

"The job of the newspaper is to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable." Finley Peter Dunne



Zackarina Jenny-hoe Mountain Pride, June 1, 2024. Avon.

Western Colorado Has **PRIDE!**

Photos and Words By Aiden McVay

Pride is more than just a word. It's not just a celebration, it is an act of resistance. In today's world, being an LGBTQ+ person is dangerous. With mass shootings, transgender people being a target, and homophobia still being rampant, it is truly brave. Pride isn't just a day, it is state of being so desperately needed. Although we've come a long way from the Stonewall Riots, much more work is needed. Until there is no longer a need to be in the closet, until people feel safe being

themselves, and until we are not afraid to be killed for who we love or who we are, Pride needs to be celebrated, acknowledged, and accepted.

Many Prides this year did it up-right. Mountain Pride in Avon, Colorado for one. They had some help from Maddy Partridge, somebody who not only helped me get an accessible parking space, but was one of the organizers in this fantastic pride. Orlando Ortiz helped draw the crowd by booking the fantastic MC's, drag

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No Charges! Questions Persists

By Jacob Richards

On Saturday June 22, District Attorney Dan Rubinstein issued his decision not to charge Mesa County Sheriff deputies Hand and Peterson with a crime in a use of force incident against a teenager at Central High School, which occurred on April 24.

Later the same day, Mesa County Sheriff Todd Rowell issued a letter detailing the internal consequences for the deputies: ten days of unpaid leave for Philip Peterson and five days for Michael Hand. Both deputies, will have to take additional trainings related to use of force, and both will be reassigned—no longer serving as School Resource Officers.

The decision to not charge the deputies largely rests with Peterson's beliefs. Peterson believed that the high schooler's back talk constituted disorderly conduct. (Note, that not once in the 20 minutes of post incident bodycam footage does Peterson mention 'disorderly conduct').

The justification for the use of force similarly rests on Peterson's belief that the student might possibly have a weapon in his pockets. (Note, not once in the 20 minutes of post incident video does Peterson mention this fear of a weapon). The student is never searched, and the student even asks twice "you're not going to take anything out of my pockets?" Peterson responds, "Nope." The whole justification of use of force, hinged on a potential 'weapon,' that the deputies never even searched him for? Additionally, the way Peterson initiated the use of force runs counter to his stated belief of a potential weapon, and his statement. Shoving the student from behind is not "quickly [closing] the distance between us" as he states in a written statement, and it goes against training. Hand and Peterson's written statements are not dated or time stamped, so we have no idea how long after the incident they were written down. (Note, the shove from behind is never dealt with in either the CIRT investigation or the MCSO's internal investigation).

Many observers thought that Colorado's ban on using chokeholds would come into play. The law seems straight forward enough: "A peace officer is prohibited from using a chokehold upon another person." But Rubenstein hangs his hat on a creative interpretation of the word 'method.' "The neck was not targeted as method of compliance," Rubinstein states in his letter. The definition uses 'method' to mean, any means by which pressure is applied to the neck. It was intended to cover variety of methods of applying pressure—forearm, chokehold, strangulation with a garrot or kneeling on someone's neck. The law is not concerned if the chokehold was part of a 'method' or system of gaining control. he DA reads intent into the law where it doesn't exist.

The DA's letter casts doubt on the victim and their guardian, speculating that their stories had changed slightly because of a civil-suit being filed. Rubenstein doesn't cast the same doubts on Peterson and Hand for coming up with the crucial 'weapon' and the 'disorderly conduct,' after their initial statements and actions, on body camera, to the contrary. Peterson's story is ever changing across three recantations.

"I believe there is not a clear charge to prosecute," stated Rubinstein's letter, "I do not believe that I have a reasonable likelihood of conviction at any trial in this matter." The letter also notes that the officers, if found guilty, would most likely get deferred judgement or diversion, and "thus, whatever the response that we would offer, is not likely to satisfy the community's need for a response."

But Sheriff Rowell's 'consequences' certainly didn't satisfy the community either.

"We are holding children who do not yet have fully developed brains more accountable for their actions than we do adults who are fully capable of making good decisions," said an anonymous parent of a Central High School student. The lack of real consequences, "leaves me feeling bitter and resentful of those in authority."

The Revolutionist originally broke this story on the April 25 on our website. Find more details on our website <http://therevolutionistgj.org>.



Peace In Gaza Rally

Every Sunday, 3pm gather near Lincoln Park Barn. Rally 3:30-4:30pm at 12th and North. Ceasefire Now! Free Palestine!

Cortez Food Not Bombs

Serves a community meal every Sunday at Veterans Park. 12pm-2pm

United to Solve Homelessness presents

An Educational Workshop on Homelessness

July 16, 5pm to 7:30PM

Mesa County Central Library

RSVP @ unitedwaymesacounty.org/

united-to-solve-homelessness

Falconer Workers' Society

Anti-Capitalist and Revolutionary Book Club

Grand Junction. Email for an invite.

falconersworkerssociety@gmail.com

Be the Media!

Help Edit, Write Distro The Revolutionist

therevolutionistgj@gmail.com

Fruita For Equality

Hosts "living-room conversations" on important topics of equality.
Second Wednesday of every month, 5pm
Lithic Books (138 S. Park Square)
Fruita, Colorado

Western Colorado Alliance

Family to Farm Tour

July 10, 9am

Early Morning Orchards , 3694 G 4/10 Rd.
Palisade, CO

<https://westerncoloradoalliance.org/>

Solidarity Not Charity

Free Food for Free People

Feeds every Saturday at 4pm at the Resource Center. Grand Jct.

solidaritynotcharitygjinfo@gmail.com

Loving Beyond Understanding

Has tons of LGBTQ+ events, groups, supports. Check them out:

302 South Ave GJ

www.lovingbeyondunderstanding.org

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would it be like for you, not having access to these programs or even the ability to get assistance from law enforcement if necessary? Imagine walking the streets, a vehicle approaches and slows to a stop, leaning in and knowing that you have to make a judgment call on the intent and safety of the driver in less than three seconds. Any longer and you could end up in cuffs, or possibly arrested anyway, as the potential client might be an undercover. Or walking into a bougie hotel room to discover that your odds are not in fact one v one.

In cities across the country even carrying condoms on your person is enough for a sex trafficking or prostitution charges. Laws utilize the language of sex trafficking in order to gain the public's support. No one wants children to be trafficked and forced or sold into the trade. Two recent changes in legislation—Allow States and Victims to Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act and the Stop Enabling Sex Traffickers Act—both make it much more difficult for sex workers to advertise online or collect information about potential clients. Unfortunately, as is the case with most legislation these laws do little to protect the people we intend them to, and instead make it more difficult for consenting legal adults to safely make a living.

Criminalization makes sex work dangerous for workers to report rape or assault. In fact, 30% of complaints from NYC to Aspen made by sex workers are against police officers. Sex work outreach creates “bad date lists.” On

those lists cops are four times more likely to be mentioned than pimps. The daily stress of fearing for your life and staying out of jail leads you to self-medicate. Drugs and alcohol become easier to access than healthcare. Which circles back to the idea of character.

So frequently we are digesting the narrative that those who are unhoused or working the streets are not deserving of having their basic needs met due to a character flaw. We're told they're lazy, refusing to work or are where they're at now due to their addictions. Never considering that an addiction often manifests itself due to circumstances. Let alone societal ideas about wealth and character. A rich person having cocktails at 10am on a Tuesday is simply “day drinking” while the unhoused person doing the same is seen as a drunk.

When I daydream of a world decriminalized I see safety, for sex workers and their clients, I see people understanding it's a job like any other, sometimes you love it and do feel empowered and other times you'd rather be doing anything other than fucking a client, I see a world where sex workers can report assault, can carry condoms, can access testing with a frequency that does not garner judgement, support groups and therapists who are trained in the unique complexities of the job. Conferences engaging sex workers in the panel discussions. I see pride in the eyes of the whores I know and a society that has accepted the world's oldest profession for what it is. And this future makes my heart feel content with being a whore.



Praxis in Action: Events & Orgs

Rainbows and Revolutions

July 8, 5pm-7pm

CMU Art Gallery, 437 Colorado Ave.

Fundraiser for the Jeffery Basinger Leadership Scholarship

Durango Mutual Aid Distro Day and People's Potluck feat. Durango Street Medics

Every Sunday 2pm-4pm in Berkley Park, Durango

Toner, Truth, and Tribulation: A Brief History of The Red Pill



Pier 57, New York City, DHS 'secret prison.' Aug 31 2004 was the largest mass arrest in United States history. Photo Credit Connie Murillo and Jacob Richards.

By Jacob Richards

It was 2004, our phones were dumb and invasion of Iraq had morphed into an occupation and insurgency, the local anti-war movement active in the run up to war was largely disempowered after the bombs started falling. The lack of dissent was deafening on the campus of then Mesa State College.

Connie Murillo, and I could no longer do nothing. We researched, wrote and laid out a tri-fold pamphlet in MS word, and scored an email that would make Thomas Paine salivate, thepamphleteers@yahoo.com. When classes resumed in January of 2004, The Red Pill was born.

The movie The Matrix was only a few years old, and the term “Red Pill” was not yet the rallying cry of Incels, Anti-vaxxers, and Flat-earthers. The early issues were bad, leaning heavily in shock value in the hope that people would read it even if only out of rage. Yet regular features like “The State of Disunion,” were already taking shape.

In August of 2004, Connie and I fund-raised from supporters to go cover the Republi-

can National Convention protests in NYC and armed with notepads and a donated handycam we went to cover the action in the streets. On the second day of protests, which was billed by organizers as a day of direct action, the authorities responded heavy handedly, and some 1800+ Americans were arrested in a series of mass arrests. Around 9pm Connie and I were caught up in one of these dragnets. We were then loaded on a bus and taken to Pier 57 on the Hudson river. The pier had long housed a secret unused Department of Homeland security detention center, designed for just such a mass arrest scenario.

Somehow Connie got a small coolpix digital camera past security and into the secret federal prison. Our journalism had just started apparently. We snapped into action, and began covertly documenting our surroundings and the people caught up in this mass violation of 1st amendment rights.

After almost 48 hours in jail we were finally released. The cops found the camera on me, but not the chip on her. We had missed our plane home while in jail and now had to buy last

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minute plane tickets home. The next morning our goal was to sell the photos and our story to all the media until we had enough money to get home.

We sold pics to the New York Times, FOX, MSNBC, CNN, The Village Voice, and the New York Post. We sold pictures to all of them, and they largely never aired, but at least we had the cash to get home.

We made it back to Grand Junction, sleep-deprived, further disillusioned with the mainstream corporate media. We were both behind at school and work, The Red Pill slipped out of print. We didn't even publish our experiences in NYC.

But we were having meetings with co-conspirators. We were screening documentaries that were critical of the corporate media. We even formed a student group on campus—Grand Junction Alternative Media. The idea was always to become bigger than a single publication. We sought to create our own alternative media network.

In January 2005, a new and improved The Red Pill, was laid out, by someone with some real graphic design skills, and their template would be followed, though sometimes subverted, for the next five years.

The Red Pill relaunch was much more collaborative and the people submitted. The anonymity allowed professors, office holders, strippers, activists, soldiers, prisoners, unhoused people and trans-folx to write and share their narratives, evidence, and/or pictures without fear or repercussions for using their voice.

We printed photos by dissident soldiers in Iraq, we printed pictures of improperly stored nuclear waste at the Cheney Cell just 18 miles south of Grand Junction, and never gave up the activists that had to trespass to get the truth.

We covered local protest movements. From Anti-War to Immigration Reform, and for Housing First! Our writers reported back from

protests in DC, Germany, Denver, Mexico, Phoenix, and anarcho mutual aid efforts in a post-Katrina New Orleans.

We broke stories. The biggest was broken by Jake Carpenter, and then professor Tom Acker and their work to document labor and human rights abuses of H2A visa immigrant sheep herders. Carpenter would go on to publish three short documentaries on the subject, numerous articles for the Red Pill, and an award winning article in The Denver Voice. Acker and Carpenter also led other, larger media outlets out there to see for themselves.

We held the GJPD accountable, and eventually got something like justice. We outed their undercovers as they tried to infiltrate the activist group Housing First! No Deaths! We printed Know Your Rights pamphlets and led Know Your Rights trainings. We ran the blog <https://gjpdexposed.wordpress.com/> just to compile all the mainstream and Red Pill articles into one place. We questioned the clear contradictions in the police killing of Brent Ingram, questions that still haven't been answered. In May of 2010, we investigated unhoused people's claims that the GJPD had come to their camp and slashed tents and bicycle tires and pissed on peoples sleeping bags and smashed their food with batons. As community media we didn't remain impotently neutral, we helped victims file the complaints that would see three officers fired.

In November 2008, GJAM morphed into the Confluence Media Collective and we opened Confluence Books. We had an office, a venue and a radical bookstore all in one. We began publishing books and stand-alone zines at a furious rate. The plucky little pamphlet had become the intersection of multiple radical grassroots movements in the Grand Valley.

We had some points of high dra-



The Red Pill Vol. 7 No. 6, September 2009.

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ma: April 2009, *The Daily Sentinel* threatened to sue us, for using their photos, in a way that was clearly 'fair use.' Their photos of a wild-fire on the island occupied by dozens of people experiencing homelessness contradicted both the official story and their own reporting.

The FBI followed us around for a bit in 2010 after publishing the addresses of the secret unmarked ICE detention center in Grand Junction, as well as the info for centers through the rest of Colorado and Wyoming.

We got leaks from inside the GJPD for years that they were profiling numerous local youth

activists as the "The Red Pill Crew." Tracking IP addresses on our website it was clear that GJPD spent an excessive amount of time on our site. What was the scale of the spying? we will never know. But when I moved away from Grand Junction in January of 2012, I got a call from the Deputy Chief of Police asking: "is it true you're moving," a full week before I was slated to leave town.

We took the time to honor our dead, publishing obituaries for persons experiencing homelessness and fellow activists.

But we also had fun, publishing a



Protesters Block Sarah Palin's Motorcade, Oct 20, 2008. The Red Pill Vol. 6 No. 11

parody 'Blue Pill' each April. We made space for photo-essays, poetry and flash fiction.

The Red Pill went out of print at the end of 2010, and I have always wondered if it was worth it. A recent conversation with Greta Ladson reminded me that it was.

"I was mostly confused about the Iraq War during its start, as I was an early teen," said Greta Ladson. "Here was TRP and it had all of this information that was so staunchly opposite of the narrative being pushed by the ... mainstream." Ladson said.

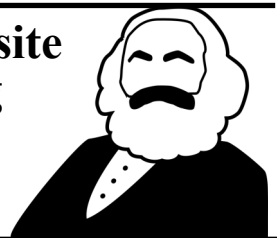
Greta received her first copy from her mom who was a non-traditional student at Mesa State College. Her

mom said "'you might enjoy this," tossing Greta a copy. Ladson said "it was something I had never seen before. Not just the format but the content." Ladson credits TRP for connecting her with alternative media like Microcosm Publishing and Crimethic Ex-Workers Collective and with local organizations making change.

"Those with a sacred duty it is to get information to the people, are instead corporate shills trying to lick enough boots to keep them off their necks," said Ladson. Adding, "anti-corporate media is more important than ever."

Make sure to checkout our website for additional content, breaking news, and calls to action.

<https://therevolutionistgj.org>



Revolutionist News Briefs

Bomb Trains' In Grand Junction's Future

The Supreme Court has agreed to hear an appeal by the Unita Basin Railroad to reinstate a previous approval that was reversed on appeal. The 88 mile railroad would connect the oil and gas rich Uintah Basin with refineries in the Gulf of Mexico. The project could see up to eight, two-mile-long 'bomb-trains' coming through Grand Junction and Glenwood Springs everyday. This corrupted court will almost certainly side with industry and allow its construction.

Julian Assange Freed

In a surprise plea deal that ends a decades long legal battle between Wikileaks founder, Julian Assange, with the United States government, Assange will plead guilty to a single felony count of illegally obtaining and disclosing national security documents. He will be sentenced to 5 years equal to the time he has been in custody in Great Britain fighting extradition to the United States. Jodie Ginsberg, CEO of the Committee to Protect Journalist summed up the duality of this news in a statement: "While we welcome the end of his detention, the U.S.'s pursuit of Assange has set a harmful legal precedent by opening the way for journalists to be tried under the Espionage Act if they receive classified material from whistleblowers."

Tim Foster and the Walton Family to Develop Powderhorn Base Village

The Mesa County BOCC approved zoning that would see the development of 2064 additional units at the base of Powderhorn. The Foster Family Partnership and Powderhorn Real Estate Company petitioned for the zoning change. Powderhorn Real Estate Company is owned by the Gart Brothers of Denver and Zoma Capital, owned by two of the Walton heirs. Considerations of water availability and environmental impacts have not been evaluated since 1986.

Who The Cops Shot

A Craig Police officer and a Moffat County Sheriff's Deputy shot and killed an unnamed man in an area trailer park on June 21. A Critical Incident Response Team

investigation has been launched, and the officer and deputy involved have been placed on paid administrative leave.

Alex Jones Forced to Sell Assets

Alex Jones will be forced to sell off his personal assets to pay some of the almost 1.5 billion dollars he owes to the families of the victims at Sandy Hook Elementary. Jones spread conspiracy theories that Sandy Hook was a false-flag operation with 'crisis-actors.' He lost two lawsuits in Connecticut and Texas. Jones had tried to shield his personal wealth by filing for bankruptcy.

Warmest May on Record; Aka the Coolest May for the Rest of Your Life

May was the 12th month in a row to rank as the warmest on record. Extreme weather, like the storm we saw on June 21, and ever warming temperatures are the new norm. The average global May temperature was 2.12 F degrees warmer than the 20th century average.

A New Revolutionary International

The Revolutionary Communist International held a week-long foundational conference this June in Italy with five hundreds of comrades from 120 countries in attendance and thousands more online. The RCI raised just shy of a half-a million pounds in its initial fundraising drive. Check them out at www.comunist.red.

Mesa County Commissioner Sorry She Missed Hate Group's Meeting

Janet Rowland was "sorry [she] couldn't make it." to a meeting held at Mountain Air Roasters Coffee by Gays Against Groomers and Moms For Liberty, to sign anti-trans petitions. Moms for Liberty and Gays against Groomers have been listed on the Southern Poverty Law Center list of known hate and anti-government groups. See our blog for more info: <http://therevolutionistgj.org/blog/>

Welcome to the Openmarket.co

By Will Locascio

If it feels like monopolies are everywhere, it's because they are," opens Adam Conover on his podcast *Factually* with guest Cory Doctorow surrounding "chokepoint capitalism," also known as monopsony.

A monopsony is a market condition where a single buyer, through means of influence, status, and general market control, dominates over a vast field of sellers, acting as a middle man and influencing the goods that make their way to the forefront of the general public. An example of a prevalent and all reaching monopsony are Amazon and Etsy.

A monopsony is a harmful consequence of free-market capitalism, because it eliminates the principle of supply and demand, creating a setting where the all powerful buyer can set market prices, norms, and impose their own terms onto sellers. In times such as ours, when monopolies and monopsonies that have been brewing, building wealth, and generating more and more social and economic influence, it is important to keep one's eye out for opportunities to buy from local sellers and markets.

It is important to insulate ourselves from our reliance on mass manufactured products from foreign workshops and often exceptionally unethical sources.

Even on a nutritional level, a vast majority of the food we eat originates from a monopsony buyer who has an unflinching grip on the price and terms at which produce and meats can be sold. Big Agriculture's monopsony has added to a volatile job market resulting in fewer jobs, terrible work conditions, low wages, and fragile food supply chain.

The Revolutionist wanted to make a point of spreading the word about The Open Market, a fairly new, online option to buy produce and goods from Western Slope producers.

Created by Jon Hutson, a 35 year old from Olathe. The Open Market is just that, a unified online marketplace and portal for Western Slope growers, farmers, producers, crafts-persons, and artists to sell their products in a more accessible and streamlined service.

This helps Western Slope communities by allowing us to buy local and move away from supporting big box stores and online monopsonies like Amazon while also being a healthier and more eco-friendly way to nourish one's body and consume products from ethical local sources.

"Directly after the first wave of lockdowns in 2020 I got triggered by the fact that big box stores were open and basically fully operable with only a few restrictions, while a ton of small businesses, artists, and farmers were

forced to go out of business. The community's well-being was getting siphoned out to these corporations, and I've been staunchly against big box stores and big government for a long time so it was a definite call to action for me," said Hutson

Jon explained that The Open Market began as a Facebook group in 2020 consisting of other like minded individuals who were growing concerned for the future and wellbeing of Western Slope food producers, artist, and small businesses.

The Facebook group quickly filled up, but due to the limitations of the platform, Jon soon realized he was going to have to create something bigger in order



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to have the type of effect that he desired.

Hutson began to learn how to create a website from the ground up in 2021. By December of 2023, he had The Open Market up and running. The Open Market already boasts 50 local sellers with an ever growing waitlist.

"I've never coded anything before this, worked on a website, or even attempted to start a business," said Hutson. "But, I've spent most of my life as a musician, geologist, and a woodworker, so for better or worse I tend to jump headfirst into projects that are out of my league when my heart calls me to it. The easy part has been nerding out on coding and all the web-dev stuff. I picked up on it relatively quickly, and thankfully I started to feel competent with it a couple months before ChatGPT came out, so I've also gotten good at delegating coding tasks and troubleshooting AI," said Hutson.

This was far from the only hoop Jon has had to jump through while in pursuit of social and economic change through The Open Market, he noted that the marketing, networking, and sales aspect has been incredibly tricky for him to get used to, as it simply has never been his forte or focus, until now. He noted the importance of reminding himself to have some grace as he embarks on this learning experience, saying, "My focus is on patiently connecting with people."

Though relatively new, The Open Market already has an array of products available for purchase from a variety of exciting local vendors. These include, but are not limited to, wagyu beef from the G Force cattle ranch in Delta, freeze dried goods from Juno Farms in Hotchkiss, skin care products from Waar Botanicals in Montrose, and limited edition art prints from Di Reiter Art, a local Grand Junction



Jon Hutton, Founder of The Open Market. Courtesy Photo

sketch artist.

As far as the vendor waitlist goes, Jon said it is just a matter of getting those vendors up and running, and simply hinges on him being able to set aside the right amount of time.

"Signing people up is just me figuring out who they are as a business, what they offer, and their message, then making an individual listings for certain categories of what they sell and making sure that it all redirects back to wherever the seller wants to do business."

The Open Market is, however, trying to stay away from resellers, emphasizing the importance of quality control and true artists doing important work.

Jon floated the idea of, in the future, creating some a system where all current sellers available on The Open Market go through a brief process of approving and vetting potential new sellers.

Hutson emphasized that he does not want The Open Market to be centered around him, but rather a project rooted in the pursuit of bringing community together, fostering culture, and supporting self-reliance on the Western Slope.

You can learn more about the Open Market later this summer, and meet with vendors and Jon. The Open Market will be hosting an event on August 31st from 2pm-9pm, at the Lowell School, in Downtown Grand Junction. Live music, food trucks, family fun activities and many of the Open Market's vendors will be there.

The Open Market is available for browsing at theopenmarket.co.

BUY LOCAL!



Art By B.O.N.E. (Breaking Oppressions Needs Education)

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once thought that that was my first act of civil disobedience, turns out I was complicit in father's job site copper capers.

While this introduction has nothing to do with sex work specifically, it does open the discourse for understanding the intersection where character and necessity meet. The ways in which people choose to navigate and survive systems of oppression has nothing to do with character. Due to societal justifications and definitions of what success and failure look like it can be challenging to accept. Social assumptions such as the ability for one to pull themselves up from their bootstraps leave many with a false understanding of character, success and failure. There's even more to grapple with when your education has told you that your work is disgusting.

Having left the industry as well as holding a couple cards of privilege, it is my duty to speak up about it and share that sex work, along with poverty, houselessness or addiction have nothing to do with character. They're nothing more than acts of survival. When a system is broken, the methods to survive it also be broken.

Having the advantage of space and time from the beginnings of the career, I have been able to see how the relationship with my own character affected how I presented to those around me. I felt as though I had to defend the choice to an extreme in an effort to hide the shame that would creep in. Doing so did not allow for a balanced discussion of what it really looked like to sell sex. I shared with friends how empowering this was. I spoke about how easy it was to decompress after meeting with a client. I joked about the ease in which I could treat myself to a designer handbag. It was my "hard girl" era and I am naturally a "soft girl."

People attempted to be supportive, making statements such as "at least it's more fun than paperwork," or hinting at my possible physical enjoyment. I'd giggle politely and shrug it off, after all, I had made this choice that carries stigma. Being a whore isn't always fun or glam-

orous. However, it would be equally inaccurate to deny the positive aspects. Selling sex freed up my time enough that I was able to take a full course load and excel in my classes and still be a parent. It granted me a new passion and a worldview that I would never have gained. I became engrossed in all things sex work. Advocating in places where I felt safe and in some where I did not. I was blessed to volunteer with a sex work outreach program in my city. Not to mention the liberation that it brought for me to discover what I did and did not enjoy sexually, in addition to how far outside of those parameters I would go to be able to clothe my children.

But, here's the thing about sex work, it's still work. It's draining and exhausting, both mentally as well as physically. Sometimes I didn't want to show up anymore than the receptionist at your dentists office doesn't want to go into work. It's literally playing pretend, creating and selling a fantasy. Balancing being too fake with too real. Juggling safety alongside needs. It was also scary.

No matter what precautions a sex worker takes, it may not be enough. There's risks of losing ones children, of physical and sexual assault, rape, exploitation or jail time. It impacted my romantic relationships. Dating on the apps lost its appeal, why would I hook up with a rando for a cocktail and appetizers when I could do the same and pay my utilities instead? How do you bring up being a whore to a partner you start to care about? Do you even bring it up at all? How do you explain why getting regular pedicures and full sets is a job requirement? What do you tell your children when they ask why you're dressed as you are? None of these questions can be answered by anyone except for the whore asking for themselves. The territory comes with a tremendous gray area.

Most folk have careers where OSHA regulations are actively enforced in a way to ensure workers safety. Many even have the safety net that programs such as workers compensation provide. A lucky few are unionized. What

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Character of Survival: A Family Tradition

By Mary Magdalen

My great grandfather immigrated from Germany after being forced into the German Army at the age of 12. He had been kicked out of his home and was living on the streets. He was picked up by army guards and they gave him two options, join or be killed. He was awarded the Iron Cross for fighting in a war they called 'great.' Afterwards he loaded up on a ship to come to the states, believing that the US was the "land of milk and honey."

After arriving, he took a job in the coal mines in Pennsylvania. Working alongside his brother in a company town. They, along with many other immigrants, suffered under the hands of the mine bosses. The two of them risked everything and escaped under the cover of night, leaving their unpayable debt to the company store behind them. They took their wives and headed west to Crested Butte.

My great grandfather and his brother continued to mine, and made moonshine and sold it as needed to keep food in their families mouths and coal in the stoves.

He did not know how to drive, although he did anyway. Taking my young father to the dump—'shine in his flask'—in whatever gear the jalopy could 'grab.' Sometimes, this meant driving for miles in reverse. The two of them dug through what others garbage, searching for treasures they otherwise couldn't afford.

My great aunt taught the family English, translating for them starting in kindergarten. Not only was she an extremely skilled and talented artist, but she won the Bausch and Lomb Science award while in high school. This caught the attention of the US Government and they offered her a position in Washington DC. Her parents told her she was to marry instead. She chose a partner who had enlisted with the Army and fought in WWII. Blessed by his absence follow-

ing his return from the war as a traveling salesman, she was free to explore her artistic expression and meet his expectations of dinner served promptly at 4pm when he happened to be home.

This along with her knowledge of abortifacients allowed her to not have children. She and my grandmother assisted many women with unwanted pregnancies during a time when this was illegal, and before the scientific breakthrough of the "Pill." Unfortunately, the herbal remedy from the "old country" died with them, given the stripping (no pun intended) of women's rights in the last couple of years, I believe they both wish they'd have snuck it into their recipe boxes.

My father was many things. One of which, a union electrician. This person is more difficult for me to talk about as he was the biggest man I've ever met, not in size or stature, but in what is referred to in the trade of humanity, as a people person. Not because he was social or nice (truth be told he could be an asshole) but he was kind, genuine, and my best friend. So here goes, the duality of my dad.

He would find himself out of work at times, either by layoff or choice—problems with authority. He had a habit of cleaning up work sites, often-times this included unused rolls of copper cable wire. An unemployment check only goes so far. Us kids had a great time removing the black rubber coating from the wire with him. A trip to Van Gundy's recycling meant grocery day was soon!

My dad quietly struggled with the realities of survival and character. He would take a deer out of season, provide a place for the weary, say fucked up shit, and then sneak me out to the garage to chose which of the four bunnies, which he bartered for in Cedaredge, to place in my basket come Easter morning.

He'd take us camping for weeks on the Mesa, tearing up logging stakes along the way. I

Survive on Page Ten



WWI German Child Soldiers



Angelique Fantastique Ouray Pride June 15, 2024



The Petty Patty Mountain Pride, June 1, 2024.



Aria Petty One Ouray Pride June 15, 2024



*Raquelle C Shelle Mountain Pride, June 1, 2024
Avon, CO.*



Maxine LaQueen Ouray Pride June 15, 2024



MixTrix Montrose Pride June 8, 2024

Pride from Front Page

performers and headliners including Zackarina Jenny-hoe, Raquelle C Shelle, and Ramona Chingona.

Ouray Pride hit it hard with their Drag performances as well with Aria Petty One, MixTrixs and out of town Maxine LaQueen. The crowd went absolutely wild for MixTrixs with their high kicks and offering flowers to the audience. One of Ouray Pride's organizers and photographers, Taylor Nowak, took amazing pictures of the crowd and performers.

This year, for the first time, Pride came to the small town of Montrose.

Organizer of Montrose Pride, Evelyn Greenman-Baird said, "(Pride) is just a loud and proud show of community and individuality...a vibrant expression of who we are." Evi continues, "A lot of people here oftentimes don't feel safe or comfortable existing authentically every day, but this is a space where they can do that if it's just one day a year, I love it."

Surprisingly, for this conservative town, they were met with very little backlash. Many local vendors supported them including \$1000 donation by Community Spirit Church for the amphitheater rental. Despite a few haters, and local businesses not wanting to support or donate because they do not agree, Montrose pride had a headcount of over 700 people in attendance.

Probably in part to the amazing headliners the Van Dykes, including Xavi Van Dyke, the founder of Delta pride, who was also the MC for this event.

Between the vendors, the amazing performances, and the inclusion, Montrose pride embodied what a pride celebration should be.