

PUMPKINS Eats N TREATS

Tuesday, October 31, 2023 Downtown Plaza ~ Meeker



Trick-or-Treating starts at 4:30pm

Herald Times

Proudly Independent Community Journalism Since 1885

Vol. 139, No. 11 ♦ October 26, 2023 ♦ \$1⁰⁰ ♦ ht1885.com

This would have been the last edition of the Herald, ever.

Two weeks, \$34,000, and 165 Community Supporters later, this historic newspaper lives on.

THANK YOU!

Herald health update

BY HT STAFF
editor@ht1885.com

The Herald is ecstatic to announce 100% funding, 100% from Community Supporters, through the end of 2023. That is a VERY long way from where we were two newspapers ago.

We know there's tremendous value in an independent community newspaper. That's why we do this work. We did not expect such an overwhelming response. There's really nothing we can say to properly thank all of you on behalf of the Herald and its 138-year-old legacy, so "thank you" will just have to do.

Every single dollar contributed is going right back into creating quality community news. If you haven't yet, join us as we continue Mr. Lyttle's legacy of independent community journalism in "White River country" by becoming a Community Supporter. You can give us a call at 970-878-4017, send your membership (of any amount) to PO Box 720, Meeker, CO, 81641, or use the link at the bottom of this article.

Here are a few additional details with regard to future sustainability plans:

- Watch for details on Community Listening Sessions and special events as we build out our Community Supporter memberships.

- Our website is currently getting an upgrade thanks to the wonderful folks at The Paywall Project. (Bonus: it will cost LESS to run each month!) Please bear with our digital construction dust as we upgrade the site to better serve you, and let us know if you run into any trouble.

- We will be adding to our slate of award-winning newsletters. Community Supporters will receive sneak peeks of upcoming coverage, Editor's Picks, and MORE in the coming weeks.

- Print ad buys will now include digital and social options upon request! This aligns much better with proper marketing tactics (repetition, repetition, repetition!) We are excited to see additional benefits for our local businesses and advertisers.

One last time, thank you so much. "The ink shall remain."

Become a Community Supporter at givebutter.com/savetheherald

THIS IS HALLOWEEN!



CAITLIN WALKER PHOTO

Bill and Donna Wille have done it again with another outstanding spooky display at their home/ Antler Taxidermy on Market Street. Pictures don't do it justice—go check out all the details for yourself (and enjoy the other great displays around town, as well!)

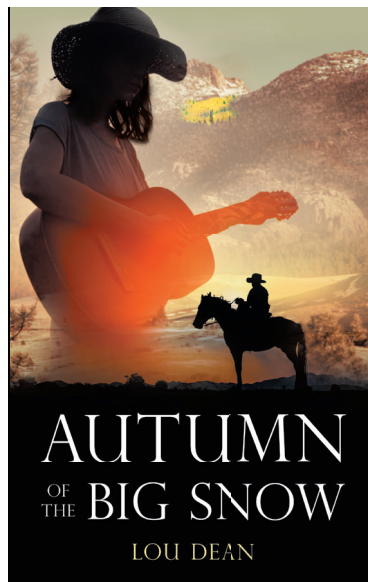
Lou Dean releases eighth book

BY NIKI TURNER
editor@ht1885.com

Author Lou Dean of Dinosaur, Colorado, has released her eighth book, titled "Autumn of the Big Snow."

Dean is an award-winning writer of five memoirs, two young adult fiction novels, and countless magazine articles. "Autumn of the Big Snow" is Dean's first foray into adult fiction. In the story, heavy equipment operator August Atkins befriends coworker Katie, who refuses to talk about her past and is suddenly unable to write music anymore.

This summer, Dean published a personal and powerful story in Guideposts magazine about what she experienced after a violent crime in 2015 on Blue Mountain. Two criminals in a stolen car that had broken down off Hwy. 40 were approached by a deputy sheriff and a Colorado Parks and Wildlife officer. During



the interaction, one of the criminals drew a gun and disarmed the officers, who fought back and shot the attacker during the struggle. "That's when I arrived," Dean writes. But that wasn't the end of the story for Dean.

For the next few years Dean suffered nightmares, anxiety, exhaustion, and other signs of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). At a book

BOOK SIGNING

Sweetbriar in Rangely
Saturday, Nov. 11
10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Meeker Public Library
Saturday, Nov. 18
10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

signing, a stranger noticed Dean's distress and handed her a phone number for a therapist who practices eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR) treatment.

Although she'd always considered therapy "nonsense," she couldn't deny what she was experiencing and she made an appointment. To her surprise, the shooting wasn't the only trauma she needed to process, she was carrying trauma from her childhood as well, and the shooting had brought it all to the surface. After "many visits" the night-

mares disappeared, sleep returned, and she was able to return to writing and hiking with her dogs.

"With God's help, I recovered from trauma in the present by reckoning

honestly with the traumas of my past," Dean writes. "Sometimes the answer to prayer is 'get help.' That's what those kind ladies told me at the rodeo. I'm so glad I listened."

Dean is excited about the release of her latest creation. The book is available on Amazon. She will have a book signing in Rangely at Sweetbriar from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 11 and will be speaking and signing books at the Meeker Public Library from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 18.

For more information about Dean and her other books, visit loudean.com.

Getting a jump on the cricket problem

BY NIKI TURNER
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In 2023, crickets invaded nine different Western states, including northwest Colorado. *Anabrus simplex*, or Mormon crickets, don't bite or sting, but they do cause crop damage as they eat their way across the landscape in droves. They've also been blamed for traffic accidents when they migrate across county roads and highways. And there is a general "ick" factor that comes with millions of large bugs covering every exterior surface.

Getting the cricket population under control isn't a simple process. While almost any insecticide will work on crickets, the cost of application and reapplication is prohibitive for property owners. Rio Blanco County's weed and pest control district has provided "cricket bait" to residents. The bait kills the adults that eat it and the insects that eat the dead ones. It may also act as a barrier for the crickets as they migrate. The bait is not enough by itself, prompting a collaborative and preemptive campaign for cricket control next spring.

Multiple agencies met earlier this year

to discuss ways to get the crickets under control in 2024 before they mature. Doing so involves locating the places where this year's cricket population laid eggs, and treating those areas as they hatch in the spring with Dimilin, an insecticide that prevents the insects from molting and thus stops them from reaching reproductive maturity.

A second meeting was held Monday at the Rio Blanco Fire Protection District in Meeker. "We're planning ahead to be as organized as possible this spring," said White River/Douglas Creek Conservation Districts executive director Callie Scritchfield.

Moffat County Pest Management Manager Jesse Schroeder, present at Monday's meeting, said, "up until last year we've kind of been able to keep them at bay because the hatches were finding early were kind of in the 40 to 60-acre range. And we were kind of keeping them beat back a little bit. And then for whatever reason this year, the first hatch we found was 640-something acres."

Crickets were spotted in residential areas near Rangely, have been seen a few miles outside of Meeker on Sulphur Creek Road, and swarmed through the

Strawberry Creek region west of Meeker. Highways 13 and 40, in some locations, were covered with insects and their carcasses as bands of crickets moved through. Schroeder said almost all of Unit 201 is full of crickets, as well as Brown's Park.

He has been mapping areas of concern and said as soon as the snow melts off south-facing slopes, crickets start hatching. Once they reach maturity they start migrating, and when they stop marching, they lay eggs. Finding those egg beds will be key to getting the cricket population under control.

"Our attack is going to be trying to bump them back from the towns and get that east edge moved back to the west," he said.

The White River and Douglas Creek Conservation Districts were awarded a matching grant from the Colorado State Conservation Board for \$50,000 to use for pest control. Matching that funding will require assistance from all impacted parties and agencies, including affected landowners who wish to participate.

The funding would primarily be used for aerial spraying of Dimilin, which is effective for grasshoppers and crickets but

is not harmful to livestock, birds, fish, or beneficial insects like honeybees. Aerial spraying could be used on large swaths of open ground, but it is not approved for use in residential areas. Scritchfield said the estimated cost of aerial spraying is \$10 an acre.

The increase in the scope of the cricket invasion "started hitting the threshold" to prompt attention from the United States Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, a necessary step in getting funding and permission to treat the cricket problem on federal lands, but any approved funding won't be available until early spring, creating a limited time frame to plan and mobilize cricket mitigation. Thus, the efforts to coordinate a plan ahead of time.

The next step will be asking people to report where they last saw crickets in the area during August or September as a way to start flagging potential egg beds. That information will be collected and mapped to prepare for flagging and prioritizing areas to spray come spring.

Where to report late summer/early fall cricket populations will be published as soon as that information becomes available.

100% community-powered journalism.

