



Photos by Tim Keller

Sugar considers dinner

Fledgling hummingbird gets overnight reprieve

By TIM KELLER
The Chronicle-News

Looking west toward Capulin Volcano Saturday evening, to enjoy the always-beautiful sunset, Christina Boyce noticed both her cats lounging in the grass below the back porch of her Des

Moines home. The one-year-old tabby, J.R., was gently pestering something. Boyce looked closer and discovered that J.R. was playing with a live, fledgling hummingbird, on the ground in front of him.

She picked up the tiny damp bird and cupped it in her hand. The bird blinked at her, its chest rapidly fluttering, expanding and contracting. After holding it and calming it for a while, Boyce retrieved an old fallen nest she had saved. She put the hummingbird in the nest and the nest in a bowl. Then she got the hummingbird feeder she'd just, coincidentally, hung the previous day.

The traumatized little hummingbird immediately inserted its long beak into the feeder. It had a voracious appetite, feeding off and on through much of the evening. Boyce named her new charge Sugar.

As Sugar rested beside her on the couch, Boyce pulled out her laptop computer and did a web search for "baby hummingbird rescue". She determined that Sugar was a ruby-throated hummingbird, almost certainly a fledgling that had fallen out of its nest... or been blown out by

the evening's typically strong winds.

Having taken pictures, she sat the still feeding Sugar on the back porch. A pair of energetic hummingbirds circled and flitted around. The parents?

Later Saturday night, Sugar suddenly felt well enough to fly. Leaving the nest in an arc of tentative flight, she crashed to the floor.

At bedtime, Boyce left Sugar in the nest, placed high atop the freezer near the open doorway inside the garage. There, Sugar was safe from cats and, if she tried to fly, she had a chance.

In the morning, she was weak but breathing. She accepted a brief feeding, then made one last ditch attempt to fly, sputtering from the nest. Boyce was able to catch her, still alive, but only for a few seconds. Then sadly her little heart just stopped beating. Rescued from the clutches of J.R., the tabby, Sugar, most certainly appreciated spending the last few hours of her tiny life in the tender loving care of Boyce. Life is a precious thing, even a little life.

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Area sophomore attends leadership program

Courtesy of SHARLA BAUDINO
Special to The Chronicle-News

Blaine Baudino recently attended the Wyoming Hugh O'Brian Youth (HOBY) Leadership Seminar. Blaine joined more than 28 other young leaders representing many high schools throughout Wyoming. The event was held June 12 through 14, 2009 in Cheyenne.

Representing Hoehne High

School, Blaine is the son of Jerry and Sharla Baudino. Hoehne School and G & C Trucking were local HOBY sponsors.

HOBY Leadership Seminars bring together a select group of high school sophomores to interact with groups of distinguished leaders in business, government, education and other professions to discuss present and future issues. The goal is to provide the youths a stimulat-

Happy Birthday to Mr. Verderaime

Catherine J Moser
Special to the Chronicle-News

Everyone knows one of the greatest gifts you can give anyone is your time. Time is that prized commodity that no one can buy; we are all alike in that respect. No one can go to the store and get more and when it's gone, it's gone forever. We've all said "Why in the world did I waste my time on that?" about one thing or another. We've all wished we had "do-over" time and we've all had our valuable time stolen by someone or something. It's just the way it is. Mostly, I think, we forget how precious time really is.

Like the old Jim Croce song said, we wish we could save time in a bottle. There are times in our lives we wish we could preserve, intact and whole, and then take them out from time to time to savor them once again. The time we spend with special people is a double treasure. Monday, July 20, was such a day for me. Not only did I get to spend the day with my good friends from beading class, which is always grand, I got to go to Aguilar and wish Mr. Albert Verderaime (Verda-rhyme) a very Happy Birthday. We had a special invitation to join in the festivities and couldn't wait to hug his neck and congratulate him. I must tell you, Mr. Albert is a very special person, in many ways.

Anthony and Josephine Verderaime started the little Aguilar Bakery in 1927. Papa Tony was a coal miner and Mama Josephine ran the bakery while their son, Frank, did all the baking. It was very hard work and the hours were long for all of them. The building where it all started is gone now; you can see the old vacant lot right across the street from the present day site. Albert was their baby. He grew up and took over the bakery in 1947 and runs it to this day, baking the most delicious bread and pastry you can imagine. There were two sisters, Anna Rose and Rose Ann; they are gone now, as are Mama, Papa and Frank. Albert is a stoic remnant of his proud Italian heritage. His life is a tribute to all the courageous immigrant families that made our nation great.

All the years of his own hard work barely show in his face. Mr. Verderaime has a sweet face, with kind, pale blue eyes; I liked him the first time I ever saw him. He doesn't look old enough to be a

man who's seen 90 summers. A man of few words, he would never boast or brag about himself, so I will for a moment. I love that he got up before dawn to bake bread on his birthday. He even made his own birthday cake to share with the crowd. "Of course I did," he said with a grin. I could see the morning's dusting of flour still on his pants and shoes. Several of his friends had already gathered to drink coffee and wish him well. The counter top was lined with many happy cards from well-wishers. Tammy, his delightful assistant, and "Boss" she said, with a laugh, was making lasagna. We could smell the aroma before as we entered the shop. The Beading Girls of Summer Guild, Frannie, Miss Susy Q and I, knew we had to get there early if we wanted any bread. Sure enough, it was flying off the shelves in record pace; barely ten o'clock and it was nearly all gone. We brought our offering of wine and fruit to add to the celebration and wish our friend a Happy Birthday.

Along with the usual Italian bread loaves, white bread and rolls, this morning's fare included apricot and strawberry Danish, along with cinnamon rolls and long johns. I brought a bag full of pastry back for my friends down here at the Chronicle-News and it didn't take long before those tasty little treats were gone as well. Mr. Verderaime is a top-notch baker. Everything he makes is delicious. He still makes all the buns for Lee's BBQ here in Trinidad. While we were talking, I finally got him to admit he makes a mean batch of spaghetti sauce, too. Somehow that doesn't surprise me at all.

Albert would never tell you this himself, but his nephew, Mark Nathe will. Mark, the son of Albert's sister, Rose Ann, lives in California and comes twice a year to see his Uncle Albert. As he swept and mopped the floor, for his self-appointed morning chore, Mark was quick to tell how his uncle had gone to baking and pastry school in Chicago and learned how to decorate cakes. He grinned as he leaned on his mop and his eyes just twinkled as he talked about Albert. Anyone could tell that he has a special affection for this man he calls Uncle. The decorating remark ignited a spark in Albert and

he added that pastry baking, especially decorating, is his passion, and he loves to make cookies. Good thing, because we love to eat his cookies.

Albert's wife was a lovely lady named Mary Piccolo. She was a school teacher for many years in Aguilar. They had two boys, Anthony, who now lives in Colorado Springs, and Charles, who, like his father, is a baker in Pueblo. I could see the love and myriad of tender memories through his eyes, as he showed me her sweet picture. "She was good to me," he said softly. Albert lost his love in 1973. She is buried, along with the rest of his family in the Catholic Cemetery in Aguilar; placed in the earth they loved and worked, now at rest under the beautiful Colorado blue sky.

As we chatted and took a little stroll down memory lane, Mr. Verderaime told me, "Trinidad, Aguilar, and Walsenburg have been very good to me. All the little grocery stores like, Bonfadini's, and Malouff's," he paused as thoughts of old friends crossed his mind, "sold my bread and pastry for years. I've made so many wedding cakes for folks in the county I couldn't even count them all." Mark piped up and added, "They were very beautiful wedding cakes, too, very professional." Uncle Albert just smiled.

When I asked what he'd like for me to say to each of you, to mark this event, this wonderful celebration of his 90th year, he said, "The good things out-weighed the bad things. I've had a lot of good friends, some good wine and a lot of good bread." Then he added, his blue eyes sparkling, and his face just beaming, "Good family means a lot and I had a good family."

Mr. Verderaime, you are a rich man, in every way it counts to be rich. It is my pleasure to know you and share this moment in your life. Thank you for bringing to our community the gift of your hard work ethic and charming personality. We are all blessed to have you belong to us as a reminder of what it means to be a community and a family. If I could save time in a bottle, I'd save today, so I could take it out and savor it from time to time. It's one of those moments worth saving. Happy Birthday Albert!

For questions or comments about this article please email me: cherokeeose50@comcast.net

positively influence business, government, and society," said Blaine Baudino. "I also better understand that my goals and dreams are important and that leaders have extreme responsibilities in whatever walk of life they pursue."

The Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership (HOBY) was established in 1958 by the popular actor Hugh O'Brian; following a visit to Africa, where a meeting with Dr. Albert Schweitzer inspired him.

"One of the things Schweitzer said to me was that the most important thing in education was to teach young people to think for themselves," O'Brian said. "From that inspiration, and with the support of others, who believe in youth and the American dream, I started HOBY to seek out, recognize, and develop outstanding leadership potential among our nation's youth."

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