

W'09 Best of PUEBLO

Sunday, October 11, 2009 The Pueblo Chieftain

Inside look at Puebloans' choices

Ever wonder where Puebloans prefer to dine around town? Or, whom they consider to be the city's greatest sport legend? Which animal do they think makes the best family pet?

The Pueblo Chieftain had those and many other of "best of" questions, and conducted a random survey of its readers in July.

Nearly 400 people responded, casting their votes for what they consider help make up the best of Pueblo.

The top choices are published in today's special section.

—Larry Lopez

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'09 Best of CITY LIFE

BEST STREET NAME

Abriendo coolest of Pueblo street names

One of Pueblo's oldest streets also is the one that has the coolest name.

Abriendo Avenue, the main thoroughfare through the Mesa Junction, was selected the best named street in the city.

Abriendo, which means "opening" in Spanish, fits that meaning literally as it serves as one of the streets that lead into Pueblo's Downtown area as well as through Mesa Junction and the Bessemer neighborhood.

Abriendo was one of the original streets of what was in the mid-1800s Old South Pueblo. The streets of Old South Pueblo all contained Spanish names, most named for cities in Mexico.

But according to historians, in 1887, a City Council committee on streets and bridges renamed all but two of the streets — Abriendo and Corona — to



CHIEFTAIN PHOTO/FILE

Puebloans like Abriendo Avenue's name the best of all.

Top voter-getters

1. Abriendo
2. Goodnight
3. Jerry Murphy

English names.

Abriendo Avenue, which is split between East and West blocks, runs from Dutch Clark Stadium east to Stauter Field and travels south to Minnequa Heights.

—Gayle Perez

BEST PLACE FOR A HONEYMOON

Inn is a delight for newlyweds

Ornately decorated rooms, chocolates, champagne and a breakfast for two in bed are just a few of the specialities the "Just Married" can enjoy at the Abriendo Inn.

The former mansion of Walter's Brewery founder Martin Walter, the bed and breakfast at 300 W. Abriendo Ave. was picked as the top spot for newlyweds to spend their honeymoon.

Abriendo Inn opened in 1989 and quickly became a popular spot for couples beginning their marriage.

The three-level home has 10 rooms of which four are designated as honeymoon rooms. Each honeymoon room has a whirlpool bath for two, including a heart-shaped bath in the Holly Room.

To make the couple's stay more memorable, the Abriendo Inn offers a honeymoon package that includes a special memento of the Abriendo Inn,



CHIEFTAIN PHOTO/FILE

The Abriendo Inn is rated the top honeymoon spot in Pueblo.

Top vote-getters

1. Abriendo Inn
2. Marriott

champagne flutes, a gourmet breakfast basket and the whirlpool bath and accessories.

The Inn also offers other items such as cake for two, chocolates, flowers and candles.

—Gayle Perez

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'09 Best of

CITY LIFE

BEST COLUMNIST

Espinosa columns draw strongest followings

Whether it is entertaining us from the Colorado State Fair with "Juan's World," reflecting on life's experiences or taking a stand on a political or cultural issue, Chieftain columnist Juan Espinosa has established a strong following.

So strong, that Espinosa was tabbed the best columnist in *The Pueblo Chieftain*, according to the newspaper's recent survey of its readers.

"I feel like I work for the subscribers to The Chieftain and am humbled to be considered the 'best' at anything in a newsroom filled with seasoned veterans," said Espinosa, himself a 21-year veteran at the paper.

"We strive to give people their 50-cents worth and I am thrilled to have the opportunity to put in my 2 cents once a week."

Upon graduation from CU in 1974, Espinosa moved to Pueblo to help start "La Cucaracha," a community newspaper. He joined The Chieftain in 1988 as a police reporter.

Juan's World, a daily column about life at the Colorado State Fair, began in 1991. Espinosa wrote about the underbelly of the Fair that most people didn't see and threw in enough self-deprecating humor to attract a loyal readership.

His weekly column first appeared in the newspaper's Life section, but soon established itself on the Saturday Metro cover.

"I've tried to retain my sense of humor, but more recently I've weighed in on some of the serious issues of the day — gang violence, kids over dosing on drugs, charter schools, and local politics," Espinosa said.

—Larry Lopez



Juan Espinosa

BEST NEWS STORY
Branch Inn explosion rated city's top story

For much of November 2008, the headlines in *The Pueblo Chieftain* and on local television news channels were dominated with the tragic story of the deadly natural gas explosion that leveled the Branch Inn and A Classic Boutique in the Historic Union Avenue District.

Stories about the Nov. 13 explosion were reported daily locally and garnered national attention with reports on CNN, The Today Show and the Discovery Channel.

The extensive coverage of one of the city's worst incidents was voted the Pueblo's top news story.

The Branch Inn explosion generated a number of different news angles from the dramatic rescue of 74-year-old Eugene "Geno" Roney, to the tragic death of 22-year-old Ashley Johnson, the only fatality in the accident.

It also drew interest because the explosion occurred just about a block away from where a Nov. 2 rally for

then-Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama had been held.

There were first-person accounts of the blast, stories on fundraising efforts, the funeral and the impact of the incident on businesses.

The death of Roney a month after the explosion brought the incident back into the spotlight. Roney died of terminal cancer, but his courageous fight after being trapped in the rubble of the explosion for nearly four hours made for compelling news.

Coverage of the incident continued into 2009 with reports of the cleanup



CHIEFTAIN PHOTO/FILE

Pueblo firefighters move past burning debris to the scene of the explosion at the Branch Inn on Union Avenue.

efforts and the reopening of businesses that sustained damages from the explosion.

—Gayle Perez

Top vote-getters

1. Branch Inn explosion
2. Obama campaign in Pueblo
3. McCain campaign in Pueblo

BEST FEATURE STORY

Chieftain's "Classic Pueblo" a series of top features

The "Slopper," a "Special" and "Star-burger" all are unique to Pueblo.

So is Gagliano's market, Gus' Tavern and Patti's Restaurant. Ditto for places such as Big Hill and the Blocks; events such as the Toy Run and the Bell Game; and people such Henry Reyes and Faye Kastelic, Sam Corsentino and Jane Rhodes.

For the past 7½ years, the people, businesses, events and places unique to Pueblo have been featured weekly in *The Pueblo Chieftain* as part of the newspaper's ongoing Pueblo Classic series.

The series began in March 2002 as a way to highlight longtime businesses, traditions, people and places in the city.

It also is a way to acquaint newcomers to the city about its rich tradition

Top vote-getters

1. Classic Pueblo

and culture, people, places and events.

The weekly series was only selection for the Best of Pueblo's feature story.

Classic Pueblo stories are published every Monday.

They reports acquaint longtime residents with businesses, people, places and events that help make up the community's uniqueness.

The stories, more than 300 to date, are as varied as the reporters and editors who write them. Every Chieftain reporter and several editors contribute to the series on a rotating basis.

There have been features on Do Drop Inn and Zoelsmann Bakery, the Black Swan restaurant and the Mesa

Drive-In.

Stories have been written about the Tamburitzans group, the Andenucio baseball tournament and the Farmer's Market. Features have been published on potica and the summer musical, Old Timers baseball and the Beulah Yule Log.

Places such as Beulah Mountain Park have been highlighted and readers have been introduced to Pueblo County Coroner James Kramer, Deputy Police Chief John Ercul and longtime teacher Marti Poole.

With a lot more stories to be told, the Classic Pueblo series will continue to focus on longtime businesses, people and places around the city.

—Gayle Perez

Top vote-getters

1. Juan Espinosa
 2. Joe Cervi
 3. Steve Henson
- Others: Chris Woodka, Chuck Green, Mary Porter

'09 Best of

CITY LIFE

BEST TEACHER

When it comes to math, South's Mara is the master

When one speaks of South High School teacher Pat Mara, thoughts of numbers and equations, polynomials and quadratic equations come to mind.

For almost four decades, the soft-spoken instructor has been helping students learn math through his caring and innovative approach to teaching.

Helping students understand one of the most misunderstood subjects is something Mara has been doing well for 38 years, including 24 years at South.

Mara, who has said he always wanted to be a math teacher, has won numerous awards locally and nationally. He recently was voted best teacher in Pueblo in a Chieftain survey.

A noted master teacher, Mara

- Top vote-getters**
1. Pat Mara
 2. Tim Brotherton
 3. Sabrina Sample

has received the Raytheon Corps Math Hero award in 2008; International Academy of Science Mathematics Teacher of the Year in 2001; Colorado Math Teacher Award of Excellence, 1997; and the President's Award for Excellence in Science Mathematics Teaching in 1989.

In a recent newspaper report, Mara said a highlight of his job has been having former students come back and tell him how much they appreciated what he taught them in class.

"Hearing that from kids is better than any award," he said.

— Gayle Perez



CHIEFTAIN PHOTO/FILE

South High School teacher Pat Mara works with four of his students in their intermediate algebra class.

BEST NEWS REPORTER

Malone's news reporting rated tops

For the past 10 years, Pueblo Chieftain reporter Patrick Malone has covered city crime from homicides and gangs to the day-to-day police blotter.



Patrick Malone

Several years ago, Malone added the courts to his beat and gave readers interesting gavel-to-gavel reports on some of the city's top trials.

With his unique flair and thorough reporting of crimes and trials, Malone was voted the best reporter in Pueblo.

He started his career at The Chieftain in 1997 as an advertising writer, contributing to the Active Years special sections and Pueblo West View.

In April 1999, Malone moved to The Chieftain newsroom as a general assignment and police reporter. By 2002, he'd found his niche reporting crime and following court cases.

Malone's style of reporting often brought a light tone to the police blotter as well as a serious view to the more violent crimes.

- Top vote-getters**
1. Pat Malone
 2. Chris Woodka
 3. David Ortiz
- Others: Gayle Perez, James Jarman, Mary Porter, Peter Roper

He has reported on compassionate and heart-wrenching victims' accounts along with the hard-hitting details that emerge in trials.

His writing has earned him several awards from the Colorado Press Association and the Colorado Associated Press Editors and Reporters.

Among some of his award-winning stories have been the Circuit City plane crash, the 1999 murder of Puebloan Dusty Thomas and the sexual molestation cases involving former Roncalli High School teacher Brother William Mueller.

In addition to reporting on crime and courts, Malone also has been an education reporter and has done some feature writing in the Lifestyle section.

He now serves as The Chieftain's weekend city editor.

—Gayle Perez

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'09 Best of

BEST CHARITY EVENT

Relay for Life a charity winner

When you combine an all-night walk/run with stories of triumph and pain, and thousands of dollars in pledges, you get one of Pueblo's most successful charity events in the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life.

For the past 12 years, thousands of people have laced up their running and walking shoes each June to participate in an all-night relay event that raises thousands of dollars for the American Cancer Society.

A national event that began in 1985, the Relay for Life has been held in Pueblo since 1998. It is hosted by the Pueblo Chapter of the American Red Cross.

The event is composed of teams who walk or run at a designated site in an overnight event that continues for 24 hours. Teams must have at least one person walking or running at any given time.

Top vote-getters

1. Relay For Life
2. Chocolate Indulgence
3. Breast Cancer Walk
4. Others: Tribute to Women, Diabetes Walk, Toy Run.

The relay has raised from \$7,000 its first year to \$100,000 in 1998.

Kicking off the event each year is a "Survivors' Walk," which allows for cancer survivors to lead the contingent of participants in a one-lap celebratory walk. The walk also honors patients with cancer and is a remembrance to those who have died from the disease.

Pueblo's Relay for Life has been held at several different locations such as Colorado State University-Pueblo, Dutch Clark Stadium, East High School and Pueblo Community College.

—Gayle Perez

CITY LIFE

BEST LOCAL ARTIST

John Mendoza artwork capturing

Whether it's oil paint or watercolor at the tip of John Mendoza's brush, the result is a unique work of art capturing Mendoza's style of landscapes, nostalgia and nature.

For nearly 45 years, Mendoza has been putting a brush to the canvas to create masterpieces that are well-known and well-loved by local and national art lovers.

Mendoza's signature work has earned him the title as the best local artist.

Mendoza earned an associate's degree in art from Southern Colorado State College and then a bachelor's and a master's, both in art, from the University of Northern Colorado.

For the past 43 years, Mendoza has been creating oil and watercolors, most notably his romantic landscapes, to the awe of many art collectors.

Mendoza, who works out of his Belmont home alongside his artist wife, Dorothy, has pieces of his work hanging in buildings and galleries throughout Pueblo as well as nationally, particularly in the Southwest.

A member of the National Watercolor Society, Mendoza's work also is



CHIEFTAIN PHOTO/FILE

John Mendoza sits among his artwork in the studio at his Belmont home.

Top vote-getters

1. John Mendoza
 2. Ed Posa
 3. Jill Starkey
- Others: Carla Romero, Nathan Solano, Ann Yaeger, Joe Adamich

displayed in several collections in museums, institutions and among prominent art collectors. He has participated in numerous art shows throughout the U.S.

In addition to his artwork, Mendoza also has shared his talents with local students as a retired teacher at Freed and East High schools. He and his wife also have served as artists-in-residence at then University of Colorado.

—Gayle Perez

BEST LOCAL ART GALLERY

Sangre de Cristo Arts Center's exhibits are wide-ranging

Local, regional and nationally recognized artists are among the many artists whose artwork have been featured in exhibits at the Sangre de Cristo Arts and Conference Center.

With more than 7,500 feet of exhibition space in several galleries, the arts center has showcased a variety of art shows and special collections in its 37-year history.

The art center's Helen T. White galleries offer a variety of exhibits on a rotating basis, which allow the center to host shows throughout the year that will appeal to many visitors.

The wide range of artwork on

Top vote-getters

1. Sangre de Cristo Arts Center
 2. John-Deaux Galleries
 3. Art on Main
- Others: Nemick & Thompson

display at any given time is sure to captivate local art lovers as well as visitors to the center.

Built in 1972, the art center has been expanded to offer an even wider array of exhibits such as the current exhibit representing the West.

—Gayle Perez

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'09 Best of!

CITY LIFE

BEST NEW BUILDING

Health department building enhances Downtown look

With bright sunlight beaming through its numerous strategically placed windows and environmentally friendly and bright interior to greet employees and clients, the new Pueblo City County-Health Department has become one of Downtown Pueblo's gems.

The new three-story building at 101 W. Ninth St. opened in August and already has become a very visually appealing structure in Downtown and for passing motorists along nearby Interstate 25.

The \$9.3 million structure was voted the best new building in the city.

It was constructed with an environmentally friendly plan in mind and features a lot of windows and skylights, which bring direct sunlight into the

Top vote-getters

1. City-County Health Department
2. Professional Bull Riders
3. YMCA

warm, comfortable building.

The abundance of natural light not only offers a brighter environment but also cuts down on the amount of electric light in the building.

All the "hard" flooring, concrete, carpet and wall coverings are made from sustainable materials.

The "green" features have earned the building designation as a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design or LEED.

The interior of the 41,000-square-foot structure is as pleasing as the exterior with its open windows, bright light and a soothing wall fountain created by local artist Judith Williams.

Another local artist, Jean Latka, designed a fused-glass, hanging sculpture depicting leaves that will create a showpiece for the building's atrium.

Additional leaves will be added to

the sculpture for every \$250 donation to the health department's "Give Healthy, Live Healthy" campaign to raise money for furnishings for the building.

— Gayle Perez

BEST VIEW OF THE CITY



CHIEFTAIN PHOTO/FILE

For the premier view of the mountains, Lake Pueblo and the city of Pueblo, try Liberty Point in Pueblo West.

For view of the mountains and city try Liberty Point

There's no better place to catch a magnificent, breath-taking view of the mountains to the west and the city of Pueblo to the east than atop the Pueblo West bluff of Liberty Point.

For nearly a century, locals have been venturing to Liberty Point to view a spectacular evening sunset, catch a glimpse of the Lake Pueblo below or get a bird's eye view of Pueblo.

Liberty Point, located about 7 miles west of Pueblo, was voted as the place to get the best view of the city of Pueblo and best view of the mountains.

Top voter-getters

1. Liberty Point
 2. Big Hill
 3. Rawlings Library
- Others: CSU-Pueblo

Long before the community of Pueblo West was started, Liberty Point was a favorite spot for locals to get a picturesque view of the front range mountains from Pikes Peak to the Sangre de Cristos.

It also provided a prime spot to gaze down on the Arkansas River valley and

SEE VIEW, 9

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'09 Best of

CITY LIFE

BEST HISTORIC BUILDING

Union Depot the pride of Pueblo history, beauty

As one of the busiest passenger train hubs in the region, Pueblo's Union Depot usually was the first to greet travelers and newcomers or Puebloans returning home by train.

Today, the architecturally appealing sandstone building remains a popular landmark for the city and the nearby Union Avenue Historic District.

Trains no longer pass through the station but the depot's design makes it a favorite among locals. The 120-year-old building was selected the best-looking building in Pueblo and also the best historic building in the city.

Construction of the depot began in 1886, but it wasn't completed until 1889.

For the next 60 years, the station would become a major hub for train traffic arriving and departing Pueblo.

During its heyday, the station reportedly had 30-40 trains passing through each day, bringing thousands of passengers through its doors.

During World War II, thousands of soldiers made a stopover on their way to bases throughout the country, while others stayed in Pueblo to train at the army air base east of the city.

A decline in passenger train service in the 1960s slowed the amount of traffic going through the station. The final passenger train stopped here in 1971.

Four years later, the building was named to the National Register of Historic Places.

Portions of the depot still were being used until the once-popular lunch counter finally closed in the mid-1980s.

For several years, the icon of Pueblo's Union Avenue Historic district sat vacant and was falling in disrepair. It was put up for sale in 1983.

In 1990, Tim and Kathi Miller along with five other couples bought the depot and began the costly repairs needed to bring it to standards and

attract prospective business to the building.

A year later, business began moving in and the depot became a top spot for banquets and other events. The upper floor of the building has been converted into condominiums.

The building, now owned by Pueblo attorneys and brothers Joe and Jim Koncilja, have worked to preserve the history of the building, one of Pueblo's crown jewels.

The restoration of the depot also was the spark that began the revitalization efforts of the Union Avenue Historic District.

—Gayle Perez

BEST PLACE FOR LOCAL HISTORY

Looking for history on the city? Try the Union Avenue District

An afternoon stroll along Historic Union Avenue provides a wide view of Pueblo's past 125 years of history.

From the legends of the brothels and gunfights at the saloons to the folklore of the "Hanging Tree" and the majestic beauty of the Union Depot, Pueblo's history comes alive along Union Avenue.

Union Avenue, which was named to the National Register of Historic Places in 1982, was voted the best place for local history.

The historic district, which is bordered by the Arkansas River to the south and First Street to the north, gives not only a glimpse at Pueblo's past through the unique architecture of the buildings, but also a look at the way of life of the people who inhabited the area when it was laid out in 1871.

The Union Avenue District served as the link between what then were three separate cities: Pueblo, South Pueblo and Central Pueblo. They consolidated into one in 1886.

The Union Avenue area still offers a broad look at Pueblo's unique heritage with places of interest such as the Vail Hotel, El Pueblo History Museum, Union Depot and the old Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad Freight Station located within the approximate five-block historic district.

With more than 50 buildings constructed before 1905, many display the unique Victorian architecture and Western influence popular during that period.

Union Avenue district also is home to several museums — Southeastern Colorado Heritage Center, the Pueblo Railway Foundation and El Pueblo History Museum among them — that highlight the area's history.

The district holds a popular walking tours, taking individuals on a stroll along the historic streets when they may read about the area's history on permanent plaques, which highlight buildings or events in the city's history.

—Gayle Perez



CHIEFTAIN PHOTO/FILE

Union Avenue Depot stands tall as the best-looking and historic building in Pueblo.

Top vote-getters

1. Union Depot
 2. Rosemount Museum
 3. Pueblo County Courthouse
- Others: Sangre de Cristo Arts Center, Thatcher Building, Vail Hotel, City Hall, Federal Building

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'09 Best of CITY LIFE

BEST VOLUNTEER GROUP

SRDA Meals on Wheels caters to homebound elderly

Delivering more than 550 meals a day to Pueblo's elderly and disabled is no easy task.

But for more than 38 years, volunteer drivers have been taking hot, nutritious meals to senior citizen shut-ins living throughout Pueblo County as part of the Senior Resource Development Agency's Meals on Wheels program.

The program has approximately 135 drivers who deliver the prepared meals seven days a week, according to Cindy Reyes, food service director for Meals on Wheels.

"All of our drivers are volunteer. Some do it five days a week; others may do it only two or three days," Reyes said. "Our volunteers are invaluable. Without them we couldn't get these meals to the elderly."

The Meals on Wheels program, which is funded by federal, state and local money, began as an off-shoot of a similar program started in England during World War II to provide meals to disadvantaged neighbors who lost everything in bombing raids.

Meals on Wheels was started in the United States in 1954 and came to Pueblo in 1971.

It began locally with five drivers delivering meals to 20 clients and has grown to more than 130 drivers and 550 clients.

VIEW / from page 7

get a scenic, panoramic view of Pueblo. Originally named Signal Point, the name was changed to Liberty Point in 1923 as part of the dedication of the site by members of the Sons of the American Revolution.

The Sons of the American Revolution erected a flag pole at the site and members voted to change the name to something more patriotic.

As development began in Pueblo West in 1969, Liberty Point was used to woo prospective buyers to the area.

According to a report in *The Pueblo Chieftain*, Liberty Point was referred to as one of Pueblo's scenic attractions.



Workers and volunteers at the SRDA pack meals for the daily delivery in Pueblo.

Top vote-getters

1. SRDA Meals on Wheels
 2. ACOVA
 3. Cooperative Care Center
- Others: Habitat for Humanity, League of Women Voters

The program provides two nutritious meals daily to qualifying senior citizens who are at least 60 years old and are homebound.

The volunteer drivers are not only essential to delivering the meals, but Reyes said they also provide a daily check on the elderly clients.

"A lot of the drivers become very attached to the clients," she said. "They check up on them and make sure that everything is OK."

— Gayle Perez

BEST VIEW OF THE MOUNTAINS

Top voter-getters

1. Liberty Point
 2. Lake Pueblo
 3. CSU-Pueblo
- Others: Beulah highway, Rawlings Library

Liberty Point also was the place where locals could come to watch progress of construction of the Pueblo Dam in the early 1970s.

In 1976, Liberty Point Park was established and outlook points were constructed along with miles of trails and a scenic park area.

—Gayle Perez

'09 Best of DINING

BEST CHAIN FAMILY DINING

Applebee's rated top family dining chain

Finding a place to eat that will satisfy an entire family can be a difficult task some days.

Applebee's has made the chore a little easier by providing a diverse menu and a family friendly atmosphere.

Stephanie Kissner, general manager of the South Side location, said being selected the best family chain restaurant in Pueblo is right in line with Applebee's goal.

"We want people to have fun; great food, fun service and a fun time," Kissner said. "We're a neighborhood restaurant."

Not only does Applebee's boast a variety for the entire family, it comes at value as well. With daily and weekly specials, customers can feed the entire family at a low cost.

Kissner said patrons can expect Applebee's two-for-\$20 value deal to

Top vote-getters

1. Applebee's
 2. Texas Roadhouse
 3. Chile's
- Others: Black-eyed Pea, Red Lobster, Olive Garden, Furr's

run through the end of 2009.

"You get an appetizer and two entrees," Kissner said. "It's a great deal, and you're going to go away full."

Every day from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. is happy hour with half-price appetizers and drink specials. Children eat at a discounted rate on Wednesday nights with the purchase of an entree. Other deals and specials vary.

Applebee's is open from 11 a.m. until 11 p.m. Sunday through Thursday and 11 a.m. until midnight on Friday and Saturday.

—Kasie Pigg



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'09 Best of

BEST BRUNCH

Sunday brunch: Shamrock offers more than an enjoyable meal

Eat, drink, watch. Shamrock Brewing Company has a simple motto that translates to a simply enjoyable time for patrons: Come eat great food, drink good drinks and watch all of the games.

What started as a Sunday football special has grown to become Sunday brunch at the Shamrock Brewing Co.

It offers everyone from the avid sports fan to a family after church a place to gather and enjoy good food and good drinks.

Chef Gordon Cossar said his restaurant serves filling dishes at good prices.

"Irish food is all about making you feel good, full, complete and happy," Cossar said.

The Shamrock menu for Sunday brunch is full of traditional Irish meals, each with a little twist. Many of the items feature green chile, and some are prepared California-style with

Top vote-getters

1. Shamrock
2. Golden Corral
3. Marriott
4. Others: Patti's, Pueblo Country Club

ingredients such as avocado.

Drink specials also are big sellers for Sunday brunch. Cossar said the biggest-selling drink is the Bloody Mary, using Shamrock Brewing Company's own recipe and fresh ingredients. There also are pint specials on Sundays, making Shamrock "a good place for Dad to come and have an excuse to have beer with breakfast," Cossar said.

Shamrock also offers all of the NFL and NCAA football packages on television, so sports fans may come and catch any game that interests them.

Brunch is served only on Sundays from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m.

—Kasie Pigg

DINING

BEST BARBECUE

GG's offers barbecue Southern style

In the South, barbecue is serious business, often accompanying two other events near and dear to Southerners' heart: church and football.

Lonnie and Carl Elley realized just how serious barbecue was during a trip to Louisiana, and have worked ever since to make Gus' Gourmet Barbecue, or GG's, just as serious.

What started as a backyard hobby for Lonnie and his wife, Rose, has become a trade perfected by their son and chef, Carl.

"We started by doing a lot of stuff for church groups and sports teams around town and cooking in the backyard," Lonnie said of GG's humble beginnings.

Once the family decided to take their backyard operation to a higher level, Lonnie and Carl, who has studied to be a chef in Italy, left for Louisiana to purchase a smoker. While there, they stayed eight days with a family that makes the smokers and learned a little about barbecue there.

"Barbecue is serious food in the South," Lonnie said. "I told Carl that we would have to take it just as serious back home if we wanted to make our business unique."



CHIEFTAIN PHOTO/BRYAN KELSEN

Carl Elley (left) and his father, Lonnie Elley, pose with Gus, outside Gus' Gourmet Barbecue. The eatery was selected as serving the best barbecue.

Top vote-getters

1. Gus' Gourmet Barbecue
 2. Dad's
 3. Willie's
- Other: Southern Classic, PT's, Buffalo Wild Wings

GG's, which is housed inside DJ's Sinclair gasoline station on U.S. 50 East, offers a variety of smoked products such as pulled pork and beef sandwiches, handmade Italian sausage sandwiches on the weekends, smoked turkeys and prime rib during the holidays, and of course pork ribs.

"We tell people to not to try the ribs," Lonnie said jokingly, "because they are addictive."

—Kasie Pigg

BEST CHAIN HAMBURGER

Carl's provides full service at low prices

When Puebloans need a serious meal in a hurry, the smiling gold star leads the way to the best burger in town among chain fast-food restaurants. Carl's Jr. offers a serious burger at a low price.

David Garrett, director of information and technology and financial operations for area Carl's restaurants, said being picked as the best chain hamburger in Pueblo is right in line with the company's goals.

"We want to provide burgers like the casual dining places at fast-food places," Garrett said.

In order to do so, Carl's Jr. boasts a \$6 burger line. With a product range from the guacamole bacon

cheeseburger to the teriyaki burger, all named for their casual dining price when the line was introduced, Garrett said.

Another aspect of casual dining that Carl's Junior has made a fast-food staple is the service. Garrett said diners who choose to eat at a Carl's should expect to remain seated throughout their dining experience.

"We try to give customers service inside the restaurants that they would receive at a casual dining restaurant," Garrett said. "We refill their drinks, deliver their food, everything."

Carl's Jr. has three locations in Pueblo. The Downtown restaurant on Sante Fe Avenue is open 24 hours.

—Kasie Pigg



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'09 Best of DINING

BEST LOCAL FINE DINING

Park East maintains fine-dining atmosphere

Whether looking to celebrate a special occasion or simply a relaxing atmosphere and a great meal, Park East is Puebloans' pick for fine dining.

Partners Terra and Jeff Riggio and David Jimenez have worked to maintain the traditions of the original Park East with an updated feel.

"We want customers to feel like they can celebrate an occasion here," Terra Riggio said of the steakhouse. "But we want to keep it affordable so that everyday can be a special occasion."

With an award-winning entree and drink menu, patrons are sure to enjoy dinner and a great atmosphere when dining at Park East.

The lounge area features live entertainment Wednesday through Saturday evenings, and seating is available in four dining rooms.

"We try to maintain the quality of the entire experience," Riggio said. "The quality of the atmosphere, the service, the food and the consistency of all of those aspects."

Originally opened in 1975 as the Three Thieves, Park East maintains a traditional menu, with many items on the menu the same as when it opened 34

Top vote-getters

1. Park East
 2. La Renaissance
 3. DJ's
- Other: 1521, Magpie's, Giacomo's, DC's, Rosario's

BEST CHAIN FINE DINING

Top vote-getters

1. Olive Garden
 2. Red Lobster
 3. Texas Roadhouse
- Others: Carino's

years ago. However, an in-house chef constantly is updating the menu.

For newcomers to Park East, Terra Riggio recommends the sirloin steak.

Jimenez, on the other hand, recommends trying the prime rib.

For starters, both agree the vegetable tempura, with fresh vegetables beer battered and deep fried, is an excellent choice.

Located on Goodnight Ave., just outside City Park, Park East is open Monday through Sunday from 4 p.m. to 10 p.m.

—Kasie Pigg

BEST BUSINESS NAME

Catchy moniker: Cinfully Delicious

Biting into one of Cindy Reyes' delicious baked goods or indulging in one of her chocolate delicacies can be sinful.

It's no wonder when Reyes decided to return to her hometown 18 years ago to open a catering business, she chose the name Cinfully Delicious.

"Everything we make is absolutely delicious," Reyes said. "It's not just one thing we make. We can cook, we can bake and we specialize in chocolate."

Her business moniker is equally delightful as Cinfully Delicious was voted the best business name in Pueblo.

Reyes said the catchy name was the brainchild of the chef she worked for in Los Angeles.

"When I told him I was coming back to Pueblo to open my business, I asked him what he thought would be a good

Top vote-getters

1. Cinfully Delicious
2. Hopscotch Bakery
3. Do Drop Inn
4. Others: Daily Grind, Exquisite, Adams Rib, Coco Man, Solar Roast

name. He said, "What about Cinfully Delicious?" and use the spelling C-I-N for Cindy."

The name took and Cinfully Delicious has become a well-known local favorite in catering and restaurant business.

"We've had the same name now for 18 years," said Reyes, who started out in catering and has expanded to a restaurant business as well. "I guess it was a good choice."

—Gayle Perez



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'09 Best of

DINING

BEST NEW RESTAURANT

Chipotle gives Pueblo a fresh, new restaurant

A business plan that's good for the community and good for customers helped Chipotle become a booming business in Pueblo since it opened last fall.

The restaurant first opened its doors in 1993 in Denver and now has more than 1,000 locations. It was voted the best new restaurant in Pueblo.

Service Manager Ash King said it is Chipotle's spin on classic Tex-Mex food that makes the restaurant stand out among newcomers in the area.

"We offer great, fresh Mexican food with a unique spin," King said. "We endorse humane treatment of animals and use only fresh, natural ingredients."

Every shift prepares and serves fresh ingredients such as oregano pulled right off of the stem. King said that all food is prepared in an open kitchen where customers may see items being prepared and then brought to the serving line.

The entire store is designed to allow customers to take comfort in the fact that everything is clean and sanitary.

"The concrete floor makes it easy to notice any dirt," King said. "Even the



Chipotle Mexican Grill opened its doors in Pueblo a year ago on North Elizabeth Street.

CHIEFTAIN PHOTO/FILE

Top vote-getters

1. Chipotle
2. Angelo's
3. Galileo's

Others: Sabor del Caribe, Dad's Barbecue, Sushi Garden, Andy's Barbecue

stainless steel has kind of a double standard for us, if it gets dirty at all it will really show, but if it is clean it looks really nice."

In order to ensure the freshness of the food served, Chipotle does not keep food overnight. In fact, King said any leftovers are donated to the Salvation Army in Pueblo.

"I think the standards here are high above expectations with the standards of food and the standards of cleanliness," King said, explaining why he feels Chipotle was deserving of its Best of Pueblo win.

—Kasie Pigg

BEST LOCAL PIZZA

Best pizza: It's in the dough

Being named the best local pizza in Pueblo takes a lot of dough.

It is in the dough that Do Drop Inn partners Donna MacFarlane-Franz and Hoss Kashani have found a way to make their pizza stand out among others in Pueblo.

"There's a lot of good pizza in Pueblo," MacFarlane-Franz said. "I think our crust and our sauce makes our pizza stand out among others."

Kashani said that the variety of gourmet pizzas, which contain fresh ingredients, adds to the sweet crust and fresh daily sauce combination.

The most popular type of pizza at Do Drop is its combination pizza, which features Italian sausage, pepperoni, green peppers, and mushrooms.

MacFarlane-Franz said she recommends patrons try the "Pueblo's Favorite" pizza.

"We named it Pueblo's Favorite because it has locally grown Pueblo Chile on it," MacFarlane-Franz said. "It has hamburger, onions, tomatoes and the chiles."

Some other recommendations are



CHIEFTAIN PHOTO/FILE

A hot fresh combo pizza right out of the oven is ready to be served at Do Drop Inn.

Top vote-getters

1. Do Drop Inn
2. Angelo's
3. Ianne's

Others: Little Caesar's, Tony and Joe's, Black Jack

the "Avondale Pizza" with steak, alfredo sauce, chiles, and chile pique; and the "Vegetarian Pizza," even for those who are not vegetarian, Kashani said. "We try to satisfy every taste with our pizzas."

Do Drop Inn has two locations, open from 7 a.m. until 11 p.m. and offers a pizza, pasta and salad buffet every evening and weekdays for lunch. Dine-in, carryout, catering and party seating are available.

—Kasie Pigg

BEST COFFEE SHOP

Daily Grind hits the spot for wide range of customers

A trip to the The Daily Grind is, for many Puebloans, a break from the norm; for others, a part of their daily routine.

The laid-back coffee shop and deli offers something for everyone from the artsy hipster to the business professional.

General Manager Charles Sole and his wife and owner, Laurie, opened the Union Avenue coffee shop and deli with the hopes of becoming a

Top voter-getters

1. Daily Grind
 2. Wireworks
 3. Solar Roast
- Others: Starbucks, IHOP

community installment.

It is an objective they have conquered.

"We decided to buy the shop to make an investment in the community," Sole said. "If you're going to

succeed, you have to become an integral part of the community."

In order to fulfill this mission, The Daily Grind has undertaken many different projects. From recycling and using green products to providing for Care and Share, The Daily Grind does a lot of behind the scene work.

A community project that is a little more visible to customers is the collections of art that adorn the walls of The Daily Grind. Sole said the shop

features a different artist each month, and provides a location for local musicians to perform.

The Daily Grind features a menu as diverse as the customers it serves. From coffees and teas, to sandwiches, Sole said there is something for everyone.

Open seven days a week from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m., the Daily Grind serves breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

—Kasie Pigg

'09 Best of!

DINING

BEST LATE NIGHT EATERY

Top vote-getters

1. Village Inn
 2. IHOP
 3. Taco Bell
- Others: Denny's



CHIEFTAIN PHOTO/FILE

Nancy Carter smells a Rocky Ford cantaloupe at the Farmers Market in the Midtown Shopping Center.

BEST PLACE TO BUY PRODUCE

Top vote-getters

1. Midtown Farmers Market
 2. Musso Farms
 3. King Soopers
- Others: Mauro's

RESTAURANT WITH THE BEST DESSERT

Got a sweet tooth? Go to Galileo's

Puebloans with a sweet tooth know the place to go for serious satisfaction is Galileo's.

What started out as a small restaurant in the Bessemer area has expanded to a new location on Victoria Street just across from the Union Depot. And owners Francesco Catinella and his wife, Jessica, saved room for dessert.

From cream puffs to tiramisu, Catinella said there are between 30 and 40 desserts featured at different times at Galileo's. Specialty cakes made to order.

"The desserts are all made from scratch with old family recipes and recipes my wife and I made up," Catinella said. "The entire stock changes every couple of days."

Before coming to Pueblo, Catinella went to school in Italy and worked at

There is little that can trigger contentment better than digging into a warm, soft cookie. Hopscotch Bakery has embraced that fuzzy feeling, and made it even better by baking with only the best ingredients.

Hopscotch Bakery owners Richard and Mary Warner have taken original favorites and put a wholesome twist to them by using fresh, local ingredients to make childhood favorites even better.

"We don't use anything canned, frozen or pre-made," Richard Warner said. "All of our ingredients are either locally grown, farm fresh, or organic."

These ingredients, combined with the Warners' recipes, have made Hopscotch the place to go for cookies in Pueblo.

The bakery's best seller, the Kitchen Sink cookie, is a fresh spin on the original chocolate chip cookie, Richard Warner said. It combines Belgian chocolate, pecans, raisins, and almonds.

BAKERY WITH BEST COOKIES

Hopscotch cookies judged the best in town



CHIEFTAIN PHOTO/MIKE SWEENEY

Mary Oreskovich stands behind a display of various cookies sold at Hopscotch Bakery, which was voted the bakery with the best cookies in a Chieftain survey.

Other cookies that he recommends are the Lemon Lipsmackers, the Oatmeal Toffee, Mary 'O's, and any of the many varieties of shortbread.

"The Kitchen Sink is a great one to

Top vote-getters

1. Hopscotch
 2. Banquet Shusters
 3. Cookie Ladies
4. Others top vote-getters: Latronica's, Rio Bistro, Rosario's

try, one is almost a meal," Richard Warner said. "I would suggest people try a Mary 'O', it's our version of an Oreo but with no preservatives. We say around here, 'Once you go Mary 'O' you don't go back.'"

Located on Union Avenue, Hopscotch Bakery offers a lighthearted environment to those looking to curb a sweet tooth.

"It's just a happy place and we don't want people to think a cookie is a bad thing," Mary Warner said. "Have a cookie then go for a walk around the block. That's what the Hopscotch logo and brand are all about, lightness and fun."

—Kasie Pigg

Top vote-getters

1. Galileo's
 2. Rosario's
 3. Village Inn
- Others: Shamrock, Olive Garden, Black-eyed Pea, Chile's, DC

restaurants owned by his family in Sicily. There, he perfected his culinary skill and desserts such as raspberry tiramisu and sfogliatelle, an Italian pastry.

"Desserts here are unique, you can't find them anywhere because they are old family recipes," Catinella said. "Some people come here just for dessert."

Galileo's is more than just dessert, however. They serve a full lunch and dinner menu and have just opened a pizza annex featuring brick-oven pizza. They also offer a catering service.

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'09 Best of **DINING**

BEST MEXICAN RESTAURANT

Jorge's Mexican food rated tops in Pueblo

Mexican food in Pueblo is a big deal. So when Jorge's attracted a special customer about one year ago, the owner knew his Mexican restaurant was doing something right.

George Ayala even created a "special plate" as a result of what his special guest ordered for dinner that night.

"President Obama ate here three days before the election," Ayala said. "Now we have the Presidential plate, which is carne asada and a shrimp taco."

Jorge's, which has two restaurant

locations as well as a carry-out location, has been in business for 25 years, establishing itself as a favorite location for Puebloans.

"Consistency, consistency. You can't have things one way one day and another day have them a different way," Ayala said of the success of his business.

Jorge's has a daily happy hour from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. with drink specials.

"Now is the best time for chile rellanos because we get fresh



CHIEFTAIN PHOTO/FILE

Then-Sen. Barack Obama shakes hands with patrons during a quick stop at Jorge's Sombbrero Restaurant after giving a campaign speech along Union Avenue in Pueblo.

local produce," Ayala said. "And we're famous for our margaritas."

Both the Pueblo and Colorado Springs locations are open Monday through Friday from 11 a.m. until 9 p.m., Saturday from 9 a.m. until 9 p.m., and Sunday from 9 a.m. until 8 p.m. A full menu is served all day.

—Kasie Pigg

BEST TAMALES

Top vote-getters

1. Jorge's
2. Rojas

3. Burrito Betty's

Others: Papa Jose, Rita's, Liz's, Martinez, Romero's, Nacho's

BEST RED CHILE

Top vote-getters

1. Romero's
2. Rojas

3. Jorge's

Others: Nacho's, Papa Jose, Coors Tavern, Adolfo's

BEST GREEN CHILE

Top vote-getters

1. Mill Stop
2. Jorge's

3. Rojas and Nacho's

Others: Rita's, Nacho's

BEST ROMANTIC RESTAURANT

La Renaissance elicits *amore*

High-pitched ceilings, soft light filtered through stained glass and intimate seating on old wooden pews. La Renaissance restaurant has all the necessary elements for a romantic experience nestled inside an ornate church.

The romantic feeling to La Renaissance is not something owner Robert Fredregill aimed to create; it occurred rather naturally.

"We don't push to be romantic. It is romantic because it is what it is," Fredregill said. "It's just casual, relaxed dining in the unique atmosphere of an old church."

Each patron is served a five-course meal on linen, both important factors in the easy feeling Fredregill hopes customers experience.

"There's only a few places in town that use linens," Fredregill said. "I think that's really important, everything is included in a dinner price so it's a real sense of value and you're not rushed through dinner."

Many Pueblo couples can tell stories of how they began at La Renaissance; one table nestled in a secluded alcove has been the location of over 50 engagement proposals.

"Each table is an individual table apart from the other guests," Fredregill said, explaining the appeal of La Renaissance as a place to pop the question.

"A special thing men will do is come in advance and pick out a table," he said.

While romance is in the air at La Renaissance, it is not the only thing served.

"This is a great place to come and have dinner, relax and enjoy yourself," Fredregill said. "We choose the finest foods available and serve a varied wine list."

—Kasie Pigg

Top vote-getters

1. La Renaissance
2. Galileo's
3. Giacomo's
4. Others: Rio Bistro, Park East, DJ's, DC's, 1521

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'09 Best of

DINING

BEST PLACE FOR VEGETARIANS

Try Wireworks for veggies' delight

Whether looking for a light bite or a serious meat-free meal, Wireworks Coffeehouse offers customers plenty of options for the herbivore in its customers.

When opening a location on the Historic Arkansas Riverwalk of Pueblo two years ago, owner Ann Chenu saw an opportunity to bring something new to Pueblo.

"My family is vegetarian, so it just seemed natural," Chenu said of creating her menu. "A lot of people were cautioning me that it wasn't a good idea, but I think people really like it."

The biggest seller at Wireworks is Chenu's black bean burgers; a patty handmade of black beans, served on a Focaccia bun that is made in house, with a red pepper mayo.

"I think what people like really depends on their comfort level with eating vegetarian. The black bean burger is a safe bet for most," Chenu said. "For the more adventurous eater, we have a pear sandwich that is really good."

Wireworks also offers a variety of



CHIEFTAIN PHOTO/JOHN JAQUES

Anne Chenu carries a vegetarian plate at Wireworks Coffeehouse. It was rated the top place in Pueblo for a vegetarian meal.

Top vote-getters

1. Wireworks
2. Souper Salad
3. Galileo's Diner
4. Others top vote-getters: Daily Grind, Sushi Garden, Pueblo Dragon, Subway

soups and salads that appeal to those looking for a lighter meal. Coffee and fresh baked pastries also are available.

"People are becoming much more open to vegetarian food," Chenu said. "A lot of them associate it with healthy eating."

—Kasie Pigg

BEST STEAK

It's in the beef, Texas Roadhouse says about its top-rated steaks

Beef, after years of hearing a simple marketing slogan, most can identify it's what's for dinner.

What Texas Roadhouse knows is that great beef is the foundation for great steaks.

Jim Lyons, managing partner at the Pueblo location of Texas Roadhouse, contributes the selective process in which his restaurant procures meat.

"What makes the steaks the best is that buyers are selective about their beef, and the meat cutter that cuts the meat," Lyons said. "We have Eric McKim, a seven-year employee, who is one of the best meat-cutters west of the Mississippi, right here in this restaurant."

Once Roadhouse employees have selected the best beef for each steak, it

Top vote-getters

1. Texas Roadhouse
2. Park East
3. DJ's
4. Others top vote-getters: Latronica's, Rio Bistro, Rosario's

is seasoned with a special seasoning and grilled on a large, 450-degree grill.

Once the steak has been prepared, Lyons said the service that customers receive at his restaurant help make their dining experience enjoyable.

"The group of employees here is one of the best," Lyons said. "Most of the people who work here have been doing so for a long time, so winning the best steak in Pueblo makes us feel like we're doing something right."

—Kasie Pigg

BEST LOCAL BURGER PLACE

Red Top burgers good as ol' days

A rocking jukebox, thick milkshakes and big, juicy burgers: Red Top has everything to make its customers feel right at home, just like the good ol' days.

Its commitment to freshness and friendly service has made many Puebloans take notice of Red Top's array of hamburgers and cheeseburgers, General Manager Della Conjo said.

"Nothing is frozen. All of the meat is fresh and prepared before shifts and we don't add salt or additives," Conjo said. "Having a good crew is a big part of serving and creating the friendly atmosphere we want customers to feel when they come in."

While Red Top offers simple burgers, some of their most popular come a little more dressed up. Conjo said the two biggest sellers are the Mike's

Top vote-getters

1. Red Top
2. Gold Dust
3. Star Bar
4. Others top vote-getters: Sunset Inn, Noodles, Deli Dave, Coors Tavern

Mushroom Top and the green chile slopper, although she recommends the hickory burger with a side of curly fries.

Conjo said the addition of a green chile burger has set the Pueblo location apart from the restaurant's other four locations in Colorado Springs.

Located Downtown on Second Street, Red Top offers daily specials and an old-time diner feel. Children eat free on Mondays.

—Kasie Pigg

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'09 Best of

BEST SLOPPER

Coors Tavern slopper the original

Anyone in Pueblo knows it is hard to beat an original. Since the 1950s, Coors Tavern has been serving the original, and best, slopper in the city.

Owner Don Gray knows that keeping the slopper just as it was the day it was created is a large contributor to its success.

"We've always had the best slopper. This is where it originated," Gray said. "We just try to keep it consistent every day."

What started in the 1950s as a special request from Herb Casebeer, former owner of Herb's Sports Shop, has become a Pueblo staple.

"The special back then was a cheeseburger and a bowl of green chile. Herb asked for his green chile on his cheeseburger and then said, 'We call that a slopper at home,'" Gray said.

And the slopper was born.

Top voter-getters

1. Gray's Coors Tavern
2. Star Bar
3. Gold Dust

Others: Noodles, Pantry, Sunset Inn

Since Casebeer's request for his cheeseburger to be smothered in green chile, the slopper has become nearly 60 percent of Coor's Tavern's orders.

"I don't eat them all the time but when I do, I think, 'No wonder we sell so many; they really are good,'" Gray said.

Coor's Tavern, located Downtown on Fourth Street, serves a lunch and dinner menu as well as a full bar. The restaurant features a two-for one-special for Colorado State University-Pueblo students on Wednesday nights as well as daily lunch specials.

—Kasie Pigg

DINING

BEST LOCAL FAMILY DINING

The Pantry draws crowds with homey meals

How popular is The Pantry Restaurant?

Within a decade of buying the family restaurant on the Mesa Junction, owner Marty Valdez purchased three adjacent buildings for expansion purposes and in another four years had tripled the seating capacity.

Today, customers often fill the capacity 144 seating and The Pantry is regarded as the best local family restaurant as well as serving the best breakfast in town, according to The Chieftain's recent survey.

Valdez since has retired, leaving the business in the capable hands of his children, Shawna and Kenny Valdez, who have been with him all the way and still are packing in the crowds wanting a homey meal.

"People like the atmosphere, good portions and good price," Shawna Valdez said of The Pantry's popularity, "It's just like home. We see people in here twice a day. . . . You always know somebody in here."

The restaurant serves all three meals — breakfast, lunch and dinner — so the place is hopping from morning to night. "We are closed on Sunday," Shawna



CHIEFTAIN PHOTO/FILE

The Pantry was voted the best local restaurant for family dining as well as serving the best breakfast.

Top vote-getters

1. Pantry
 2. Mi Ranchito.
 3. Mill Stop
- Others: Latronica's, Patti's, Giacomo's, Do Drop Inn

Valdez said with a sigh of relief.

While the restaurant has a "huge menu," it is The Pantry's breakfast that draws the most customers, Shawna Valdez said.

"We probably are known for our green chile and huevos rancheros for breakfast," she said. "Anything with green chile. I think they (customers) put it on everything."

Other popular plates are the green chile cheeseburger and home-style chicken fried steak, she said.

—Larry Lopez

BEST POTICA

Mauro's potica: The kind Grandma made

As a staple for many during the holidays and family gatherings, Puebloans know the place to go for potica is Mauro Farms and Bakery.

For more than 45 years, 36th Lane has been the home to Carla Houghton's recipe, brought to Pueblo from Slovenia by her grandmother.

"We make it exactly how she taught us to," Houghton said. "I started when I was 10, and our whole family helps."

All of the ingredients used at the bakery are fresh, and quality is on the top of the priority list.

Keeping the process in the family can be difficult at times, since during the holiday season Mauro Farms and Bakery will make more than 10,000 loaves, and potica is available year-round.

"It's easier for us to make it than to

Top vote-getters

1. Mauro's
 2. Shusters Bakery
 3. Zoelsmann
4. Other top vote-getters: Gagliano's, Musso's, DiSanti's

try to teach someone else how to, so for the most part we do it ourselves and it turns out better that way," Houghton said.

Having a great product and great customers is what has made the potica at Mauro Farms and Bakery stand out.

"The recipe is simple and we keep it that way," Houghton said. "We're very grateful for our customers, that's why we try to keep our quality up."

—Kasie Pigg



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'09 Best of

SHOPPING

BEST MUSIC STORE

Pueblo Records and Tapes tuned in to music lovers

The old adage, "those who can't do, teach" may have been adapted slightly by Dave Dwight, owner of Pueblo Records and Tapes. His version would read "those who can't play music, sell it."

"I always loved music and wanted to be around it, even though I'm not musically talented," Dwight said, describing his decision to open a music store 20 years ago.

Since then, Pueblo Records and Tapes has gone through as many changes as the music industry itself. Pueblo Records and Tapes moved locations, added a state of the art disc repair system and an extensive DVD collection, just to name a few.

"Something most people probably don't know about us is that we repair discs," Dwight said. "It's \$2.99 per disc, and if we can't fix it there is no charge."

One aspect of Pueblo Records and Tapes that has not changed over time is the service and relaxed atmosphere customers enjoy. Dwight said that out of the four employees, three have been with the company for more than 10 years and the newest employee was formerly its best customer.

"Once people come in here they're more like friends," Dwight said. "Customer service is the most important thing to us, we strive to make sure our customers are happy."

Pueblo Records and tapes is located just off Pueblo Boulevard on Pueblo's South Side.

—Kasie Pigg

Top vote-getters

1. Pueblo Records & Tapes
2. Independent Records
3. Music Man
4. Other top vote-getters: Best Buy

BEST FLOWER SHOP

Campbell's Flowers variety appealing to Puebloans



CHIEFTAIN PHOTO/BRYAN KELSEN

Gary Stanifer, owner of Campbell's Flowers and Greenhouses, pauses for a photo amidst some of his geraniums. Campbell's received top honors for flower shops in The Chieftain's Best of Pueblo reader survey.

When Gary Stanifer purchased Campbell's Flowers in 1978, he grew more than flowers. He expanded the small shop on Claremont Avenue to encompass an entire city block, and added two more locations.

"Customers are able to buy fresh product every day," Stanifer said. "We bring it in or grow it."

The biggest occasion for Puebloans to purchase flowers is Mother's Day. Both cut-flower arrangements and potted plants are big sellers during the month of May.

"A lot of people don't realize we sell bedding plants," Stanifer said. "They also don't realize that our plants are comparable or cheaper than chain stores."

Campbell's creates flower arrangements for weddings, funerals and dances. Some of the biggest holidays for

Top vote-getters

1. Campbell's
 2. PS I Love You
 3. Flowers & Herbs
- Others: Petals, Dee's, Flowerama, Huber, King Soopers, Albertson's

flowers are Thanksgiving through Christmas, and Valentine's Day, depending on the day of the week it falls.

"Valentine's Day is a big time for flowers if it falls on a weekday," Stanifer said. "If it falls during the weekend, people don't send as many arrangements."

Campbell's offers worldwide delivery. Flowers may be ordered by phone in the store or at www.campbellsflowers.com.

—Kasie Pigg

BEST CONSIGNMENT SHOP

Top vote-getters

1. My Sister's Closet
2. ARC
3. Dress to Impress

BEST HARDWARE STORE

Top vote-getters

1. Ashley's
 2. Lowe's
 3. Home Depot
- Others: Rush Lumber, Mesa Hardware, Ace Hardware

BEST LIQUOR STORE

Top vote-getters

1. Loco
 2. Spanky's
 3. Oscar's
- Others: Pueblo Discount, Pueblo Boulevard, Powder Keg

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'09 Best of

BEST GIFT SHOP

Seabel's expands gift selections

What first opened as a small gourmet kitchen shop has grown to be the best gift shop in Pueblo.

Seabel's on Union Avenue has changed to meet new demands while still offering quality, unique items. Co-owner Mindy Potestio said kitchen items no longer are the best-seller in the store.

"People are becoming more concerned with what they're wearing," Potestio said. "In this economy you can buy a shirt or a piece of jewelry and not feel guilty, whereas if you buy a pasta bowl, how much are you really going to use it?"

While kitchen items and gift baskets remain a staple at Seabel's, since the store's reopening following the Branch Inn explosion nearly a year ago, the clothing and accessory department has erupted.

Top vote-getters

1. Seabel's
 2. Dee's Too
 3. PS I Love You
- Others: Exquisite Taste

"We've expanded and changed a lot since the explosion," Potestio said. "We have a lot of stuff you can't get anywhere else."

Seabel's is full of special gift items, and exclusive lines. With more than 80 flavors of coffee and unique jewelry lines, shoppers are sure to find something for every occasion right in the Hi+storic Union Avenue District.

"We want customers to feel happy, like they can get anything they want right here in Pueblo," Potestio said. "From under \$10 items to over \$900 items, we have something for everyone."

—Kasie Pigg

SHOPPING

BEST BOOK STORE

Barnes & Noble caters to readers, authors alike

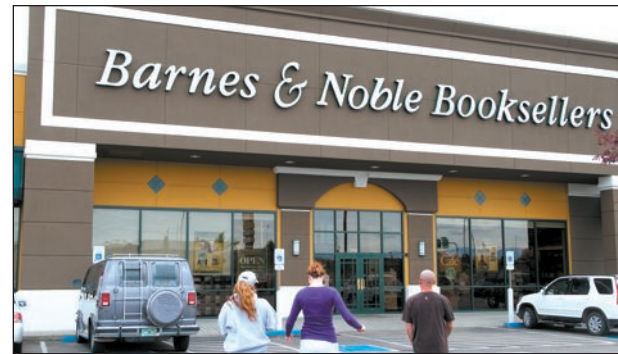
When Barnes & Noble opened its doors in Pueblo in 1997, the bookstore decided to become a major player in the community.

Since then, the store has been supporting schools, local authors and local businesses. Community relations manager Jenny Preston said being chosen as the best bookstore in Pueblo is a huge honor.

"We try to support school and authors, so to be selected as the best in Pueblo is one of the greatest compliments that can be given," Preston said.

One reason Barnes & Noble has moved to the top of the list, Preston said, is its eagerness to take care of customers. Whether handling individuals or providing books for an entire school, Preston said the Pueblo store "tries to put the book in the customer's hands."

For local authors, Barnes and Noble offers opportunities to sign books. They also carry locally written books on their shelves at all times.



CHIEFTAIN PHOTO/CHRIS McLEAN

Barnes & Noble is the best place Puebloans go to buy their books.

Top vote-getters

1. Barnes & Noble
 2. Books Again
 3. Bookery
- Others: Tumbleweed

There are two free story times per week for children. On Wednesday nights, children are invited to a 7 p.m. pajama story time. The young listeners are encouraged to come in their bedtime attire. Friday morning (11 a.m.) is another opportunity for families to listen to stories.

—Kasie Pigg

BEST HEALTH FOOD STORE

Store offers more than just vitamins

Eating healthy doesn't require a healthy budget.

Vitamin Cottage offers a great alternative to larger grocery stores, and General Manager Rod White says Pueblo shoppers might be surprised at what they will get for a low cost.

"A lot of people probably don't realize that everything is less expensive than chain grocery stores," White said. "They also probably don't realize that all produce is 100 percent organic. I think in the state of Colorado we're the only store that insists on using 100 percent organic."

While most people recognize the name Vitamin Cottage, the company has changed its name to better reflect the variety of goods they carry. Natural Grocers by Vitamin Cottage represents

Top vote-getters

1. Vitamin Cottage
2. Schrock's

the array of vitamins and supplements carried, as well as the grocery, health and beauty products available.

"We have world-class customer service and a wide array of products," White said. "The employees here are treated well and they like their jobs, that's why it is such a happy store."

Natural Grocers by Vitamin Cottage started in the Denver area by the Isley family as a door-to-door selling operation. The Isleys then opened a store in a building that looked like a small cottage, hence the name Vitamin Cottage.

—Kasie Pigg

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'09 Best of FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT

BEST PARK

City Park doubles your pleasure

For more than 100 years, City Park has been a favorite gathering place for Puebloans.

Established in 1904, the park is loaded with attractions for visitors, warranting its selection as the best park in Pueblo, according to a Chieftain survey. It also was chosen as the best picnic spot.

"It has a lot of amenities that brings everybody together, which is what you look for in a community," City Parks and Recreation Director Mike Sexton said of City Park's appeal.

"The biggest draw is that it is such a beautiful park," Sexton said, "But it has the tennis courts, kiddie rides, lakes, the zoo and spacious grass areas for picnickers."

Sexton says the city has no way of keep determining how many people use the park.

"It'd be mind-boggling if we had a counter at each entrance and counted the number of people. The only thing we keep track of is the kiddie rides. More than a quarter million people go through those rides each summer, so you can imagine the number of people who use it (park) for weddings,



CHIEFTAIN PHOTO/FILE

A family enjoys grilling and picnicking in City Park, which remains popular for family gatherings and picnics.

Top vote-getters

1. City Park
2. Mineral Palace
3. University Park

Other top vote-getters: Bessemer, Bruner, Belmont

BEST PICNIC SPOT

Top vote-getters

1. City Park
2. HARP
3. Pueblo Mountain Park

Other top vote-getters: Mineral Palace Park, Nature Center, Belmont Park

receptions, picnics, tennis. . .

"It sit in my office at the park and am amazed at the traffic in the park. It is the best used park in Pueblo."

—Larry Lopez

BEST COMIC STRIP

People can relate to life of 'Zits'

Every family with teenagers likely can relate to the triumphs and trials of 15-year-old Jeremy Duncan, star of the popular comic strip "Zits".

Jeremy has been entertaining comic strip readers for more than 10 years with quirky adventures with his friends, Pierce and Hector Garcia, the ongoing romance with girlfriend, Sara Toomey, and his relationship with his boring parents, who don't understand anything.

Jeremy's humorous antics and true-to-life teenage response to life have made Zits one of the most popular strips among Pueblo Chieftain readers as well.

The idea for the strip was developed by co-creators Jim Borgman and Jerry

Top vote-getters

1. Zits
2. Garfield
3. Peanuts

Others: Pearls Before Swine, Frank and Ernie

Scott, while both were sitting on a porch in Arizona.

The strip debuted in about 200 newspapers in 1997. Today, there are more than 1,600 newspapers worldwide who read about the life of Jeremy Duncan on a daily basis. The strip is published in 45 countries and in 15 different languages.

—Gayle Perez

BEST CONCERT OF THE YEAR

State Fair concerts all encompassing

Where else can you listen to Garth Brooks in concert under the stars and then attend a Foreigner show indoors the following night?

Where can you laugh your head off to Carrot Top or sing along with the Statler Brothers?

The annual Colorado State Fair is the place and its the Fair's concert series that offers that kind of diversity in entertainment and venue.

So, when it comes to listening to the music of George Strait or Sugarland, REO Speedwagon or 3OH3!, there's no place better than the State Fair, say Chieftain readers.

For years, a highlight of the Fair has been its concert series, which has been known to bring in up-and-coming musicians, longtime favorites and even an occasional comedy act.

The variety of entertainment offered during the annual 11-day State Fair, generally offers a show that appeals to music lovers of all genre.

Top vote-getters

1. State Fair series
2. Sugarland
3. Ludacris

BEST FAMILY FUN CENTER

Top vote-getters

1. Bowlero Lanes
2. Skate City
3. City Park Kiddie Rides

Others: Buell Children's Museum, Nature Center, YMCA

Although country acts dominate the Fair's concert lineup each year, usually includes a popular rock band, an oldies group, a contemporary band and a Latin performer for Fiesta Day.

Take this year's lineup of country acts Rodney Atkins and Darius Rucker, the oldies pop group Felix Cavaliere's Rascals, gospel performance of the Gaither Vocal Band, the Mariachi Reyna de Los Angeles and the rock groups of Foreigner and 3OH3!

—Gayle Perez

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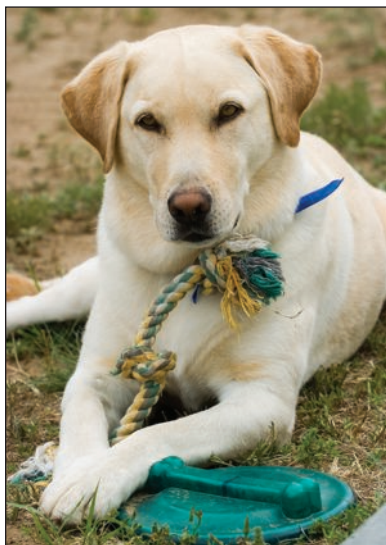
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'09 Best of **FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT**

BEST FAMILY PET



CHIEFTAIN PHOTO/FILE

Gunner is a golden Labrador owned by Wetmore residents Ed and Nancy Kneuz.

Gentle temperament makes Labradors the dog of choice

When it comes to pets, Puebloans prefer dogs. And the breed they like most is a Labrador.

"I've always had a black lab since Day 1," said Pueblo resident Arnauld Swift.

So what does Swift like about a lab? "By far and away, their disposition...their demeanor and trustworthiness," he said. "My grandkids are wrestling with the dog right now."

Wetmore resident Ed Kneuz has owned his golden lab, Gunner, for 10 years and agrees "without a doubt, (a lab) is the best dog there ever could be. Labs gets along with everyone."

You even have a choice of varieties, Kneuz and Swift both noted: golden, chocolate or black.

"They make good companions," Kneuz said.

"Two or three were good retrievers," Swift said of his labs. "They're pretty dang smart as far as dogs go."

—Larry Lopez

Top vote-getters

1. Labrador
 2. Mutt
 3. Jack Russell
- Others: Golden retriever, Beagle, German shepherd, Collie, Bassett

BEST MUSEUM

El Pueblo is a showcase for local history

Pueblo's rich history and diverse cultures are among the attractions that draw visitors from near and far to El Pueblo History Museum.

Whether it's learning about the early history of the region, the role the steel mills and smelters played in shaping Pueblo or viewing the artifacts of the fur trading era, El Pueblo provides a broad and expansive look at the Pueblo area's history.

Deborah Espinosa, director of El Pueblo History Museum, credits the outstanding exhibits and the strong outreach programs for making El Pueblo a popular attraction, which was voted the best museum in the city.

"It's really the outreach programs and the variety of programs we offer such as the Song of Pueblo that really makes us unique," Espinosa said.

Espinosa added that the museum also is a strong community resource for local history.

"I'm really excited about our future. We will refresh our north gallery to make it more family friendly. We also will introduce two new national programs next summer through the Elderhostel program, which I think will really

broaden our appeal."

The museum provides both an educational and cultural experience to visitors to the site of the historic El Pueblo trading post.

The museum showcases several permanent exhibits to include the history, culture and ethnic groups in the region, the history of Pueblo and first explorers to the region.

It also has an 1840s-style adobe trading post and plaza, which is brought to life with people portraying people of that era.

Espinosa said the museum's most popular exhibit is the Pueblo history gallery.

"I think people like it because it really is Pueblo. It covers a lot of history in a small space. It's also



CHIEFTAIN PHOTO/FILE

Benito Guerrero, Virginia Vigil and Isabel Ortiz (left to right) take part in the annual mercado held at the El Pueblo Museum.

Top vote-getters

1. El Pueblo
 2. Rosemount
 3. Buell Children's
- Others: PBR, Heritage Center, Steelworkers

comfortable and attractive," she said.

El Pueblo also holds annual projects and events that highlight the site, including the popular mercado.

El Pueblo is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.

—Gayle Perez

BEST PLACE FOR A WEDDING

HARP offers perfect setting for weddings

A serene backdrop of lush plants, a flowing stream and sounds of whistling birds make the perfect setting for an outdoor wedding.

The Historic Arkansas Riverwalk of Pueblo has several locations that provide such a serene and romantic stage for couples to tie the knot.

"The place that I always recommend is the Boettcher Outdoor Education area," said Marguerite Cullen, administrative assistant at HARP.

"It's a covered amphitheater. You don't have to rent chairs and with all the flowers, trees and bushes, it's just gorgeous. You don't have to decorate it."

The riverwalk offers several prime locations for couples to wed and by the end of the year will have hosted 18 weddings.

Cullen said the Boettcher Outdoor Education Center, which is secluded

Top vote-getters

1. HARP
2. Union Depot
3. Nature Center

near the far eastern edge of HARP, is the most popular spot for couples to exchange vows.

The amphitheater seating can accommodate 90 guests. "It's also below the street level, so it's nice, quiet and serene," Cullen said.

Other popular wedding spots along HARP include Gateway Park, the Xcel Stage and the Lake Elizabeth Pavilion, all of which have covered structures. The Lake Elizabeth Pavilion can seat up to 250 guests.

Cullen said that sites for the weddings are not limited to the covered areas. "Those are the most popular."

She said one of the most common uncovered areas is at the far west edge of the riverwalk, near the St. Francis of

Assisi statue.

"It's a very quiet and intimate place on the riverwalk."

Rental space at the riverwalk begins at \$100 and reservations are required.

"We do require reservations but we also have so many spaces that it doesn't fill up all that fast," Cullen said.

The busiest times for weddings at HARP are from May through September, "however we do get a few in April and October."

Cullen said other than providing a beautiful outdoor setting for a wedding, the only other service HARP provides for weddings is rental of the riverboats.

She said the riverboats, which are equipped with bars, have been used to ferry the bride and groom, wedding party or guests up and down the HARP channel.

—Gayle Perez

'09 Best of **FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT**

BEST PET GROOMER

Pet Paradise keeps pets neat and trim

When your pooch is getting smelly and a little bit shaggy, where are you going go?

Why, Pet Paradise groomers, of course, say a majority of Puebloans.

The dog groomers at Pet Paradise have been pampering pets with shampoos and haircuts, then ribbons and bows for more than 25 years.

The six professional groomers bathe and trim, primp and polish about 50 dogs a day in the shop located inside the popular Pet Paradise store, 1115 Pueblo Boulevard Way.

"Each dog takes about four hours to do," said Gail Knerr, manager of grooming.

"We have a furminator for the bigger dogs to help reduce shedding," Knerr

Top vote-getters

1. Pet Paradise
2. Mountain Valley
3. PetSmart

said. "It really does work. It's amazing how much more hair you can get out of them with this."

The business specializes in doing older and special-needs dogs and even have dryers designed specifically for those animals.

"We want to make it as less stressful as we can on them," she said.

The groomers aren't limited to grooming dogs. They also do cats on a regular basis and have done guinea pigs and even rabbits.

—Gayle Perez

BEST ZOO ANIMAL

Penguins are zoo's top attraction

The Pueblo Zoo is home to more than 400 animals of 130 species.

The No. 1 attraction? Why those adorable little creatures in their black-and-white "tuxedos," of course.

Executive Director Jonnie McFarland has a pretty good idea why the zoo's African black-footed penguin species exhibit rates at the top.

"The penguins are popular because visitors can see them 'flying' under water, because they are large birds and because they are so cute. In addition, several of them come right up to the viewing window and interact with kids. There's always action in the penguin exhibit," McFarland said.

The zoo has 29 penguins — 15 adults, 10 juveniles and two newly-hatched chicks — that are managed under a species survival plan.

The zoo's exhibit, which opened to the public in 1992, features underwater viewing, rock work representing their native South African habitat and naturalistic holes leading to their underground nests. They live in a temperate



CHIEFTAIN PHOTO/FILE

Some of the Pueblo Zoo's black-footed penguins sit on the rock work. The African species is rated the best zoo animal.

Top vote-getters

1. Penguin
 2. Monkey
 3. Otter
- Others: Lion, Seal, Zebra

climate so only require normal air conditioning in the summer and no heat in the winter.

McFarland said the penguins are taught to eat from their keepers' hands so a record can be kept as to how many fish each eats each day and to ensure that each animal receives a fish that has been "loaded" with vitamins and salt tablets.

—Larry Lopez

BEST CHRISTMAS TRADITION

Parade of Lights shines brightly in Pueblo

Pueblo is filled with many Christmas holiday traditions and activities.

There's nothing more festive or brighter than the annual Parade of Lights, held annually through the streets of the Mesa Junction and Downtown.

The parade has ushered in the Christmas season for almost two decades with its thousands of twinkling lights, festive holiday music and an annual appearance by Santa.

The light parade was voted the best parade and also the best Christmas tradition in Pueblo.

"It's the lights, the music and the festive atmosphere that everybody likes, plus watching a parade at night is a little out of the ordinary," said Kerry Gladney, the longtime organizer of the parade.

The tradition was started in 1990, a joint effort of the Mesa Junction Association, Union Avenue Historic District

Top vote-getters

1. Parade of Lights
 2. Potica
 3. Christmas Posada
- Other top vote-getters: Beulah Yule Log Hunt, Jingle Bell Rock, ElectriCrittters, HARP lighting

and the Downtown merchants.

Pueblo actually held a Christmas light parade in the late 1980s but it was a dud.

In 1990, Colorado Springs parade organizers Pat Riley and John O'Donnell helped to put on the successful inaugural Parade of Lights in Pueblo.

Gladney said that first parade attracted about 40,000 spectators, who watched about 80 entries march through Downtown.

"It was electrifying to see that kind of a crowd," he said.

—Gayle Perez

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'09 Best of SPORTS AND RECREATION

BEST GOLF COURSE

Golfers like teeing it up at Elmwood

When Puebloans tee it up, the majority prefer the venerable Elmwood links to play their game.

The municipal golf course offers golfers the choice of its 18-hole or nine-hole layouts.

It includes a driving range, two putting greens, and a chipping green in addition to offering a pro shop and a restaurant.

Built in the early 1930s (it opened in 1932), it formerly was known as City Park Municipal Course.

"The vast majority (of Pueblo golfers) probably have grown up on Elmwood," said head professional Randy Bregar.

"It's an older golf course, and has a pretty flat layout that is relatively easy to walk," Bregar said of golfers' attraction to the layout. "It presents very little trouble other than the trees, but they provide shade when it's hot."

"It always is in great shape and the players like that. Plus, there is a very

Top vote-getters

1. Elmwood
2. Pueblo Country Club
3. Walking Stick
4. Other top vote-getters: Desert Hawk, Hollydot

BEST RECREATIONAL SPORT

Top vote-getters

1. Golf
2. Soccer
3. Biking
4. Others: Swimming, baseball, softball, tennis, fishing

easy, laid-back atmosphere."

Bregar said 68,000-72,000 rounds are played at Elmwood. "The prices are reasonable," he said.

And, it's open year-round. "The only time we are closed is when there is snow on the ground," Bregar said.

—Larry Lopez

BEST PLACE TO WORK OUT

Pueblo Athletic Club: A gym for everybody

If it is a physical workout that you are looking for, the place to go in Pueblo is the Pueblo Athletic Club.

The South Side club has all you'd want whether you are a swimmer, weight-lifter, racquetball enthusiast or looking for a personal trainer. It even has a nursery to accommodate moms (or dads) who need to bring along their kids.

The facility was top-rated in The Chieftain's recent survey. It was built in the late 1970s as a racquetball club, before Deb and Eric Beaudry purchased the club in 1994 and expanded it in 2007.

The club's success is the result of excellent service to its members, Mrs. Beaudry says.

"We have an incredibly loyal staff. You can have a beautiful facility, but it's people who make or break your experience. It's nice to walk in and have someone know your name," she said.

Top vote-getters

1. Pueblo Athletic Club
2. YMCA
3. Major Fitness
4. Other top vote-getters: World Gym

She said the club draws between 300 and 500 people a day who want a good workout, whether its swimming, racquetball, weight-lifting, water or boxing aerobics, yoga, karate, mixed martial arts or one of the more than 50 fitness classes. Its staff of personal trainers also teach classes.

So, which is the most popular form of exercising at the club?

"That's hard to say," Mrs. Beaudry said, "I'm not sure one outweighs the others. With the size of our club, we offer something for everyone. You name it, we've got it. We even offer swim and inline skating lessons"

—Larry Lopez



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'09 Best of **SPORTS AND RECREATION**

BEST HIGH SCHOOL TRADITION

Bell Game a century-old tradition

The single event that combines history and tradition, drama and emotion, spirit and rivalry for the entire city is the Central and Centennial high schools' annual Bell Game.

For 109 years, the cross-town rivals have clashed on the gridiron in what is believed to be the longest-running rivalry west of the Mississippi River. The winner of the annual game receives the coveted Victory Bell to keep and ring until the next year's game.

The football classic generally draws a sellout crowd of students and alumni of both schools, hometown football fans and curious newcomers to what has been voted the best high school tradition in Pueblo.

The rivalry, which began in 1892 between what had been the only two high schools in Pueblo, still is the biggest game in town despite the relatively new rivalries between South and East (Cannon Game) and Pueblo County and Pueblo West (Pigskin Classic).

Regardless of talent or records, the traditional clash always draws a full house to Dutch Clark Stadium. It's the only high school sellout every year.

Although the rivalry goes back to 1892, it wasn't until 1950 that the bell was introduced as the trophy for the game's winner.

The bell, which came from a train engine at the CF&I, was donated to the schools by Pueblo businessman Lew



CHIEFTAIN PHOTO/FILE

Central High School football players hoists the Victory Bell after the Wildcats beat Centennial 22-21 in overtime last year at Dutch Clark Stadium.

Top vote-getters

1. Bell Game
2. Cannon Game

Rhodes and has served as a victory symbol the past 59 years.

Centennial has the bell after beating Central 22-21 in overtime last year. This year's Bell Game was played on Oct. 2.

The tradition is not solely the game. It also includes a week of hype leading up to game time, known to locals as "Bell Week." Pep rallies and bonfires, dress-up days and school assemblies help to generate school spirit and excitement leading up to the game.

Central leads the series 53-46-9 overall and 32-25-3 since the Bell Game began in 1950.

—Gayle Perez

BEST LOCAL SPORTS LEGEND

Dutch Clark: The greatest of them all

In Pueblo, there is no bigger sports legend than Dutch Clark.

The man known for his football prowess is best recognized for his superior play at Colorado College, earning 12 letters and becoming the first All-American football player from any of Colorado's colleges and universities, and later professionally with the Detroit Lions as a triple-option threat and a six-time All-Pro.



Dutch Clark

But what about high school? Clark attended Central High School from 1922 to 1926 and was a three-sport standout, gaining all-state honors in football and basketball and set South-Central League track and field records in the discus and high hurdles. He finished his high school career with 16 letters (he also

Top vote-getters

1. Dutch Clark
2. Daymon Runyon

played baseball).

Clark led the Wildcats to the state high school football semifinals in 1925 and 1926, scoring a total of 34 touchdowns and kicking four field goals and 49 PATs in his junior and senior seasons. 13 touchdowns, three field goals and 21 PATS. In 10 of those games, he scored multi touchdowns, including five against Littleton in the 1926 state quarterfinals.

Clark would be inducted into the Greater Pueblo Sports Association Hall of Fame as a charter member in 1973. He also is a charter member of the NFL Hall of Fame.

His jersey number? Why, "7," of course.

—Larry Lopez

BEST SKATE-BOARDING SITE

Pueblo Skate Park rolling along

More than a decade after 18-year-old skateboarder Lauren Sullenberger and her friends began lobbying City Council to build a facility that boarders could call home, Pueblo Skate Park remains a popular attraction not only for skateboarders but BMX bicyclists as well.

The park is located within City Park and is "one of the most popular areas among the many amenities the park has," says City Parks and Recreation Director Mike Sexton. "On a given day, you can find a handful ... five or six ... or a hundred skateboarders and bikers out there." It's definitely the place to go if you skateboard, according to respondents to The Chieftain's Best of Pueblo survey.

Sharon Sullenberger, who joined her daughter in 1996 to push for the park,

Top vote-getters

1. Pueblo Skate Park

BEST TRAIL TO BIKE, RUN AND WALK

Top vote-getters

1. Nature Center
2. HARP
3. Arkansas River Trail

said the beauty Pueblo's Skate Park is that it is a "street park."

"They incorporated a bowl, but it has objects that skateboarders would encounter in the street," she said. "We have an annual competition, usually in June, that draws skateboarders from all around."

—Larry Lopez

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