

“When one man says, “No, I Won’t,” Rome begins to fear.” —Dalton Trumbo—



## Just the Tip: A Long Look at GarCO's SPEAR

By Jacob Richards

*SPEARS logo that embraces white supremacist iconography.*

Why has Garfield County's Special Problems Enforcement and Response team, or SPEAR, adopted a logo that uses Spartan iconography often associated with anti-government militias, neo-nazis, 2A activists, and alt-right groups? Are they signaling their alliance with the far right, their racism, or are they just laconophilies? All of the above, maybe?

Laconophilia is the love or admiration of Spartan culture, political systems or constitution, and has long been associated with far-right politics. The Spartan's culling of weak children, subjugation of the Helot slaves, prowess in battle, and obedience to authority make the Spartans fertile mythology for those on the far-right.

Adolf Hitler's admiration of both Rome and Sparta is well documented. In his follow up to Mien Kampf, he said, "The subjugation of 350,000 Helots by 6,000 Spartans was only possible because of the racial superiority of the Spartans. This, however, was the result of systematic racial preservation, so we see in the Spartan state the first racialist state."

Today's neo-nazis love everything Hitler loved about the Spartans and more.

Today's popularity of Spartan iconography amongst the far-right got a major bump when Zach Snyder's film "300" came out in 2006. The film came out three years into the occupation of Iraq amidst rampant islamophobia and during years of prolonged saber-rattling towards Iran (Persia) by the G.W. Bush Administration.

The film follows King Leonidas and his 300 warriors in a valiant yet futile effort to stop the invading Persian army. The movie engages in rank racism—it's a story about a highly militarized vanguard of white men holding at bay the barbarous non-white Persian hords. The film goes so far as making soldiers in the Persian army literal monsters—sub-humans.

In both the movie and the myth, at the battle of Thermopylae, there was an exchange between Persian emperor Xerxes and King Leonidas. Xerxes called out "surrender your arms." The Spartan replied "Molon labe," or literally, "come take."

"Molon labe" is now the rallying cry of 2nd amendment radicals, and "Molon labe" flags can be seen at alt-right, militia, and neo-nazi rallies across America

**SPEAR on Page Four**

# Thousands Come Together With PRIDE

By Aiden McVay

This year, Grand Junction Pride, hosted by Colorado West Pride, was bigger than ever. There were an estimated 3300 attendees and 75 vendor booths along with a star-studded drag show and food trucks.

Colorado West Pride was founded in 2014 "as an LGBTQIA+ community event & outreach organizer. We have been the host & primary event organizer for Pride events based in Grand Junction, and serving Western Colorado & Eastern Utah," according to the CWP Facebook page monitor.

Pride hosted a variety of vendors, from churches such as Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the Grand Valley to the Colorado Satanists, local business Revolution Cycle, and resin artwork creator Daizy McCarty and newcomer Amber with Differently Abled Designs.

McCarty commented on the event: "Grand Junction Pride 2024 was a potluck of queer creatives and all their amazing talents! We are so honored to be a part of this massive celebration and love getting to meet members of our local community!"

Amber, first time vendor of Differently Abled Designs, wanted a "chance to show off my talents as a creator/crafter and eventually turn it into a business and help the differently abled community to thrive and create their art."

But Grand Junction Pride wasn't always so big.

Heidi Hess, Community Engage-

ment and Education Director and founding board member of Colorado West Pride, said, "The first pride had under 10 booths and fit on the lawn of the old Courthouse at 5th and Rood."

"Both seatings of the Rainbow Party sold out, and the Glow Party was at capacity!" Hess stated.

Zen Fatale, co-founder of the Roaring Divas and mother of the House Fatale, performed at the sold-out show, The Rainbow Party at Good Judy's. She said, "We need to do Pride events,

because drag is an integral part of Pride. Drag performers, Trans people, etc., have always been at the forefront of our community. We have led the protests and the parties; drag is a living protest."

Zen's drag kids, Angel Fatal Spectrum, Axel Spectrum, and Scarlet Fatale performed at Pride on Saturday. They are all newcomers that have only been performing since spring/summer of this year but showed an immense amount of talent.

It wasn't just the House of Fatale that performed at Saturday's Pride.

Long-time performers, the House of Van Dyke, included Xavier, founder of Delta Pride, Madame Van Dyke, Stella Rae, Peter Pan, and new members Scarlet Rose and Vandetta.

Vendetta has only been performing for about four months. This was his first time performing at a pride and said about his experience, "I had so much fun with pride. I



The one and only Stella Rae at Grand Junction PRIDE. Photo by Aiden McVay.

## Announcing the Formation of a Mesa County Democratic Socialist of America (DSA)

"The DSA is the largest socialist organization in the United States with over 92,000 members."

The local chapter is holding meetings and organizing! Join them! Memberships are on a sliding scale! [www.dsausa.org](http://www.dsausa.org)

### Contact the local chapter:

[mesacountydsa1@gmail.com](mailto:mesacountydsa1@gmail.com)

### Cortez Food Not Bombs

Serves a community meal every Sunday at Veterans Park. 12pm-2pm

### Falconer Workers' Society

Anti-Capitalist and Revolutionary Book Club Grand Junction. Email for an invite. [falconersworkerssociety@gmail.com](mailto:falconersworkerssociety@gmail.com)

### Be the Media! Help Edit, Write Distro The Revolutionist

[therevolutionistgj@gmail.com](mailto:therevolutionistgj@gmail.com)



Margaret Killjoy reading from *The Sapling Cage* (see page 8-9)  
October 23, 7pm  
Lithic Bookstore 138 S. Park Square  
Fruita, CO  
(upstairs, and ADA accessible.)

### Mutual Aid Partners' Distro Day!

Every Tuesday!  
10am to 1pm Drop Donations  
11am to 1pm Receive Donations  
262 Ute Ave, Grand Junction

### Solidarity Not Charity

Free Food for Free People  
Feeds every Saturday at 4pm at the Resource Center. Grand Jct.  
[solidaritynotcharitygjinfo@gmail.com](mailto:solidaritynotcharitygjinfo@gmail.com)

### Delta PRIDE!

Delta Pride Festival 2024  
10/26 :21 + Dance and Drag Show 8pm to 12am  
10/27; All Ages Pride Festival 1pm to 6pm  
Delta County Fairgrounds Heritage Hall,  
Hotchkiss, CO

[www.deltacopride.com](http://www.deltacopride.com)

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## To Die From Page Six

today will be the day. He has less energy as time passes. It takes almost all that he has to go from his bedroom to the living room. He hasn't gone out of the house for a few weeks. The hospice nurse encourages him to take morphine to keep him comfortable, and he tries it, but doesn't like it. It's not what he wants. One Monday morning, I find him leaning, hunched over, on the kitchen counter. I can tell he feels awful, and he tells me for the first time ever that he doesn't want to be alive anymore. I do my best to offer comfort, and later that day, he makes his decision. He wants to go on Friday. He calls the hospice nurse to schedule the time for them to be there. Friday at 1pm.

The next few days are rough. The night before, I go and get him food from his favorite burger place, Five Guys Burgers and Fries. He wants a cheeseburger, with no mayo, and fries. He hates mayo. To my surprise, he eats most of the food. It's the most I've seen him eat in a while, and somehow it feels like a rare achievement. A last meal he really could enjoy. In the morning, I go and get him a ham and cheese croissant from Burger King. He can't eat anything after a certain time or it could affect the drugs and slow things down. So he eats his croissant, and watches some episodes of Star Wars on Disney Plus.

I am trying hard to somehow make the day meaningful. I try reading Rumi poetry aloud, because we both love Rumi. We listen to his favorite Pink Floyd song, and I surreptitiously snap a picture of him while he listens. His eyes are closed, and I can't even begin to describe the look on his face. I realize I am pushing. Trying too hard. Trying to

give him a good last day, but everything just feels weird. He is in a strange head space. I am in a strange head space. So I let go. I let go and just try to be in the moment. It is snowing outside.

Eventually, the time arrives and the hospice nurse is here with us. The first round of drugs needs an hour to work, and so he takes them, and we just sit and talk about nothing. It is the most meaningless, significant conversation I've ever been a part of. The nurse asks him if there is anything he feels he needs to say. Jack just kind of shrugs and says no. Forty-five minutes go by, and then it's time for the death drugs. He mixes the powder with water, and he drinks it.

I am holding his hand, and I am crying. I have my fingers on his pulse, and the hospice nurse is right beside me with his stethoscope and morphine, just in case. He asks Jack if he is in any discomfort, but Jack shakes his head no. It isn't long before Jack seems to go to sleep. I am holding his hand, and watching his breath, and feeling his pulse. I feel it as it slows. I feel it as it stops.

I sit beside him. I hold his hand, and I sing. I sing because I know to the core of my being that he can hear me. I sing because I know that music is a bridge from where we are to wherever we go. I sing because there is no possible way I can make words in this moment. I can only make sound. I wrap all my love, and pain, and grief, and gratitude into my voice, and I sing to him. I sing everything I could never say, and I say goodbye. I hold his hand for as long as I can, and wish him well on this next part of his journey. Safe travels, my friend. Shine on, Jack. Shine on.

## Praxis in Action: Events & Orgs

**You can find The Revolutionist at the following business:**

Lithic Books, Discontent, 1st Street Tattoo Parlor, Copeeka Coffee, Good Judy's, Uncanny Valley, Loving Beyond Understanding, Desert Bloom Hydroponics, and more!



**Free Palestine Rally**

10am to 12noon @  
12th and North  
Grand Junction  
October 13 & 27.

## October News Briefs

### Who the Cops Shot

Glenwood Springs Police Officers shot and killed Richard Grande on September 2. Grande suffered from mental illness and was "known to live in his vehicle." Police claim he drew a weapon upon contact. Body camera footage has not been released.

Montrose County Sheriff Deputy shot and injured one person suspected of auto theft on September 8.

NYPD Officers shot four people over a \$2.90 subway fare. When the suspect pulled a knife, the two officers opened fire, hitting two bystanders, another NYPD officer and the suspect.

Gunnison Police Department Officer, Daniel Huff was charged with incest and sexual assault on September 26.

### Paramedic Convicted of Elijah McClain's Death Resentenced to Probation

On September 13, a judge reduced the sentence of paramedic Peter Cichuniec, who was convicted in the death of Elijah McClain. The paramedic had his sentence reduced from five years in prison to four years of probation after spending less than six months in prison. Elijah, who was black, was killed in 2019. His needless death in part fuelled the 2020 uprisings for justice.

### Halt the Dolores Monument, Part of Right-Wing Misinformation Network

The Center for Western Priorities released a report exposing the shadowy cabal of right-wing and conspiracy groups opposing conservation in the west. Many in western Colorado have been fooled into supporting the Halt the Dolores Monument, without realizing that they now stand shoulder-to-shoulder with anti-vaxxers, election deniers and the Heritage Foundation.

### 5th American Citizen Killed in West Bank Since 2021

Secretary of State Blinken can't count. Recently, when American and Turkish citizen Aysenur Ezgi Eygi was killed by Israeli troops in the occupied West Bank, Blinken said that she was the second American killed by Israel. But in reality, at least five Americans have been killed by Israeli troops since Blinken took office. In January, 17-year-old Tawfiq Ajaq was shot in the head on the way to a barbecue in the West Bank. Similarly, last week Mohammad Khmour, also 17 years old, also on his way to a barbecue, was killed in the West Bank. In August of 2022, Omar Assad, a small business owner from Milwaukee, died in custody of IDF soldiers. Again in 2022, Israeli forces killed Palestinian-American Journalist Shireen Abu Aklen. Other Americans killed in the West Bank since 2003 include Rachel Corrie, Furkan DoGan, Orwa Hammad, and Mohmoud Shaalan. If you really want to go down the rabbit hole, google the "USS Liberty."

### Saudi Arabian Officials Aided 9/11 Terrorist

Propublica is reporting that twenty-three years after the attacks of 9/11, two Saudi Arabian officials did in fact knowingly aid two of the 9/11 hijackers. Ongoing FBI investigations, an ongoing lawsuit by the families of the victims of 9/11 against the Saudi Arabian government and recently declassified documents all paint a picture quite different than the 9/11 commission report. Saudi Arabia is a rogue state that the US will support regardless of how many women they execute, journalists they cut into pieces, or even after 15 of the 19 hijackers were found to be Saudi Arabian. The deal struck by President Truman with the Saudi Arabian royal family right after WWII, of course, still holds. The deal—"You sell us your oil and we will protect your tyranny."

### Venezuela Arrests Coup Plotters: Americans

Wilbert Joseph Castañeda Gomez, a former US Navy Seal, was one of six foreign nationals arrested for their part in an attempted coup against the socialist government in

**Briefs on Page Eleven**



## SPEAR From Page One

and Canada.

Sparta, of course, is more myth than reality. Sparta was never the military power, ethno-state, nor eugenic utopia that many on the right envision. In his book, "The Bronze Lie: Shattering the Myth of Spartan Military Supremacy," Myke Cole breaks it down: from a king with a club foot, to numerous military defeats and surrenders of the Spartan army, and when the Spartans finally did gain hegemony of the Greek speaking world, they squandered it in less than a year.

But facts be damned. Right-wing



*Persian portrayed as literal monster in "300."*

groups from the Three Percenters to the Proud Boys to the Oath Keepers continue to embrace Spartan imagery and sloganeering.

Greece's neo-nazi party, Golden Dawn, holds an annual rally at Thermopylae where they light torches and chant anti-immigration slogans, continuing a long history of fascist movements co-opting classical history for their own designs.

In 2018, Oath Keepers leader and founder, Stewart Rhodes, announced the formation of a "Spartan Training Program" in preparation to confront leftist protests in large urban areas.

Around the same time, John Turano became a darling of the alt-right for engaging in street fights across the west coast with leftists while wearing a Corinthian helmet. Known as the "Based Spartan," he was recently found guilty of libel, along with three other Proud Boys, for over \$1 million dollars in damages stemming from a 2020 attack on the Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Church in Washington D.C.

So why is a federally and locally

supported taskforce on the Western Slope adopting this kind of racist imagery? Does Garfield County Sheriff's Office see themselves as the vanguard—the tip of the spear—keeping the barbarians at bay?

SPEAR was formed around September of 2022, when Two Rivers Drug Enforcement Team TRIDENT and the Threat Assessment Group (TAG), an anti-gang unit, combined. SPEAR is a multi-agency task focused on serious crimes, and member agencies include: Garfield County Sheriff's Office (GCSO), Glenwood Springs and Rifle police departments, U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the U.S. Marshals as well as a Deputy District Attorney from the 9th Judicial District Attorney's office.

Garfield County Sheriff Department is the lead agency of SPEAR, the tip of the spear so to speak, and Lou Vallario, a controversial figure, is the Sheriff.

"We have recently declared Garfield County and the Garfield County Sheriff's Office as 'hostile' governments to Latinos and immigrants," said Alex Sanchez, President and CEO of Voces Unidas de las Montañas, a Latino advocacy group based in Frisco and Glenwood Springs, in an email. "This was after the BOCC passed a racist anti-sanctuary resolution that blamed Latinos for bringing crime and disease to the county," said Sanchez

"The current Garfield County Sheriff has a well-established track record of being anti-immigrant and supporting radical extremist views on immigration," he added..

Vallario's extremist views extend beyond just racism and immigration.

In 2013, Vallario was praised by the Constitutional Sheriffs and Peace Officers Association (CSPOA), for refusing to enforce state gun control laws in his county. The CSPOA is the formal organization of the constitutional Sheriff movement, which holds that the Sheriff and the county government supersedes any state or federal authority. This idea was originally popularized by Christian Identity minister William Potter Gale in the 1970s.

"I am not a member and never will be," said Vallario. "Although, we are in agreement with certain political issues."

## SPEAR from Page Four

Additionally, Vallario has been investigated for using his office's resources to promote the candidacy of Lauren Boebert in 2022. He was ultimately cleared, but also in 2022, he came under fire for his "hands-off approach" to dealing with criminal complaints filed by Boeberts' neighbors against her and her drunken then-husband, Jayson. Boebert has extensive and well documented ties with Three Percenters and other right-wing extremists, many of whom have also adopted Spartan imagery.

Earlier this year, Vallario refused to comply with the Roaring Fork School District's "Safe Haven" policy for immigrant students, resulting in the removal of a sheriff deputy School Resource Officer from the Riverview K-8 school in unincorporated Garfield County.

"We receive complaints from members of the Latino community about the treatment they receive as they encounter patrol deputies in the community as well as their experiences in the county jail," said Sanchez.

What do you do when your local law enforcement agency is signaling their alliance to the far-right extremists?

Are we all Helots, and the officers and deputies the Spartan slaveholders? What's the message here? The message that many in Garfield county are getting is that anti-immigrant racism is okay.

"Our own public opinion research of Latinos in Colorado suggests that Latinos in the Western Slope experience more



*Spartan clad far-right street-fighter, Photo from Reddit.*

discrimination in their communities than in any other region in the state. We are also more likely to express concern about political violence and the increase of hate groups," Sanchez added.

"I am a right-wing con-

servative, but as a law enforcement officer I am bound to enforce and comply with ALL laws, whether I personally agree or not," said Vallario.

The situation in Garfield County has become untenable for many. Lots of people had a lot to say, but very few felt safe enough to speak on record. Vallario has been sheriff in GarCo for over 20 years, and is unlikely to face a challenger in 2026.

A Garfield County press release from April 2023, finally announcing SPEAR six months after they actually formed, states "bottom line is, if you're committing major crimes in Garfield County, SPEAR is coming for you!"

**Make sure to checkout our website for additional content, breaking news, and calls to action.**

**<https://therevolutionistgj.org>**



## To Die From Page Eleven

remind him that hospice will just be more angels to help. He's not particularly religious, but has told me of the many angels who have cared for him through his cancer treatments. So, he calls hospice. I am so entirely relieved after the first hospice visit that I go and cry in my room. And I was right. The hospice folks are indeed angels.

He tells hospice about his wishes, and they help get the things started for the MAID program. He tells them he at least wants this choice, when so many things are now out of his control. He must see two separate doctors, and there has to be 15 days between those two visits. The doctors must assess his health and state of mind. They have to make sure he is competent to make this decision, and isn't depressed. I wonder who wouldn't be depressed in this situation. To do MAID, a person must have a terminal illness and be expected to pass within the next 6 months. There must also be a pharmacist willing to dispense the medication. There isn't a pharmacist locally that will do it, but one can be reached by phone in Denver. Even the doctors that come to assess Jack aren't local.

The first doctor that comes is a woman doctor. We all sit in the living room and talk. She asks him questions. She explains the process. There is a cocktail of drugs first: benzodiazepines, morphine, and also an anti-emetic drug. The anti-emetic one is really important because it keeps the person from throwing up the other medication, and that would obviously complicate everything. Jack has to be able to administer the medication, and swallow it, himself. I learn that the drug they use to stop the heart is a derivative of foxglove, an herb I have studied. Of course, it will be the pharmaceutical version, and a very high dose. They ask me at one point what I think of this whole



business. I am surprised to be asked. I suppose they are trying to determine if Jack has the support of the close people in his life. I tell them I think that it is his choice. His decision to make.

Fifteen days later, the second doctor comes to the house. A man this time. A similar conversation takes place. Everything is explained again. The drugs. The process. The doctor asks about his life, and Jack tells him stories. A week or so later, the first doctor comes again, and we all talk again. It's made clear, of course, that Jack can change his mind. He never has to fill the prescription, or take the drugs. Thirty percent of people get the medication and never take it. This whole undertaking of getting approved has been a bit more leisurely in Jack's case; there was no need for urgency. He is not ready. I tell him I think it's probably better to have the option, and not need it, than to need it and not have it. Finally, he is approved, and just has to decide when he is ready to be prescribed the drugs.

I don't really feel like I can tell anyone that I am terrified. That the thought of having the drugs in the house scares me. The medication is sent in a liquid or powder form, but the liquid has to be used within two weeks. The powder can last up to 6 months in the fridge. This freaks me out. I am struggling with it, but I talk to friends. I talk to my therapist. I let go of some of my worry because it's not time yet.

Though, he is definitely slowing down. He is sleeping more, and certain symptoms are getting more difficult to bear. He decides to talk to the pharmacist and get the medicine. When it comes, I put on gloves and seal it all in a ziplock bag and put them in the crisper drawer. We call them the "death drugs" whenever we talk about them. They cost him \$1000, and he put them on his credit card.

Each day I wake up, I wonder if



By L. John

## Swords and Solidarity

At Sherwood Park, a new game adds to the lazy noon buzz on most Saturdays. New players meet a merchant selling leather pouches and potions of healing. An armored knight and an elf argue about how to best rob an oncoming caravan while two ladies in medieval dresses spar with foam swords. Yet past all the costumes and props, a few cardboard boxes are stacked bearing the label, "Mutual Aid."

Game developer Nick Burk (Kas the Blacksmith) is the creator and Lead Game Runner for the Specters of Sherwood LARP, an interactive game where players dress up and play the role of medieval fantasy characters. In general LARP (Live-Action Roleplay) is a creative form of group storytelling, cooperative play, and escapism.

"Honestly, the real world can get overwhelming and depressing, especially for people eager to make a positive difference," Nick said, "For mental and emotional health reasons, it makes sense for people to disconnect from social media, the news, and regular life from time to time. That's probably a big reason why 'immersive experiences' like Dungeons and Dragons, Murder Mystery Parties, Escape Rooms, andLARPs have recently become so popular."

Yet while the Specters of Sherwood enjoy their weekly breaks from reality, the reality of those experiencing homelessness isn't far from view. "When playing the game, we leave modernity and politics behind," Nick continues, "But Mutual Aid is a promise. It's a promise that I'll help you when you need it, and you'll help me when I need it. As members of the working class, I believe that positive ideals like Class Solidarity, Mutual Aid, and building Duel Power should always be on our minds."

Even though the LARP's players form a politically mixed group, their characters seem to understand and share that mindset.

This is helped by the context and setting of the game's story. The Specters of Sherwood are members of Robin Hood's band of outlaws who steal from the rich and give to the poor. They constantly engage in acts of sabotage and revolt against the corrupt ruling classes (and their hired muscle) while inviting all the oppressed and exploited peoples of Nottingham to help them build an egalitarian and self-sustaining community within Sherwood Forest.

For their first act of solidarity, players are encouraged to bring boxes filled with donated food, clothing, and other items to be delivered to the Homeward

Bound Resource Center. This quest comes in the form of a letter from Friar Tuck, urging the player to remember those in need. "There is no time to ask who, why, or wherefore..." the letter reads, "...We must come to the aid of our neighbors. They are our countrymen, our fellows, and our equals. These are good folk. If our fortunes were switched, they would not hesitate to lend us a helping hand. Yea, in time, they just may!"

So far, this quest has prompted the donation of four large boxes with more to come. "Mixing Mutual Aid with medieval roleplay is simple," Nick says as he prepares for next Saturday's session, "Players are eager to complete quests and perform meaningful good deeds. It only makes sense that we use parts of our game to help out. Despite what many people in our country may believe, we aren't 'temporarily inconvenienced millionaires.' Most of us are one or two paychecks away from eviction. The unhoused are our people. They are us and we are them, even when we pretend to be someone else."

More information about the Specters of Sherwood LARP is available at: <https://www.kastelgames.com/larp>





## PRIDE From Page Two

performed at the CMU show as well. I was very nervous before going on stage, but as soon as the music started, my nerves disappeared.”

If Vandetta was nervous beforehand, he sure didn’t show it. His music choice, facial expressions and movements were met by a captivated, cheering audience.

House father, Xavier Van Dyke, had a moving performance performed to Beautiful Things by Benson Boone, as he handed out gift bags compiled for suicide prevention. He also commented on the festivities: “When we got to the event I was greeted by

my drag family and friends, some I have not seen in a year. I started to realize. This was more than Pride. This is a family reunion. Each time I get tired and ready to take a break I get reminded why I started doing this 30 years ago.”

Fellow performer Craven Moore Romanova, who is not new at doing drag but has just opened a new drag house, said, “Performing for people just like myself feels extra special. Being able to connect with a



Xavier Van Dyke at Colorado West PRIDE.  
Photo by Aiden McVay.

crowd through emotions and art is always a good time. And being comfortable in my own skin while doing it all meant everything. I was honored to be a part of the festival and look forward to doing it again!”

But it was performer Cardi Reada who summed up what drag is about: “I would say drag is a celebration not just of gender, not just of personality, but a celebration of the self. A moment in which anyone can be more than what others think of them. Transcending singing, dancing, and acting. It is a moment to let your inner self feel joy in just existing genuinely.”

Cardi Reada, who was the victim of a hate crime during the past year, also said, “To see everyone being joyful together and celebrate themselves as well. It makes me believe in hope for the future.”

This is why pride was originally a riot. This is why we need to have pride all year round. This is why pride is important. To stand up and be brave, to be authentically ourselves, to celebrate, and have hope for the future.

*Check out Aiden McVay’s other stories from Colorado West Pride on our website.*

*“Pride Mural Sparks Emotion; Empowers Youth” covers the unveiling of the BAM mural at LBU’s Center.*

*“Welcome to the House of Romanova.” A Q & A with drag performer Craven Moore Romanova.*

*There is regularly additional content that didn’t make it into print on our website. [www.therevolutionistgj.org](http://www.therevolutionistgj.org).*



Mural unveiled by BAM at Loving Beyond Understanding’s Center. Photo by Aiden McVay.

## Carnegie From Page Seven

“the mere agent and trustee for his poorer brethren, bringing to their service his superior wisdom, experience and ability to administer, doing for them better than they would or could do for themselves.” His views can be summed up easily; the poor cannot be trusted to build their own communities, to use their money for the common good, or to take care of themselves efficiently. They need to be told by someone rich, someone with “superior wisdom,” what to do.

This is, as previously seen, startlingly similar to Musk’s beliefs about his own position in the world. Musk doesn’t need to give to the poor. He doesn’t need to be upfront about where the money that goes to his charity gets distributed. It is enough, in his eyes, to run his companies and pretend that it’s all for the greater good of humanity.

What is especially egregious is that this idea has seeped into the very foundations of our society. There is a widespread idea that the common people cannot be trusted with money, whether that be from charity or from taxes. If you give people social programs, they will abuse them. If you put more money into schools, it will only be used to

fund indoctrination of the students. If you put money into the homeless population, they will use it to buy drugs. This belief is so widespread that it is difficult to convince those who hold it to think critically about why they believe it.

When Carnegie died in 1919, he had given away roughly 90 percent of his wealth. It was a moral duty, he believed, to do so. But society cannot function this way. Leaving common people to the mercy of out-of-touch billionaires for basic community resources leads to a society with wildly unequal wealth distribution—not to mention the fact that these individuals are already being exploited by the wealthy.

Elon Musk sees himself as supremely important to the world. According to himself, he is wildly intelligent, a beacon of free speech, and a proponent of an interplanetary future for humanity. And unfortunately, due to society’s blind worship of the wealthy (largely influenced by Carnegie), Musk is allowed to get away with this.

Musk is not unique. He is a symptom of society’s worship of wealth, and until that ends, he will continue his reign as the richest of the rich.

## Briefs From Page Three

the wake of an election contested by the opposition and the United States. Another two Americans, two Spaniards and Czech citizens have been arrested in what the Maduro government calls a CIA-backed plan to overthrow the government. This tracks with 20 years of US sanctions and covert actions against the popular Chavista government.

## BLM Rounds Up Wild Horses

Over 100 horses were rounded up out of the Little Bookcliff Wild Horse herd by the BLM despite protests. At least one horse broke a leg and had to be euthanized leaving its foal orphaned

## Israel Invents Brand New War Crime

On September 17, Israel detonated thousands of pagers, that they had somehow rigged with explosives,

across Lebanon. The next day Walkie-Talkies and off-grid solar batteries across Lebanon exploded. The total number of people injured is in the thousands. At least 12 people have been killed, including an eight-year-old girl. We will never look at our phones the same way again.



Little Bookcliff Wild Horses.

# How to Watch Someone Die

By Audrey Singer

His face is pinched, and he is squinting at me today. His left eye is very red and angry. There is a sty in the middle of the lower lid, and I think I can see blood. It is another infection. Just one more thing in a list of things. Last week, he had diarrhea for 3 days straight, and he couldn't leave the house. He didn't really sleep either for fear of making a mess. Sometimes I catch him with his head in his hands, or he will just sit and stare off into space. "This is my life now," he tells me.

And this? What this is, is cancer.

This is three years of chemo and counting. 'This' is his body breaking down in bizarre ways. He has diabetes now from the steroids that came with his first chemo. He had a mild stroke some months back. Neuropathy.

Increasing heart problems. He drops things because his left hand doesn't always seem to work. Weight Loss. Fatigue. The list keeps expanding.

What's strange is that you wouldn't even necessarily know that he is sick. He still goes to the gym when he has the energy, and gets his groceries. Even some of his doctors say he doesn't match the person described in his medical records. On paper, he has lung and bowel cancer, heart disease and diabetes, amongst other things. He looks terrible on paper. To me, he is Jack. My good friend Jack.

I met him about 4 years ago because I was looking for an aikido teacher. Jack had taught aikido and Tai chi for decades. I had studied Chinese medicine, and surprisingly, we had a lot to talk about. We would talk about life, and energy, and Qi and the universe. We would talk about music, and he would tell me amazing stories of his adventures. We were always cracking

each other up, probably because we both have a similar sense of the ridiculous and slightly inappropriate.

The cancer diagnosis happened about a year after I met him. They gave him 3 years, but now he is "past his expiration date" as he likes to say. It is why I'm here. I had been traveling. I called one day to check on him, and what I heard in his voice made me worry. So I came for a visit, and haven't left.

So far, there are good days and bad days. He laughs a lot less. When there is a bright moment, it absolutely blazes. Making

him laugh is like winning the lottery. Sometimes I make up ridiculous songs on my ukulele trying to make him smile. If I want to annoy him, I play "Leaving on a Jet Plane." He hates that song. Sometimes, we have conversations of complete silliness. Sometimes, he tells me how he wants to go. He's not interested in suffering. He doesn't want to get to the point where he can't "wipe his own ass." I get it.

He tells me stories about his time in the Peace Corp. About his spit fire of a grandmother. He tells me about his years of being an elementary school teacher. I try my best to capture his stories. To bear witness to the life he lived. Somehow, I feel like I always fall short. I can never get it all down.

He tells me it's legal in Colorado to check out when you want to check out. It's called MAiD, or Medical Aid in Dying, and that's how he wants to go. So, I start researching. I try to understand the process and what needs to happen. The paperwork. What doctors he needs to see. It is overwhelming. I think it's probably time for hospice to come in, but he's not ready. 'Hospice' means the end to him, and he's not there. Not yet. I

To Die on Page Fourteen

# The Myth of the Billionaire Philanthropist

By Shelly

The year was 1901, and Andrew Carnegie wanted to retire. He was in his mid-sixties and the second-richest man in America—second only to John D. Rockefeller. By all accounts, he'd had an outstandingly prosperous career. And besides, Carnegie Steel was worth a fortune. Selling the company would officially make him the wealthiest man in the country. And so, before going into retirement, Carnegie sold the company to J.P. Morgan.

Flash forward to 2024. As of September, Elon Musk is the richest man in the world, with a net worth of over 200 billion dollars. This is over 400 million times the average annual salary in the United States. As the owner of multiple companies (most notably SpaceX, Tesla and X Corp), Musk has more money than most of us can comprehend. But unlike the aforementioned Carnegie, he is also incredibly "skeptical" of charity.

A New York Times report from March of 2024 called his charity work "haphazard and largely self-serving," as the vast majority of his charitable donations go to The Musk Foundation, run by himself. He also stated in a 2023 interview that he has "done more for the environment than any single human on Earth."

It seems that Musk feels that his contributions to technology via Tesla and SpaceX and his support for "free speech" on X (despite X being a platform rife with censorship and anti-LGBT, racist, and antisemitic hate speech) are enough to make up for his lack of actual, philanthropic dona-

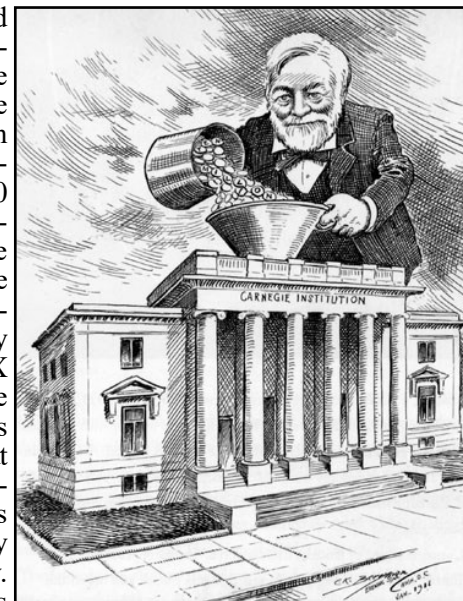
tions. This egotism prevents him from doing much good on a local level. And certainly, you could argue that Tesla's technological innovations have done a great deal for electric vehicle development, and that SpaceX has created valuable technology for space exploration and through its Starlink satellite system. However, this requires us to ask another question; how much good does this do for "humanity as a whole" (which Musk claims to be his focus) if the vast majority of humanity (and even America) is unable to access or make use of this technology?

Musk believes that he knows better what humanity needs. It needs electric vehicles (which you can now buy for cheaper through more mainstream automobile companies), space exploration (which feels almost redundant in a time when most Americans are one missed check away from homelessness), and a social media platform so poorly regulated that advertisers are leaving in droves. What is even

more unfortunate is the fact that this egotistical attitude, the force that drives Musk to believe that he is more in touch with what humanity needs, did not start with him.

This brings us, then, back to Carnegie. In 1889, he published *The Gospel of Wealth*, which contained his views on class, wealth, capitalism, and philanthropy. Within the essay, he argues against the socialists of his time, arguing that the distribution of wealth should be done by the rich. This is because the rich have a "duty" to become

Carnegie on Page Eleven



Washington Evening Star, Jan 1911



# Change Making and Story Telling: A Conversation with Margaret Killjoy

*Margaret Killjoy will be reading from her newest book The Sapling Cage at Lithic Books in Fruita. Wednesday, October 23 at 7pm.*

**The Revolutionist:** You have so many creative projects. We are in awe. Between your music, podcasting and your writing, what keeps you motivated. What moves you to create?

**Margaret Killjoy:** Oh, it's what gets me up in the morning, it's what keeps me going. I used to create because I felt like I didn't have any other good way to connect with people, if I'm being honest, but these days it's just what I enjoy the most. I like spending most of my time making things (by myself or with others) or plotting out making things. I don't like parties very much, most of the time, but I sure love getting a bunch of people together and brainstorming strange things.

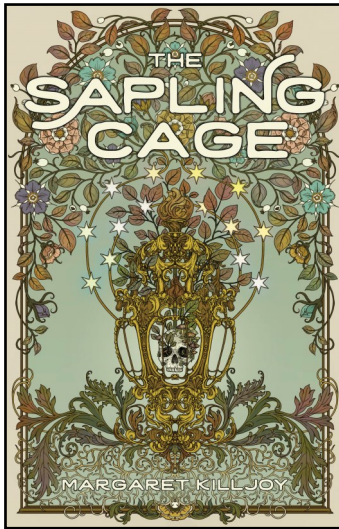
I also write to try to have my hand in the collective shaping of the world, and I'm really blessed to get to be doing that—I think all of us are.

**TR:** Your newest book, The Sapling Cage has been billed as "a tale of trans witchcraft, found family, and resistance against corrupt authority" Can you speak to the power of fantasy and fiction in challenging social norms and power structures?

**MK:** So, a lot of fiction, including a lot of my own fiction, exists to challenge social norms, for sure. It's good at that task, because it allows us to understand emotionally, not just intellectually, what is wrong with this or that way of doing things. But lately, what I'm most excited about is fiction's ability to not just critique the existent, and not just imagine better alternatives, but to just show that this shit could be different. Fiction helps us understand that not everyone thinks like us, that not everyone lives in the same sort of world as us. I love writing fiction where people

just operate on entirely different (not necessarily better or worse) ethical frameworks than we do. I think that is inherently radical, because, well, we're all told that the way things are is the way things must be. But if we can imagine ourselves moving through a different society (again, not even necessarily a better one), we can realize... oh, humans can operate in a lot of ways.

Of course, nonfiction can do this too, like the book The Dawn of Everything by David Graeber and David Wengrow, but I say we should attack the hegemony of the existent from every angle we can.



**TR:** How did you come up with this story line? How long have you been working on this?

**MK:** I wrote The Sapling Cage in probably 2016 or 2017, coming off the heels of writing the first two Danielle Cain Books. I couldn't tell you exactly when I hit upon the basic idea, of a young person dressing up as a girl to go join the witches, but it was probably a bit before then.. I only came out as trans in 2016 myself, and I wanted a way to really start looking at what that meant to me, a way to start talking about it.

**TR:** The first book of yours that we remember is Mythmakers and Lawbreakers, a collection of interviews you did with anarchist writers of fiction, How did that project influence your fiction writing? We can't imagine meeting Ursula K Le Guin and walking away unchanged.

**MK:** I used to see my fiction writing and my political work as two separate things. Fiction was a hobby, organizing anarchistically for a better world was my full time profession (well, it didn't pay, but it's what I did). Le Guin was the first author I talked to for that project, and in that simple short email she did something really basic and important: she explained to me that it was okay to have fiction be what you do, so long as you don't use that as an excuse to get out of the grunt work. She was glad anarchists left her alone to her writing and didn't expect her to or-

ganize, but would still march in any anti-war march and would stuff envelopes for Planned Parenthood. We all naturally specialize, even us jack-of-all-trades types, but we should still do some generalist work from time to time. That's how I interpreted it, anyway.

So I started taking my fiction writing more seriously, which I'm glad for. I don't hate the stuff I wrote back then, but it was shortly after that when I started well, getting good at it.

**TR:** You also have two podcasts? Can you tell us about those?

**MK:** You there, the reader. The person reading this. If you have stable housing, do you have three days of water, food, and cell phone battery life stored up? If you don't, you should.

I run a podcast called Live Like the World is Dying, which I started in 2020 about a month before the pandemic hit, and it was my attempt to bully my friends into becoming preppers, and to bully the preppers into becoming more community-minded. It's still around, but I'm no longer the only host... there's a rotating cast of us, and we discuss everything from gardening to antifascist organizing. Comes out every Friday.

My day job is a different podcast, Cool People Who Did Cool Stuff.

**TR:** I find your history podcast, Cool People Who Did Cool Stuff, fascinating! We try to cover our local radical history. Why is digging into suppressed history so important?

**MK:** Okay I clearly love narrative, right? Well, it turns out we're all part of the grandest story ever told, the story of the world. We're characters in that. We have agency. But the way that history is generally told, folks like you and I don't have much agency. It's just a few random rich people, or rarer workingclass people, who do anything in the mainstream histories we read. But that's simply not true. History is made by each of us. And the contributions of so many people are regularly left out. Women are left out, constantly.

The queer status of people is left out. And anarchists? Left out. If you read mainstream leftist theory, it's just communists with a smattering of social democrats or whatever. Anarchists—and antiauthoritarians more broadly—have been a major part of so many histories, so many revolutions, so many cultures. And you have to dig to find it, because yeah, if someone is an anarchist, that's somehow left off their bio unless they threw a bomb at this or that political figure.

Take the history of fiction... Ursula Le Guin of course, but also Tolstoy. There's this entire huge, influential lineage that descends from Tolstoy's Christian Anarchism. Oscar Wilde... famous as a playwright and a witty gay man, but he wrote one of the better and most widely-read anarchist socialist tracts of the 19th century, one that gets into everything we're talking about now... it's called The Soul of Man Under Socialism and in it he argues that the point of art isn't to make socialism, the point of socialism is to enable us to make art. He also like, bailed anarchists out of jail. The Modern Library wrote a list of the 100 best novels of the 20th century. Three of the top 5 were written by anarchists... James Joyce wrote two and Aldous Huxley another. Yet no one teaches those Big Important Famous Literary Men as anarchists. An interviewer once asked Henry Miller "you call yourself an anarchist, yet you're so organized..."

and Henry Miller was like "yeah." And the interviewer was all flustered, clearly not understanding anarchism, and was like "well why do you call yourself an anarchist?" and Henry Miller was like "because I like read Kropotkin and shit, what the fuck." (I paraphrase from memory here).

The world's first modern pop star, Charlie Chaplin? Not exactly the best feminist, but he was an anarchist.

Anarchists have been the arts, disproportionately represented, forever, but our politics are systematically stripped from our legacies.



*Margaret Killjoy, Courtesy Photo*