

Bev Rich at her office last week (above. At right, she holds the Mining History Association Award she won earlier this year



# A County Treasure(r)

## Bev Rich retiring (sort of) after 24 years in office

By Mark Esper

After 24 years in office San



met her husband, Bill.  
"Then I went to work for the  
Town of Silverton as deputy

including for the restoration of  
Town Hall after the November  
1992 fire

up here the town probably didn't  
appreciate its history as well as it

juan County Treasurer Bev Rich is retiring, though she's not exactly sure just when.

Deanna Jaramillo, elected treasurer last month, takes office in January.

"I'm not sure when my last day will be," Rich said, adding that County Administrator Willy Tookey has "suggested I stay on for an extra month as a paid person so I can help Deanna learn her job."

But she said she probably won't be coming in at 8 a.m. sharp every morning.

Rich was born and raised in Silverton, graduating as valedictorian of the Silverton High School class of 1968.

"There were 10 graduates that year," Rich said. "I tell people I was in the top 10 percent of my class."

Rich said that Silverton back then "was just a really nice place to grow up, it really was."

Rich said it was safe town.

"Years later my mother told me she always knew where I was," Rich said. "That was very shocking."

Rich then went off to Fort Lewis College in Durango, and, as she puts it, "I became a hippie."

Her college days were an eye opener.

"I thought I was so worldly. I didn't realize how sheltered I had been," she said.

The Vietnam War was raging and Rich became a protester.

She and a girlfriend took off to Connecticut "to find fame and fortune" but Rich said she ended up working three jobs and "didn't get famous."

Back in those days she says she "traveled by thumb" a lot.

"I missed the mountains so much," Rich said. "So I came back to Colorado. When I hit the Kansas border I never stopped smiling for about a year; I was so happy to



Bev (Orr) Rich in her 1968 graduation photo.

"The historical society board passed a rule that you couldn't wear hot pants. I think that was seriously aimed at me."

Bev Rich

be back in the mountains."

Back in Silverton, Rich worked at a variety of jobs. She started working at the San Juan County Historical Society Museum in the old jail when she 19.

"The historical society board passed a rule that you couldn't wear hot pants," Rich recalled. "I think that was seriously aimed at me."

Rich said she worked at the museum for 17 summers and

town clerk 27 years ago," Rich said.

When County Treasurer Katey Martinez decided to retire, Rich applied for the position. She has since been elected six times to four-year terms.

"How time flies," Rich said.

In retirement she plans to do more work for the historical society, where she has been on the board for "30 years or more" and is long-time chairman.

Her stint at the head of the nonprofit did not start out smoothly.

That winter the roof blew off the Jail Museum.

"I took office the first of January. Then the roof blew off the jail. Dang, it was cold. At the time we didn't know if it was going to collapse the whole way. We were taking stuff out of there and it had to be 35 below zero. We had to get the artifacts out of there."

"I've been around in county politics for a long time," Rich said. She's currently chairman of the county Democrats and is chairman of the candidate selection committee for the state's 6th Senatorial district and vice chairman of the 59th House district.

She sits on the State Historical Fund Advisory Board, and has brought untold million in grants for historical preservation projects in the town and county,

She won the National Trust for Historic Preservation's National Honor Award in 2005 and this year won the Rodman Paul Award for Outstanding Contribution to Mining History from the Mining History Association.

"That mining history award was really nice because those people know what we're trying to do," Rich said.

"I've never in my lifetime done anything just to get an award, but I think history will look at me kindly because I've always tried to be a good person and I do think I've succeeded to an extent.."

Noting that the San Juan County Historical Society is celebrating its 50th anniversary over the course of the next year, Rich said that while she was growing

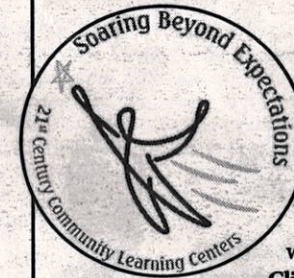
in reality the museum started out as a Rotary Club project," Rich said. "They just wanted more traffic and tourists."

"Then people like Allen Nossaman came along and figured out it's not just something to attract people to town. It's our history that we're trying to protect."

Without naming herself, Rich says, "it's just a pure stroke of luck we got the right people in place."

County Administrator Willy Tookey said "it's been a great pleasure working with Bev. She has been the ultimate professional on the job and what the Historical Society has done under her leadership has been truly amazing. What a tremendous asset she has been and will continue to be for this community."

## AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES!



No STREAM events over Christmas break: Dec. 22nd-Jan. 2nd

Tutoring: M-Th 3:30-5:00

Music Appreciation: Tues. 4:30-6:00

Pep Squad: Wed. 3:30-5:00

Cooking Class: Wed. 5-7 pm

Drama Club: Thurs. 3:30-5:00

Volleyball: Students and community members welcome! Mon. 5-6:30 pm

Climbing: Tues. 5-6 pm, Thurs. 3:30-5:00

Open Gym: Tues 6-7:30, Fri. 4:30-6:00

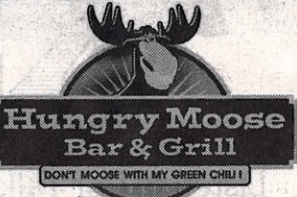
High School Basketball: Practice M-Th:

2014-15 GAME SCHEDULE:

Date	Time	Opponent
Dec. 19	4 pm	@ Ignacio
Jan. 10	Tbd.	@Dolores/Mancos
Jan. 17	Tbd.	@Nucla/Dove Creek
Jan. 24	2 pm	Telluride @ Home
Jan. 31	Tbd.	Mancos/Dolores @Home
Feb. 7	Tbd.	Nucla/Dove Creek @ Home
Feb. 14	Tbd.	Cedaredge @ Home

### Science, Technology, Math:

A program for Silverton School made possible by a grant from the 21st Century Learning Center.



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*Happy Holidays to All!*

**Potluck Christmas Dinner,  
December 23, 11am-4pm!**

**UGLY SWEATER CONTEST 2pm! Prizes!**

**White "Moose" Gift Exchange at 2:30pm!**

**(Bring a gently used, wrapped gift)**

