



A BIBLICAL TALE

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JOINING THE CLUB

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IGNACIO

Library's virtual reality travel, free services draw community interest



From left, Paul O'Black, Shannon O'Black and Wade Horn use virtual reality headsets to "travel" to Scotland during the Ignacio Community Library's VR Travel Program on Tuesday. The program is one of many fun, educational and helpful opportunities the library offers.

SCOUT EDMONDSON/Durango Herald photos

DURANGO FIRE, POLICE

Agencies to begin using drones

Remote 1st responders a boon to emergency operations, they say

BY CHRISTIAN BURNEY
HERALD STAFF WRITER

The city of Durango is preparing to deploy drones – but only in certain types of emergencies, according to the police and fire chiefs.

Durango Police Chief Brice Current and Durango Fire Protection District Chief Randy Black recently presented to City Council about how first responder drones can make their departments better prepared for emergencies.

Drone first responders provide real-time information to officers, enabling better positioning for police and fire, and provide more context about the situation responders have been called to, they said.

"Our response times are between six and eight minutes, and this response time is less than a minute. Especially because of the river and the traffic and everything else," Current said. "It's built perfect for Durango with a 2-mile radius."

The drones have been leased for about \$12,000 and have yet to be activated while the final infrastructure is set up, said city spokesman Tom Sluis.

Current stressed the drones would not be used for public surveillance purposes, and that they would only be used for active service calls.

He said the community wants:

- Safety.
- Consistency.
- Accountability.
- Privacy.

Likewise, the police department needs:

- Faster eyes on the scene.
- Credible information.
- Better decisions.
- More options to deescalate situations.

Current said the drones work

See DRONES, 8A

Broadening horizons

BY SCOUT EDMONDSON
HERALD STAFF WRITER

IGNACIO – Ignacio Community Library patrons went to Scotland on Tuesday. But, instead of taking a flight halfway around the world to the foggy Highlands or the ancient castle city of Edinburgh, attendees were transported to England's northern neighbor through virtual reality.

The event was the latest installment of the library's monthly VR travel series – where attendees enjoy a brief presentation about a selected country, eat traditional food and put on virtual reality headsets to be immersed in the sights of wherever they "travel" to.

"Each month we feature a different location," said librarian Liz von Tauffkirchen, who dreamed up the VR travel



Laura Ryan, originally from Scotland, made traditional Scottish food to share during the Ignacio Community Library's virtual reality travel night.

program. "India has been our most popular one. We repeated it now three times."

Von Tauffkirchen said the library searches for a volunteer from the community, who then comes, prepares the food and talks about their country and culture.

"Then the second half of the program we use the VR headsets to travel to that location," she said.

For Tuesday's virtual voyage to Scotland, the library brought in Laura Ryan, who grew up in Scotland before moving to Aztec on a teaching exchange.

"I got two years out of my teaching exchange here, and then I went back to Scotland," she said. "I came back because I missed the sun."

To deepen the immersive

See IGNACIO, 8A

Around THE CORNERS

Durangoan has been picking up city's trash for nearly 30 years

Longtime volunteer Janet Reichl teams up with neighborhood children to collect waste

BY ELIZABETH POND
HERALD STAFF WRITER

Longtime resident Janet Reichl is in the business of trash – or treasure, depending on how you look at it.

For close to 30 years, Reichl, 76, armed with a trash-grabber and a bag, has been venturing out on the town several days a week in an effort to chip away at the city's garbage footprint.

Recently, a few little helpers have joined her trash-capades.

Reichl's garbage collecting mentees include her elementary school neighbors, who have been using the garbage hunts as part

of their homeschooling curriculum for the past year. Each child has their own trash grabber, and Reichl handles the trash bags.

"They love all the fun things that they can find, like balls and little toys, and I think that's what's really gotten them interested," she said.

The children join Reichl as often as once a week and sometimes more sporadically, she said – but she's out three to seven times a week, no matter what.

Reichl generally focuses on north Durango, but occasionally ventures to other zones. She frequents a half-mile stretch of

East Animas Road (County Road 250) and a half-mile stretch of East 32nd Street, both of which she adopted through the county when she first moved to Durango back in the late 1990s.

She also cleans parking lots, the river trail, drainage areas, alleyways, parks and open spaces around town through Durango Parks and Recreation and about 5 miles of forest roads near Mancos as part of an adopt-a-road effort through the San Juan Mountains Association.

She and her special helpers focused on the Fort Lewis College area Thursday.

Though Reichl has been involved in trash cleanup efforts in Durango since the 1990s, she

See REICHL, 8A



JERRY MCBRIDE/Durango Herald

Longtime trash collector Janet Reichl walks the trail along Rim Drive picking up trash with her helpers Bennett DeRaad, 6, and his brother Carson DeRaad, 4, on Thursday next to Fort Lewis College.

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