

TELLURIDE DAILY PLANET

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WEDNESDAY

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Don't quote me but...

"What the hell are we supposed to do now, you moron?"

—Kirk Drogsvold, of Telluride, quoting "Animal House"

Calendar

Wednesday

• AA: Meeting via Zoom, 5:30 p.m., call 970-728-7270 for access info.
• Free Grab and Go Lunch: Telluride Middle School Cafeteria, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. The lunches are available Monday through Friday.

Thursday

• Telluride Food Bank Open: Aspen Street, corner of Main Street, extended hours 3-7 p.m.
• Norwood Food Bank: Open every other Thursday, 1470 Spruce St., 3-7 p.m.
• West End Food Bank Open: 853 Main St., Nucla, open Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays, 9 a.m.-3:45 p.m.
• Ah Haa Makers Moments: Live feed art Tuesdays and Thursdays at ahaa.org

Weather

Forecast: Wednesday and Thursday will be partly cloudy with highs of 43 and 40, respectively.

Muse: "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."—Maya Angelou

IN ORBIT:

Wednesday Focus:
Arts, Lifestyles &
Nonprofits

A community comes
together

Friday: Music &
Entertainment

SAN MIGUEL COUNTY

Countywide COVID-19 testing to begin this week

By **BRIA LIGHT**
and **JUSTIN CRIADO**
Planet staff

Voluntary tests are free and will help officials track the virus impact locally

Though it was a beautiful, warm spring day, local mountain guide Fischer Hazen wasn't teaching an eager group of spring break clients how to tie in for their first ice climbing experience or taking a carefree ski lap of his own on

the mountain. Instead, although feeling healthy, he was waiting in line outside the Telluride Regional Medical Center to be tested for COVID-19. Since Hazen's father is a first responder,

he was part of the first wave of free COVID-19 tests offered by the county late last week to all community members who faced higher risk of exposure to the virus through their profession or

family or household members in such professions.

"It was a relatively simple process," Hazen said. "We showed up to the med center and they had a table outside where we filled out questionnaires with our basic info and any symptoms," noting that participants were told to

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Seventh-grader Shai Kanow listens to her father, Telluride Mountain School art teacher, Daniel Kanow, instruct online. (Photo courtesy of Joanna Kanow)

EDUCATION

Schools adapting to online learning

Telluride School District may tweak academic calendar

By **AMY M. PETERS**
Planet Contributor

In an effort to limit the spread of COVID-19, last week Gov. Jared Polis ordered all public and private schools in Colorado to close through at least April 17. The Telluride School District, along with the Telluride Mountain School (TMS), have been closed since March 16.

"We've had to MacGyver an educational system that was running pretty smoothly. Teachers stepped up to the plate, and kids are responding," Superintendent Mike Gass said. "We definitely have some tweaks we need to make, but considering we did it all within about 72 hours, we've done pretty well."

"I'm hearing that we are probably not going to re-enter buildings this year, which makes me sad because school is sometimes the best and only positive thing in a kid's world."

TMS Head of School, Andy

Shoff, said that he started thinking about a school closure a month ago and has been receiving good guidance from the Association of Colorado Independent Schools for implementing a "continuity of education plan."

"At every stage, there are adjustments that need to be made that are fairly substantial, and we adjust," Shoff said. "We've learned that less is more. Overloading kids with work might work for a sick day, but it's not going to work for the long-term. This is very different from a home school. It's distance learning."

Computer devices were handed out last week to students in the district who needed one.

"We're still working through some connectivity issues," Gass said. "I've acquired some hot spots from vendors to disperse. For the most part, I think kids are doing well."

TMS fifth- and sixth-graders

were given Chromebooks to take home, while students in seventh grade and above were already required to have their own devices.

"On day one we started with synchronous — real-time, shared, online — learning in all of our grades," Shoff said.

TMS teachers are primarily using Zoom and Google Meet as teaching platforms, and a consolidated school interface called Black Baud for students and parents. All TMS Zoom instruction is public, which not only serves teacher oversight, but creates a welcoming feeling.

"I'm learning to pop my head into the virtual classroom," Shoff said. "And I'm encouraging people to pick up the phone and call or set up a Zoom or a FaceTime instead of putting all their thoughts into one-way written communication."

Telluride Elementary School

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COMMUNITY

EMERGENCY INSURANCE ENROLLMENT

Order reopens the individual marketplace until April 3

By **ERIN SPILLANE**
Planet Contributor

Last week, as part of a package of special health-related measures aimed at addressing the COVID-19 pandemic, Gov. Jared Polis announced that the state was adding an "emergency special enrollment period" for the individual marketplace.

The move means that anyone who is uninsured can still purchase coverage outside of the usual enrollment period, which ended in January.

Special enrollment opened on Friday and continues until April 3. The aim, according to a Connect for Health Colorado news release, is to help as many people as possible "protect their health and safety during the COVID-19 outbreak" by increasing access to health insurance coverage.

Coverage will begin April 1, even for those who register April 1-3.

Individuals will qualify if they currently don't have health insurance, have recently lost their health insurance or are about to lose their health insurance.

(Separate from the new measure, Coloradans who have life-changing events, including those who have lost or are about to lose their job, and thus lose their employer-based health insurance, have a 60-day window to enroll in individual coverage, whenever that might happen throughout the year.)

Tri-County Health Network navigators are available to enroll individuals by phone or email Monday through Friday from

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