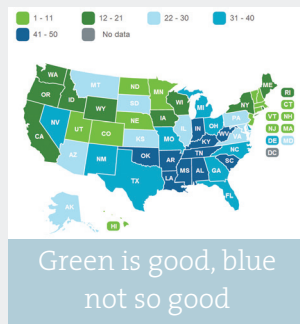


Coloradans:
You're living
in a state of
good health



Americans have made some gains in health in 2013, and Colorado continues to be in the Top 10 Healthiest States, ranking #8, up one spot from 2012, according to a report from a group of healthcare organizations. (There's a link to the report at ColoradoNIE.com)

Colorado has the lowest obesity rate in the country, but needs to work on drug and alcohol problems, according to the report. And, while Colorado looks good among the 50 states, the USA could do a lot better compared to other relatively advanced countries.

Among 17 countries with strong economies, we're near the bottom in life expectancy, heart disease, homicide, lung disease and infant mortality. So take some pride, Colorado, but don't let it make you ignore your health!

ColoradoKids

December 17, 2013



CK Reporter
Olivia Ooms,
Denver



GO NUTS FOR MORE HEALTHY EATING

There are so many warnings about things you shouldn't eat that it comes as a pleasant surprise when researchers say there's something you *should* eat.

A report from a Harvard study shows that, over the 30 years of the experiment, eating even a few nuts every day lowered people's chances of dying by 20 percent.

People who ate nuts less often also were more likely to live through the 30 years, and their lifespan matched how close they were to that near-daily rate.

Nuts lowered the rate of cancer by 11% and of heart disease by 29% among the 119,000 people in the study.

It didn't seem to matter what kind of nuts people ate, or whether they were raw, roasted, ground or prepared in other ways.

Even more good news: In spite of their fat content, eating nuts regularly helped people keep their weight down. *Photo/Simon Speed*

SECOND HOBBIT TOPS FIRST

“The Desolation of Smaug” follows up the first of the three Hobbit movies with a bang!



By Brianna Wolle,
13, a CK Reporter
from Arvada

Like “An Unexpected Journey,” the first of the series, a back story starts off the film, and then comes action.

Right where the last movie left off, Bilbo (*Martin Freeman*), Gandalf (*Ian McKellen*), and the 13 dwarves continue on their quest for gold, power, and revenge.

Any teen or adult would enjoy “The Desolation of Smaug.”

For those books-are-better-than-movies people, this Hobbit movie comes closer than most to being as great as the novel.

Director Peter Jackson took into account the importance of detail, but fans will notice changes.

And while some parts may be hard for non-readers of the book to get, the general plot is easily understood and captivates all viewers alike.

Many one-liners shook the



audience with laughter, while fighting scenes had watchers on the edge of their seats.

There were moments of fear, but also times of happiness, with stunning graphics that set the story ambiance perfectly.

Each setting was articulately crafted so it felt like you were traveling with Thorin and company. The 3D was stunning, especially in the scenes with Beorn's bees, whizzing arrows, and barrel-riding.

While the second section of the book is one of the more peaceful sections, the film based on it isn't.

The movie is PG-13, understandably. Some frightening images occur, and frequently.

The suspense, especially near the end of the movie, would be scary for some.

However, it's easy to tell that hard work was put into this two-and-a-half hour film.

Viewers' hearts will leap for joy, coo over the hidden romance, and possibly even skip a beat regarding the adventure.

One more thing: Look out for another cliffhanger. “The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug” will leave you wanting more than the second part of the tale!

'Rescue Bots Beam Box' programmed for little kids

Transformers Rescue Bots Beam Box might seem to be a great toy to add to your Christmas list, but don't be fooled; it isn't what it looks like.



By Reid Strieker
11, a CK Reporter
from Antonito

The game comes with an Optimus Prime figure, a remote controller, and a strange-looking box with an opening and a

big, blue button on the top.

To start, you insert the figure into the box, plug the box into your television, and turn on both.

Then push the top blue button. The doors in the opening close, and, when they open again, the figure has disappeared, appearing instead on your television screen, and



that's when the game starts.

The Optimus Prime figure starts out as a robot, but quickly turns into a car that you operate with your remote controller, avoiding other cars and hazards. The gameplay on this is difficult, since steering does not function that well.

Then you morph back into

a robot and fight other evil robots. In this part, you have more control over Optimus Prime, and there is more action happening.

I really didn't have that much fun with the game, due to poor graphics, bad controlling, and the lack of a pause button. But then I realized the game was meant for ages 3 to 7, so I let my little sister have a go at the game, and she really enjoyed it!

I would recommend it for kids in that range.

Colorado Kids

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We welcome your comments.

For tools to extend the learning in this feature, look under "eEdition lessons" at: www.ColoradoNIE.com

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BEYOND THESE FOUR PAGES

There are two reviews of holiday entertainment on Page Four of CK this week. Look through today's paper for more entertainment that you would only see this time of year. Draw a calendar for the next week and create an imaginary entertainment schedule for yourself.

Fun for toddlers, but tighten the screws!

The Playskool Elefun Push Along toy is a fun toy for toddlers!



By Salina Garza,
14, a CK Reporter
from Westminster

The Elefun is fun because while you push it around balls fly in the air. The other cool thing is that the Elefun picks up the balls as you push it! It also has a storage compartment on the handle of the Elefun.

My 3 year old cousin really

enjoyed it, especially following the balls around to pick them up.

It also seems reasonably priced and doesn't require batteries, which is nice.

Although this colorful toy was fun, it does have some flaws. The screws in the handle come out easily, which could be a choking hazard.

It would be great if it had

music box music, (*not electronic!!!!!!*) that played while you push it.

Another downside is that you don't learn anything. Other Elefun products teach numbers and letters, but this one does not.

It is simply for entertainment, which isn't always a bad thing, so, overall I would recommend this toy for toddlers who are looking for simple fun.



Little ones will enjoy playing with trash

Have you ever thought that a junkyard could be fun? If you answered no, think again, because that's where "Trash Wheels" comes in!



By Mreedul Gupta,
9, a CK Reporter
from Littleton

"Trash Wheels" shows how to recycle, reuse and play with the material that was once junk.

It includes two nano cars, two ramps, three fences, a recycle

machine, a car crusher, two roads, a liftable bridge, a junkyard, a crane and a board: Everything needed to build a junkyard city!

This toy is easy to assemble because it is kind of like Legos and it does not need batteries.

Its features let you launch cars by pressing a button, crush the cars with a lever and press a button on the crane where the

line would extend.

I recommend Trash Wheels for ages 4 to 7 because it is an opportunity to learn how to recycle and reuse, along with some other fun!

Older kids may or may not like this toy depending on their knowledge of recycling, and, although "Trash Wheels" is fun at first, there was nothing left to do after building the city/junkyard.



Technology may solve a very old mystery



In the old map at left, a discolored spot turned out to be a patch that covered the marking that indicates a fort. We've added an arrow and a dotted to make it easier to find. Below, the arrow shows Albemarle Sound on today's US coast.



The Lost Colony of Roanoke is one of the oldest mysteries of the New World.

In the 16th Century, England wanted settlements on the North American shore, and one of the men Queen Elizabeth appointed to do this was Sir Walter Raleigh.

In 1585, Raleigh set up a fort on Roanoke Island for 108 soldiers, but they stopped getting along with the natives fairly soon, and so, a year later, all but 15 soldiers went back to England.

Then, in 1587, 117 colonists came for another try. During that year, the first English colonial baby, Virginia Dare, was born.

But then England and Spain went to war, and the colonists were left on their own. By the time someone came to bring them fresh supplies in 1890, they had disappeared, leaving only the word "Croatan" carved on a post, and "Cro" carved on a tree.

There have been many theories about their fate, and now a new clue is being discussed: A researcher at a college in North Carolina used x-rays to examine a 1585 map of the area.

It showed a paper patch over what looks to have been the symbol for a fort, about 70 miles from the abandoned colony.

He suspects the colony may have moved and built a fort, which was added to the map but then covered up for reasons of military secrecy.

That period in English history featured government secrecy and use of propaganda, so it wouldn't be the only case of that sort.

Tests in the area suggest that there were some European style buildings in the area, and the researchers hope more study will show what they were.

If they were built by the Lost Colony, it will be yet another clue in an old historical mystery.

ck Kids and adults can find live links to information about stories in Colorado Kids at www.ColoradoNIE.com

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to register.

ColoradoNIE.com 
The Denver Post | Boulder Daily Camera | Longmont Times-Gazette | Loveland Reporter-Herald

Sudoku

Rules: Every row across, every column down and each of the six smaller boxes must contain numerals 1,2,3,4,5 and 6, one time and one time only. The solution to this week's puzzle is on Page 4.

6		3			
				3	5
	6				1
			2		
				4	
3		4		2	

HOLIDAZE WILL DAZZLE



Featuring flying ornaments, flipping gingerbread men, and Santa Claus himself, it's "Cirque Dreams Holidayaze," a spectacular stage show you won't want to miss!



By Cara Dulin
12, a CK Reporter
from Castle Rock

"Cirque Dreams Holidayaze" is about all Christmas things coming to life.

Watch as the fearless performers flip, turn, and fly! Squeeze your neighbor's hand as they perform death-defying feats! This magical, mesmerizing show will be sure to "wow" you.

Have you ever seen ornaments soar? Or penguins wobble on a seesaw made of tables?

No? Well, Cirque Dreams Holidayaze makes those fantasies a reality.

Things that you put into the

"not humanly possible" category happen right in front of you!

Not all performers do dangerous acrobatic moves, though. There are also singers!

The Queen of Ice, the Angel, and Dickens sing songs to accompany many of the scenes.

The songs include "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree," "O Holy Night" and more, all chosen to fit their particular scenes.

"Cirque Dreams Holidayaze" is wonderful for all ages. No matter who you are, or how old, you will find this play absolutely thrilling!

So take the whole family! Once they see it, they definitely won't mind the drive into town!

This stunning performance is worth the cost. However high your expectations, this play will most definitely exceed them!

"Cirque Dreams Holidayaze" is at the Buelle Theater until the 22nd, so hurry fast!

For ticket information, go to ColoradoNIE.com

CLASSIC COMES ALIVE

Most everyone is familiar with the 1843 classic "A Christmas Carol," but even if you haven't read the book, you'll be able to follow the Denver Center Theater Company's performance of Charles Dickens's novel.



By Anja Mook,
11, a CK Reporter
from Northglenn

Scrooge (Philip Pleasants) played his part very well.

The sets for each scene were great, and, when Marley (John Hutton), Scrooge's partner who has been dead for seven years rises out of the floor it looks very real.

The Ghost of Christmas Past (Stephanie Cozart) takes Scrooge on an adventure through his past. During this trip Scrooge's heart begins to thaw.

The Ghost of Christmas Present (Leonard E. Barrett Jr.) closely resembles the description in the book: He has a wreath on his head and is large.

During this trip through the present Scrooge learns the truth about his clerk's son Tiny Tim.

Then, in Scrooge's trip into the future, seeing his own grave and nobody weeping combined with seeing Tiny Tim's funeral being planned causes him to finally repent, and he sees Christmas as a beautiful thing.

I would rate this play 5 out of 5 stars. It has some scary things, so parents should know how much scariness their kids can take, but I would recom-

mend it for children of all ages, and especially for fans of Charles Dickens.

This play follows very closely to the book, and two well-dressed gentlemen often narrate the play by quoting the book.

"A Christmas Carol" is on the Stage Theater of the Denver Center for Performing Arts until Dec. 29, and you'll

find a link to ticket information at ColoradoNIE.com.

As you leave, you'll still have the image of a happy, rejoicing Scrooge in mind. Nobody can say "Bah Humbug!" to this play.



Transformed New, improved Scrooge greets Tiny Tim and Bob Cratchitt Photo/ Jennifer M Koskinen

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