

LIFESTYLES

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Evergreen Creative District Nonprofit Coalition Harnesses the Power of Collaboration for Colorado Gives Day



Concert with the Denver Children's Choir

By Jo ANN M. COLTON
Special to Lifestyles

British Prime Minister, orator, and author Winston Churchill (1874-1965) once said,
“We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give.”

Coloradans throughout our state can likely relate to Mr. Churchill’s words. Many of us know firsthand that the act of giving and offering kindness and support to those around us not only contributes to the well-being of others but also enriches our own lives. Consequently, what better way to give assistance to others than by supporting state and local nonprofits on Colorado Gives Day. The biggest 24-hour giving movement in the state of Colorado, Colorado Gives Day is scheduled for December 9 but early giving opens on November 1.

According to this Chamber of Commerce website, (<https://www.chamberofcommerce.org/nonprofit/colorado>), “the state of Colorado has approximately 23,148 nonprofit organizations: 18,166 of those are public charities, 1,020 are private, and public foundations and 3,962 of those are 501(c) nonprofit Colorado organizations.”

Colorado Gives Day was launched in 2010 to encourage

charitable giving to these nonprofits from donors who want to make an impact in their local community. Besides the donations going directly to support the designated nonprofits of the giver’s choice, a portion of the total contributions collected is allotted to each participating charitable organization through the Colorado Gives Foundation’s \$1M+ Incentive Fund.

With more than 191 nonprofits in Evergreen, Colorado and the surrounding foothills, local nonprofit leaders led by Betsy Hays (retired Resource Development Director of Mount Evans Home Health Care & Hospice in Evergreen) formed The Mountain Area Nonprofit Coalition 15 years ago. This cooperative group of organizations has motivated its member organizations to join forces, pool their resources, and work together to bring greater community awareness to their Colorado Gives Day campaigns.

The Coalition is now being run and managed by the Evergreen Creative District. People can search for “Evergreen Creative District Nonprofit Coalition” on the ColoradoGives.org website. The link to the Group Giving

FEATURE OF THE MONTH



Evergreen Chamber Orchestra concert with conductor William Hill

page for the Coalition can be accessed at <https://www.coloradogives.org/group/20fjze>

The Coalition provides opportunities for the nonprofit community to interact with each other, leading to discussions about how to support each other’s undertakings, and the community as a whole. It unites local nonprofits and

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helps share the cost of advertising to raise awareness about Colorado Gives Day. As good stewards of its donors' donations, these nonprofits are able to pour into their missions and use donor funds to further their projects in our mountain community.

Coalition member Graham Anduri, Executive Director for Ovations West Performing Arts views the focus of the Coalition's nonprofits as falling into one of three major categories: arts & culture, environmental sustainability, and health/human services (physical/mental and those serving the under resourced communi-

ties). "Each organization provides diverse services and immense value across the board. I would encourage everyone to visit the Coalition's group giving page to learn more about what each of these amazing nonprofits is doing to make the Foothills a place where everyone can truly thrive," stated Anduri.

"The coalition exists because these nonprofits recognize the value of collaboration over competition. The Evergreen Creative District is proud to lead the coalition as the District places great emphasis on collaborative, cooperative efforts that uplift our whole community," said Graham Anduri. "My analogy that I like to use is that an iceberg has much greater sustainability



Please see **CO GIVES DAY**, Page 16 Center for the Arts Evergreen produces annual art festivals at Buchanan Park



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The Tunnel of Love, painted recently by muralist Bobby Magee Lopez, is one of several projects the Evergreen Legacy Foundation supported with a challenge grant in 2025.

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than an ice cube. We are stronger when we work together.”

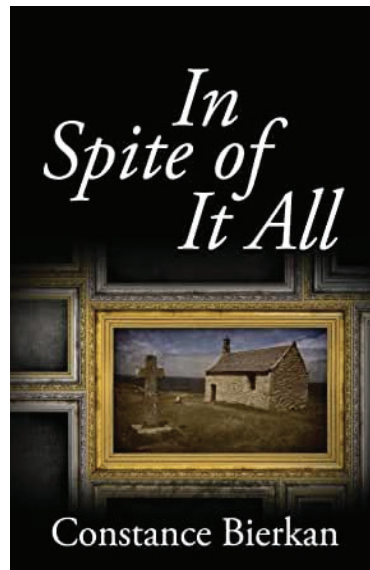
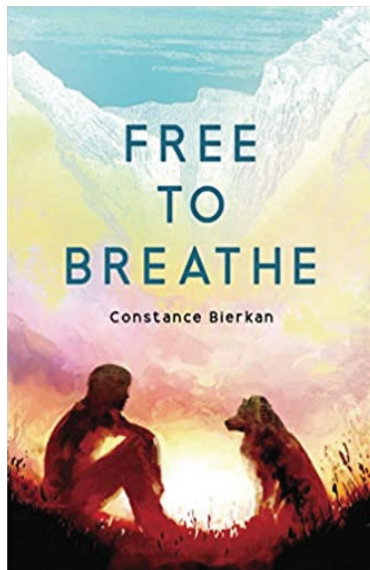
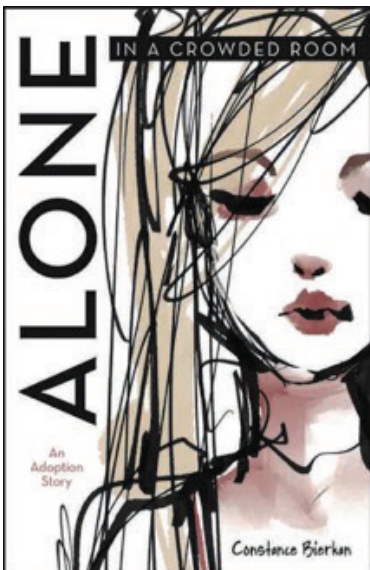
There are 26 charitable organizations participating in the 2025 Mountain Area Nonprofit Coalition. The following charitable organizations are confirmed to be participating: Blue Spruce Habitat for Humanity, Bootstraps, Boys & Girls Club of the High Rockies, Center for the Arts Evergreen, EChO, Evergreen Animal Protective League, Evergreen Audubon, Evergreen Chamber Orchestra, Evergreen Children's Chorale, Evergreen Jazz Festival, Evergreen Legacy Foundation, Evergreen Music and Performing Arts, Evergreen Creative District, Evergreen Players, Evergreen Rotary Foundation, Evergreen Sustainability Alliance, Mount Evans Home Health Care & Hospice,

Mountain Area Land Trust, Mountain Foothills Rotary Foundation, Mountain Youth Musicals, Ovation West Performing Arts, Resilience 1220, Stage Door Theatre, The Venue Theater, The Woodenhawk Foundation, and Wild Aware.

“Many area nonprofits are centered in Evergreen and Conifer, which is part of unincorporated Jeffco where no civic entity exists,” stated Anduri, “so the responsibility to help fund things in our community falls to all of them, including organizations like the Evergreen Legacy Foundation.”

“The Evergreen Legacy Foundation (ELF) began in 2010 to offset the missing pieces in Evergreen as a result of our being unincorporated. Amenities like sidewalks and crosswalks, paved shoulders, and bike lanes are not part of what's provided by the county to areas considered rural,” said Linda Kirkpatrick, Evergreen Legacy Foundation Executive Director.

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ELF conducted four community meetings to gather information from residents about improvements they'd like to see and formed the Evergreen Local Improvement District, which the Commissioners approved in 2020, zeroing in on 17 projects to be completed by the county in a 10-year period on county rights-of-way.

ELF fronts the money, 80% of which is reimbursed by grants and then recycled to cover the next project. Monies for these projects comes from a 1% pass-through added to the receipts of participating businesses and from individual donations.

"In the past year ELF has evolved into a community foundation – still filling voids and bridging gaps – helping other area nonprofit organizations and efforts to make Evergreen a better place," explained Kirkpatrick.

Recently Evergreen Legacy Foundation has provided challenge grants to stimulate donations for bleachers at Evergreen High School, the inclusive playground at Buchanan Park, renovation of the historic log schoolhouse, and creation of the murals in The Tunnel of Love.

Since its inception in 2010, Colorado Gives Day has raised over \$415 million due to the united efforts of people in Colorado just like you who are committed to fortifying the efforts

of nonprofits that make a meaningful change within our communities. In 2024, the coordinated efforts of 160,000-plus donors raised more than \$54 million dollars. The 2025 goal is expected to exceed that amount.

Nonprofits everywhere are struggling from a two-fold setback of hyper-inflation over the past couple of years and federal funding cuts that have had a trickle-down effect for many of them. The funding sources that these organizations have typically relied upon have either diminished or have been cut completely. Therefore, the role of individual giving has become ever more crucial for nonprofits of all types and sizes.

If you would like to make living better in your community, visit Colorado Gives Day (<https://www.coloradogives.org>). Making a donation to the nonprofit of your choice can be accomplished in a variety of ways from workplace giving, fundraising, creating your own free donation page to round up support for your favorite nonprofit(s), giving cards to say, "thank you" and celebrating milestones with the gift of generosity that allows the recipient to support a nonprofit that matters to them, or donating by using major credit cards/PayPal or your own preferred method of payment. Donations can be made online through Colorado Gives or they can be accomplished by visiting the website of the nonprofit(s) of your choosing.



Wild Aware promotes harmonious co-existence with local wildlife



Playground construction funded by Evergreen Rotary Club



Evergreen Sustainability Alliance educates young people on environmental stewardship



Annual fundraiser for student-led initiatives by Woodenhawk Foundation



Stagedoor Theatre's production of The Little Mermaid



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