graduated from Creighton University with a B.A. in political science in 2004 and earned a J.D. from the University of Colorado School of Law in 2007. She is an associate attorney at Lewis Roca Rothgerber LLP. The groom graduated from Southeastern Illinois College and earned an A.A. in 2005, a B.A. in communication studies from the University of Illinois – Springfield in 2011, and a M.A. in interpersonal communication from Southern Illinois University – Edwardsville in 2013. Doug is a communication instructor and director of forensics at Casper College. They met at a Casper College communication faculty dinner party.

Governor Matt Mead has appointed Ashley Mikels, Casper College Workforce Training Specialist, to serve on the Wyoming Council on Women’s Issues.

Ray Pacheco was elected to the Casper City Council in the November 2014 general election. Ray is the GEAR UP Regional Director for Casper College.

Ginny Garner, marketing and hospitality management instructor at Casper College, ran “my first distance run, ever” when she took part in the 2015 Walt Disney World 1/2 Marathon. Garner ran with over 26,000 other racers. More than 100,000 runners in total competed during the Walt Disney World Marathon Weekend. Garner ran the 1/2 marathon in 3:03:53. She also reports that Disney World is “a lot of fun!” Ginny is also the first registrant for the inaugural 2015 T-Bird Trek.

Vince Crolla, Western History Center archivist, recently earned the Digital Archives Specialist (DAS) certificate from the Society of American Archivists (SAA) after completing required coursework and passing a comprehensive examination. Crolla has been with the Western History Center at Casper College since July 1, 2011. A total of 215 people have earned Digital Archives Specialist certificates since the program began in October 2011, said Teresa Brinati, director of publishing at SAA. DAS certificate holders must complete nine courses from four tiers: foundational, tactical and strategic, tools and services, and transformational, and pass the comprehensive examination.

Roberta Marvel, Casper College Flex Lab instructor, received her doctorate in post-secondary and adult education from the University of Wyoming in May.

Walter Nolte, retired Casper College president, was honored by the Casper Chamber of Commerce with its “Person of the Year” award. The award is presented each year based on volunteer service to the community and region, volunteer services of a civic nature in nonwork related activities, accomplishments in the city and area betterment, character as a citizen, and civic trusteeship. Also recognized as a nominee was Mike Stepp (’80), owner of Donells Candies and president of the Casper College Alumni Association Board of Directors. Walt was also recognized by the Literacy Volunteers of Casper with its Community Recognition Award for his efforts in promoting adult education and student success during his tenure at Casper College.

The 2015 Casper College Retirement and Recognition Dinner featured awards to several Casper College employees. Russell Hawley, Tate Geological Museum education specialist, received the Robert Durst Classified Staff Award. The 2015 Outstanding Administrator was Leanne Sims, student success counselor, and the Garth Shanklin (former psychology and addictionology instructor) Faculty Leadership Excellence Award was given to Claudia Stewart, mathematics instructor. Scott Nolan, general business instructor and Laurie Weaver, radiology department chair and instructor, were honored with the Rosenthal Outstanding Faculty Award. The Judith Bailey Scully Award, which is given for demonstrating academic excellence for teaching, went to Gretchen Wheeler, communication instructor. Finally, the Garth Shanklin Adjunct Faculty Teaching Award was given to Leon Chamberlain, social and behavioral science instructor.

Cody Alan Foltz arrived on May 13, 2015 to parents Kyla (AS ’02) and Casey (AAS, ’03) Foltz. Cody was 7 lbs., 10 oz. and 20 ½ inches long. Kyla is director of admission services at Casper College.

Gurn Brown checked in. He and Paula are enjoying retirement in Richfield, Utah. Gurn was an agriculture instructor and Paula worked in the copy center at CC. Since retiring, Gurn has done some work with the Utah Resource Conservation and Development program. They celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in 2013. Their four children have given them 20 grandchildren. They also have one great grandchild. Gurn says they plan to stick around to see several more.

Janet de Vries, director of student success services, is the current president of the Wyoming Counseling Association and was recently recognized by the American Counseling Association for her efforts of communicating the importance and roles of
professional counselors. Janet won the 2015 Public Outreach contest and will receive a complimentary registration to the ACA 2016 Conference and Expo in Montreal, Canada.

Janice Dodson, former physical education and athletic department academic advisor, founded a homeless dog rescue and adoption service after she retired from Casper College in 1999. Rainbow Rescues, Inc., in Casper works to place homeless dogs in the right permanent homes with a focus on the long-term welfare of the dog. She also established the Rainbow Rescues Endowment Fund to support the program.

Bev Dye, who retired after she spent 27 years working for Casper College, writes, “I have an awesome volunteer position as a CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate). I was trained in February/March, sworn in on March 23, and was assigned my first case the next day. This is a very worthwhile organization, which advocates for children and their needs. I am also enjoying having time to garden, visiting my parents more often, and some short travels. We went to Moab, Utah (in the spring) for a week, and I now have a t-shirt ‘I survived Metal Masher and Widow Maker.’ Yikes!”

Pat Patton, former Casper College choral instructor and choir director and his wife Marcia were clinicians at the Heritage Spring Festival competition for high school vocal music groups and soloists held in the Bay Area of California in May.

Richard (Dick) C. Reitz, former Casper College English instructor, has written and published several books since retiring in 1990. His books are available on Amazon and Barnes and Noble websites, in print version and as e-books. His other retirement activities include nine years of motor coach residence travel. After alternating winters and summers in Wyoming and Arizona for 15 years, he is now a permanent Arizona resident.

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Robert and Janet Walkinshaw are living on Rimrock Ranch up in Sundance, Wyoming. Bob began teaching at CC in 1958, and retired after 30 years from his position as director of physical plant. Bob still takes care of a herd of 10 black bulls. As a World War II veteran of the 14th Air Force Flying Tigers, he continues to write a newsletter for the remaining vets. Bob writes that he’s “age 92 and still able to attain vertical from out of bed each morning.” He still runs into his former students. He posed two questions. “One, does the bust sculpture of Tim Aley that used to be in the library still have a cigarette stuck in its lips? Two, has anyone recently plastered the Goodstein Library Bumper Sticker sculpture with bumper stickers?” Janet was the former director of the nursing assistant program. Bob says they don’t travel for recreation anymore, but do make trips to the doctors’ offices and the pharmacy. Janet’s daughter, Holly Nye (AS, ’74), is back in Wyoming running Rimrock Ranch. Holly was the 2006 Distinguished Alumna.
1940s, 50s, 60s

Charlotte Babcock (AA, ‘49) recently gave talks on her book, “Shot Down: Capital Crimes of Casper” to two different groups. She was the featured speaker for the Ladies of the Petroleum Club in February. In June, Charlotte joined Fort Caspar Museum and the Natrona County Public Library for their final book discussion of the season. Charlotte is a member of the Casper College Alumni Association Board of Directors.

Donald F. Robb (AA, ’58) writes, “It was a pleasure to read the article on the Casper College Veteran Center (Winter 2014). This article brought back many memories of Casper College and the creation of a veterans club in, I believe, 1957. The veterans club was named the ‘550 Club’ after the veteran’s benefits claim form 550. The faculty adviser was drafting instructor, Professor Gothberg and the instigators were Marvin Hollenbeck, Donald Stumph, and myself. I know there were others involved whose names, unfortunately, have escaped my rapidly diminishing recall. I am positive all the 550 Club members are proud and happy that veterans have been and are still being recognized with a designated organization today at Casper College. Thanks to all who support and protect our freedom.”

Bill Bolles (AA, ‘66) was inducted into the National Coaches Association Hall of Fame in June at the annual convention in Rochester, Minnesota. After graduating from CC with an A.A. in English, Bill finished his undergraduate degree at the University of Northern Colorado, and later earned a M.A. from the University of Wyoming. He taught for 46 years, 44 of them in Casper, and 42 of those years at Kelly Walsh High School teaching English and coaching. Bill retired in 2010 and he and his wife moved to Iowa to be near her family.

Ron Cunningham (AS, ’68) is retiring after 38 years as a University of Wyoming Extension educator. Ron served Big Horn, Fremont, Hot Springs, Park, and Washakie counties, and the Wind River Reservation. He received several awards in the course of his career including the University’s Outstanding Educator Award and awards from the Fremont County Recreation Board, National County Agents Association, and the Wyoming County Agents Association.

1970s, 80s

Margaret (Glover) Ruvalcaba (AA, ’70) is keeping busy as a volunteer English as a Second Language tutor, an avocation she has enjoyed for 15 years. She is currently working with two female students—one Korean and one Chinese. She also volunteers at her church and works as the receptionist for her husband’s sports massage business, a position she took three years ago after giving up her RN nursing license.

Betsy Sell (AA, ’71) was honored as Wyoming’s assistant superintendent for 2015. Betsy is a Wyoming native and employed by the Cody School District. She has held the position of assistant superintendent since 2006. She earned her associate’s degree at Casper College and a bachelor’s in elementary education and a master’s in curriculum and instruction from the University of Wyoming. She has worked in education for 38 years, spending 13 years as an elementary school teacher and 25 years in administration. In 2001 she was selected as Wyoming’s National Distinguished Elementary Principal. Betsy and her husband, Dan, have three grown children and six grandchildren.

J.D. Weinberg (AS, ’71) graduated with a post-graduate American Bar Association approved paralegal certificate. He had an overall cumulative grade point average of 3.5 in his paralegal studies law courses while attending the Central New Mexico Community College. His prior law courses while attending the University of New Mexico School of Law aided in his performance at CNMCC for his paralegal certificate.

Bob Trebelcock, (’73) recently retired after more than 38 years of service with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department. He held positions in Douglas and Greybull before relocating to Lander where he served as game warden from 1995 to 2008. In 2008, he assumed the position of large carnivore biologist. Bob grew up in Buffalo and after attending Casper College, earned a B.S. in wildlife management from the University of Wyoming. In 1991, he was Wildlife Division Employee of the Year and in 2004, he was named the Shikar-Safari Wildlife Officer of the Year in Wyoming.

Cheryl Gillum (AS, ’75) is retiring as executive director of the Wyoming Community Development Authority (WCDA). Her successor is Lesli Wright (CC adjunct instructor). Lesli was most recently employed with Hilltop National Bank as senior vice president, risk management and community reinvestment act officer.

Julie Cann-Taylor (AS, ‘77), retired chief nursing officer at Wyoming Medical Center in Casper, was honored by the Casper Star-Tribune as one of the four top nurses in Wyoming. Julie retired this spring after 43 years at Wyoming Medical Center.

Mark Kinner (’83) was chosen to replace the late Rep. John Patton, R-Sheridan as the legislative representative for House District 29 in November 2014. Mark is retiring from First Interstate Bank, after working in banking for 40 years. Prior to his banking career, he worked in the oil industry. That work inspired an interest in oil and gas, so he took courses at Casper College to learn more about petroleum technology, which helped his career in commercial lending.

Dan Cheney (AS, AAS, ’87) is CCO of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. He transitioned to the new position last summer after spending four years as the CEO of Cheyenne Frontier Days in Cheyenne, Wyoming.

1990s

Lawrence Daniels (AAS, ’95) completed his B.A. in Christian studies at Grand Canyon University and is now attending seminary at Liberty University Baptist Theological Seminary in Lynchburg, Virginia. Larry is married to Virginia Argelia, originally from Mexico, who became an American citizen in 2009. One of Larry’s long-term goals is to establish an orphanage in central Mexico for children without families and also a school. He writes, “Presently it is hard to attend school in Mexico if you lack a birth certificate, so (the model would be) more along the lines of an adult education program.”

Samantha Dyer (AAS, ’95) graduate and faculty member from 1998 to 2004 and her husband Donald Edelman purchased the local grocery store in Crawford, Nebraska in April 2014. They renamed the business D & S Market. Don manages the store while Sam is a remote mobile financial officer for Farm Credit Services of America. They live near Crawford on the family ranch with their children, Teague (4) and Skyler (2).
Josh Hamilton (AS, '95) was chosen as the 2015 Distinguished Alumnus for the Fay W. Whitney School of Nursing at the University of Wyoming. He is currently dean of Health Sciences at the College of Southern Nevada, one of the largest community colleges in the U.S. He also serves as president and chief clinical officer of The Hamilton Group, LTD, an innovative behavioral health center in Las Vegas. He has two other academic appointments: one as an adjunct clinical professor for the College of Medicine at Roseman University in Henderson, Nevada, and the other as contributing professor at Walden University in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Damon Burnett (AS, '97) has received his Ph.D. in mechanical engineering from the University of New Mexico. Damon is a graduate of Casper College, the Colorado School of Mines and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. He attended Casper schools from K-12, graduating from Natrona County High School in 1994. He is the son of John and Carol Burnett, formerly of Casper.

Kirsten Martel (AA, '97) is currently the legal assistant for the Northern Arapaho Tribe’s Child Support Program on Wyoming’s Wind River Reservation. She has been working with both the Eastern Shoshone Tribe and Northern Arapaho Tribe for a total of 15 years in various human service programs.

Rachel Oakes (AAS, '97), RN at the VA Casper Clinic, was honored by the Casper Star-Tribune as one of the four top nurses in Wyoming, Rachel has worked for the clinic since October 2007. She earned her master’s in nursing from Grand Canyon University this spring.

Zachary Pullen (‘98) of Casper received one of three 2014 Wyoming Governor’s Arts Awards and was honored at the annual Governor’s Arts Awards Gala in Cheyenne in February. Zak is a well-known, highly regarded illustrator, with a national reputation. He has written and illustrated several books, the most recent of which is “The Presidents,” inspired by his painting of facts and vignettes about all the U.S. presidents. Zak is a well-known, highly regarded illustrator, with a national reputation. He has written and illustrated several books, the most recent of which is “The Presidents,” inspired by his painting of facts and vignettes about all the U.S. presidents.

Seth Ramsey (AAA, ’99) had a joint show this winter at Metro Coffee Company in Casper with Jamie Lacore. Seth is a Glenrock, Wyoming native and earned a degree in graphic design from Casper College. He currently works for a local communications company. The show featured collage work and integrated images from things such as playing cards, sports cards, horror characters, and Wyoming things.

2000s

Jill Bowlsby-York (AFA, ’01) has gone from dream to reality. Jill writes “I opened up the doors to my own business, Grapevine Design + Secretarial, on November 3, 2014. Currently, aside from owner, my position is senior designer/virtual assistant. We concentrate on three main professional services: print/digital advertising design, virtual assistant administrative services, and resume services.” For the previous 15-1/2 years, Jill worked at the Casper Star-Tribune, where she was senior designer. To see more, visit Jill’s website, grapevinelp.com.

Jonathon Faubion (AS, ’01) recently received board eligibility as a certified chiropractic sport physician. He owns and operates Healing Element Chiropractic, LLC in Riverton, Wyoming. Jonathon earned a degree from Palmer College of Chiropractic West in San Jose, California and is the first Graston Technique practitioner in the state, specializing in soft-tissue and scar treatment. In 2011 he was named Riverton Chamber of Commerce Citizen of the Year, as well as Riverton Rotarian of the Year in 2008 and 2010.

Adrian McNamee (AB, ’04; AS, ’05), will serve as the assistant volleyball coach at Casper College. Adrian has coached the Riverton volleyball program for the past seven years. During that time, the Wolverines went to the state tournaments four times, finishing fourth the past two seasons.

Tara Fairbanks (AS, ’09) has joined Girl Scouts of Montana and Wyoming as the Girl Scout Leadership Experience Manager for southeastern Wyoming. Fairbanks has an associate’s degree in addictionology from Casper College and a B.S. in psychology from Boise State University.

Mikelle Hallock (AS ‘09) was named by the Gillette News Record as one of “Ten Who Made a Difference” in 2014. Three years ago Mikelle started “Holiday Hope,” an event for low-income and homeless people. Mikelle works as a nurse in the oncology unit at Campbell County Memorial Hospital in Gillette, Wyoming.

Tyler Smathers, (AS, ’09) a senior in elementary education through the University of Wyoming at Casper (UW at Casper), was recently presented with the Sue Jorgensen Excellent Student in Education Award. Tyler was nominated and selected by UW at Casper’s education faculty and staff. He graduated from UW at Casper with a bachelor’s degree in May, and has been hired as a fourth grade teacher in the Natrona County School District.

Tara Marie Mackler (AS, ’10) and Brad William Legler (AS, ’03) were married on April 18, 2015, at the Saratoga Inn in Saratoga, Wyoming. They met through mutual friends.

2010s

Kellan Derek Stenhaug (AAS, Cert., ’10) and Kaitlyn Marie Hillhouse were married on June 27, 2015 in Casper. The bride is employed by Natrona County Weed & Pest. The groom served in the United States Marine Corps from 2011 to 2015. He is employed by CK Mechanical.

Amber (Rosty) Zimmer (AS, ’10) is pursuing a degree as a certified midwife. Amber currently serves as a part-time nurse at True Care Women’s Resource Center in Casper. She was the youngest person to graduate from the Casper College nursing program in 2010.

Amanda Leigh Marquez (AFA, ’11) and Matthew Spencer Neely (’08) were married on August 3, 2014, in Platteville, Colorado. The bride attended Casper College and Metro State University in Denver, graduating in December 2014 with a bachelor of arts in music education from Metro. The groom attended Casper College and Mesa Community College, Mesa, Arizona, and graduated from Colorado Christian University (Lakewood, Colorado) in December 2014 with a bachelor of science in science. They live in Denver.

Amanda Moeller (AA, ’11) runs Cowgirl Consulting, LLC in Thermopolis, Wyoming and was nominated for the 2014 Chamber of Commerce Citizen of the Year. Amanda serves as contract management for the Thermopolis Lodging Tax Board and she also contracts with the area economic development company to act as its CEO. Before returning to her hometown, Amanda shared her talents in Casper for many years.

Alix Diane Wimer (AS, ’12, ’13) and Michael Anthony Kraushaar (AAS, Cert. ’11) were married July 12, 2014, in Evansville, Wyoming. The bride graduated in 2010 from Kelly Walsh High School in Casper and from Casper College in 2012 with an associate in general sciences. She is currently working at Russell Industries and is returning to school for a degree in business. The groom graduated from Casper College in 2011 with an associate degree in diesel power technology and is working for Anadarko Petroleum. They are living in Evansville, Wyoming.
Makayla Hallford (AA, ’13) earned concurrent B.A.’s in communication and social science from the University of Wyoming at Casper. Makayla is a member of the Casper College Alumni Association Board of Directors.

Delina Dority (AS, ’14) received a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship for her graduate studies beginning in the fall at the University of Wyoming. Delina majored in biology at Casper College, subsequently receiving her B.S in biology and a minor in entomology in May 2015. The award carries a generous stipend for three years to pursue her master’s degree in zoology at UW. Delina co-authored a paper with Casper College biology instructor Will Robinson. Andy Kulikowski (AS, ’14) and UW entomologist Scott Shaw based on their research on lekking behavior of an Ecuadoran parasitoid wasp. The paper appears in the International Journal of Tropical Insect Science.

Annette Estella Hein (AS, ’14) has been awarded a Goldwater Scholarship, a national award given to a handful of college juniors and seniors each year who show exceptional promise for a Ph.D. degree in a STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) research career path. Annette is particularly interested in water resources and would like to work as a geologist.

Andy Kulikowski, (AS, ’14) has been accepted to graduate school at the University of California Santa Cruz, where he will be doing research in Costa Rica with their environmental studies department. Andy received the Outstanding Graduating Senior Award from the University of Wyoming Department of Zoology and Physiology, and the Maggie Murdock Award, which goes to the best University of Wyoming Outreach student.

Breanne Tobin (AS, ’14) and Taylor Johnson (AAS, ’10) were married June 20, 2015, at the Folded Hills Ranch near Buffalo, Wyoming. The bride is employed by Shepherd of the Valley in Casper as the recreation service manager. The groom is employed by Anadarko Oil Company at Midwest, Wyoming. The two met while attending Casper College.

Shawn Johnson (Current) was recently elected to the Casper City Council in Ward 2. Shawn is employed by the Natrona County Sheriff’s Office and has served 14 years in the National Guard. He is currently enrolled and studying business at Casper College.
Friends We’ll Miss

Marietta Smith Jones  
(AA, '53; former CC employee)  
February 18, 2013

Marjorie L. (Stewart) Simineo ('72)  
July 25, 2013

Marvin D. Hollenbeck (AA, ’58)  
February 25, 2014

Cynthia Deanne Voas (AD, '96)  
April 15, 2014

Alta Mae Schwager Rieck (AA, ’58)  
June 15, 2014

Loren Lloyd Anderson (AA, ’49)  
August 12, 2014

Robert A. Logan, Sr. ('92)  
October 9, 2014

Bessie Eaton Yadon ('49)  
November 1, 2014

Lou Jones (’61)  
December 18, 2014

Cathy Jean Ray  
December 26, 2014

Donna Louise Bratton Ward ('68)  
January 5, 2015

Georgiana Stoick Stewart (AB, ’81)  
January 8, 2015

Gregory Johnston (Cert., ’78)  
January 10, 2015

Robert “Bob” L. Haley (AA, '49)  
January 12, 2015

Charles Arthur Campbell (AS, ’59)  
January 13, 2015

Elizabeth “Betty” L. (Reichart) Sanders (cont. ed)  
January 13, 2015

John Henry Grissom (AB, ’85)  
January 15, 2015

Chalene “Cheri” Smith (AS, ’80)  
January 23, 2015

Kaye (Kasey) Marian Zimmer ('59)  
January 26, 2015

Krista Topaum ('02)  
January 29, 2015

Ruth Elaine Stephens ('94)  
January 31, 2015

Robert D. Miller (former CC employee)  
February 6, 2015

James (Jim) Goehring ('59)  
February 7, 2015

Guy Robert “Bob” Parks (AS, ’68)  
February 10, 2015

James B. “Jim” Russell ('69)  
February 10, 2015

Gordon Prickett (AS, ’60)  
February 12, 2015

Randy Gene Schmidt (AVE, ’68)  
February 18, 2015

Kosta “Gus” Kamboros (AB, ’53)  
February 19, 2015

Nona Kimball (former CC employee)  
February 20, 2015

Michael "Mike" Leonard Doyle  
(former CC instructor)  
February 26, 2015

Arletta “Artie” Erickson (CC friend)  
February 27, 2015

Willis Geer (former CC instructor)  
March 2, 2015

Frank A. Philp ('68)  
March 8, 2015

Neil Albert “Mick” McMurry ('65)  
March 10, 2015

Kathleen Edwards-Church ('63)  
March 12, 2015

Dean E. Beyer, Sr. (AA, '57)  
March 24, 2015

Charles Donald Knerl  
(former CC employee)  
March 24, 2015

Anita Katherine Jolley-James ('67)  
April 9, 2015

Shawn Dale Richardson (Cert. ’94)  
April 9, 2015

Jack D. Byer (Cert. ’77)  
April 10, 2015

Paul E. Follette (OLLI student)  
April 11, 2015

Theodore S. Cross  
(former CC instructor)  
April 12, 2015

Virginia L. Cherer (CC benefactor)  
April 15, 2015

Linda Lee Schmiedt (AS, ’75)  
April 16, 2015

Glenda Kay Freeman (AA, ’58)  
April 18, 2015

G. Lynn Klocksiem (AA, ’57)  
April 22, 2015

Kimberly “Kim” Nathan Levine  
(Cert. ’14)  
April 30, 2015

Jerry A. McCormick (Cert. ’11)  
May 2, 2015

Darwin Elwood Jones (AA, ’58)  
May 3, 2015

Lawrence Stephens ('70)  
May 4, 2015

Russell Aaron Pitts (AS, ’07)  
May 11, 2015

David Wayne Ravert (AAS, ’74)  
May 14, 2015

David Lee York ('70)  
May 17, 2015

Greg Lance (AS, ’90)  
May 18, 2015

Ronald H. Day (former CC instructor)  
May 26, 2015

James “J.R.” Raymond Hunter ('04)  
June 02, 2015

Thomas Ray Sandison (ATE, ’64)  
June 3, 2015

Twilla L. Herrick  
(Western History Center volunteer)  
June 4, 2015

Nyla Murphy ('77)  
June 6, 2015

David Edward Reynolds ('58)  
June 7, 2015
In 1927, the State Military Board appropriated $43,000 for the construction of an armory to house the Headquarters Troop of the 115th Cavalry Regiment.

Completed in 1930, the original two-story structure measured 124’9” x 183’6”. The first floor housed the drill area, horse stalls, wagon shop, blacksmith, and equipment room. The hayloft, viewing area, and ballroom (complete with hardwood floors) occupied the second level. Aside from the normal drilling, the armory held dances, occasional polo matches, and even played host to a sick elephant from a traveling circus.

After the Korean War, the armory housed the HHB 3rd Battalion 49th FA into the 1970s when it traded hands to Casper College functioning as a maintenance building until its controversial razing Sunday, May 31, 1987. In 1988, through community donations of both monetary means and bricks from the original armory, sculptor Steve Semino, architect Henry Therkildson, and brick contractor Ray Clamp, were commissioned to construct a monument to reflect the many fond memories of the armory. Though it is sad that the original structure remains only in pictures and memories, the bronze, brick, and mortar is a beautiful reminder of what once was.
One of my very favorite childhood summer memories is of my backyard, a large and neatly fenced wonder right outside our backdoor – a Disneyland delight full of adventure and fun for a little kid of the 1930s.

My father’s garden – his pride and joy – took up a good third of the expansive backyard and was planted with almost anything you could think of: corn, squash, cucumbers, beets, green beans, peas, tomatoes, lettuce, carrots, rhubarb, (he supplied the whole neighborhood with that), and strawberries. I loved that strawberry patch and raided it every chance I could get away with; so much so that I once broke out in hives, which ended up with a quick trip to the doctor who took a look at me and said, “What’s this kid been into?”

I loved the privacy of the tall rows of corn where I practiced my artistry by making all manner of mud pies and various dishes from the wet ground. My mother said emphatically, “No, you are not going to eat out of them!”

There was a splendid boardwalk through the length of the grass outside the garden all the way from the back door of our two story, lemon yellow house to the back fence that separated the yard from the alley where the hollyhocks grew. The hollyhock buds and blossoms, (along with a supply of toothpicks my mother supplied), became lovely ballerinas, which danced along the boardwalk.

The boards of the walk were weathered and gray and some of them tilted a bit one way or the other. I liked to see how many boards I could skip in one jump and how many cracks I could avoid so that I wouldn’t break my mother’s back.

The walk was the pathway to my world that held adventure and never-ending entertainment. Ten or 12 jumps along it brought me to the towering cottonwood where, hidden high in its sturdy limbs, I became the sailor in the crow’s nest sailing away to the other side of the world where the sea met the sky.

Twenty or so more jumps brought me to the rambling yellow rosebush, which dropped its gold coins onto the grass where I collected them in handfuls to become richer than old King Midas. The bush grew alongside the garage with the big shiny padlock on the doors behind which sat the grand gray Studebaker (also my father’s pride and joy) in solitary splendor.

The walk was the pathway to the clotheslines where my mother hung the wash every Monday morning, winter or summer, without fail. In between Mondays, squirrels might use the lines as a trapeze wire running along between the posts with abandon – and sometimes falling off to land in the dense iris beds which grew below.

The iris beds were the adventure land where our five little kittens (who were totally unexpected) spent time playing in their forest learning all the tricks of pouncing from behind on their unsuspecting siblings in the forest of purple, blue, and yellow blossoms which bowed kindly in the breeze that stirred the cottonwood leaves calling the sailor back to the sea.
Put the Icing on Summer’s Cake

The Nicolaysen and the Casper College Foundation and Alumni Association present the End of Summer Wednesday Night Live Finale on August 26, 2015 at 5:30 p.m. Double headers, Inda Eaton and The Patti Fiasco, return to their Wyoming roots and rock you right into fall. The WNL summer series is sponsored by Hilltop National Bank.