

# Missing hikers turn out ok

By Norma Martinez  
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The weekend of April 13, could have been a tragic time for Steve and Isabelle Headrick, Desera Headrick who live in Bird City, Keith Headrick from Goodland and other family members in Denver. Tragic news of two missing hikers on the western slope of Colorado took a twist ending up as a very positive experience.

Isabelle's son, Thomas Gabaldon of Westminster, Colo., and his friend Santiavo Rodriquez loaded their car with hiking gear and King, Rodriquez's 1-year-old Labrador on Thursday, April 11. They headed to Grand Junction, Colo., to the McInnis Canyons made up of the Black Ridge Canyons Wilderness to hike the four-day trail, relaxing and enjoying the spectacular scenery on the western slope of Colorado.

The Mee Canyon is only accessible by boat from the Colorado River, or from a trail head near Glade Park. The trail runs into Cedar Tree Arch making the hike a 50-mile loop. This is not a trail for inexperienced hikers. Some spots are very narrow, but contain the scenery of natural arches and bridges second only to Arches National Park in Utah.

The Mee Canyon Hike contains many exposed cliffs to hike over making it more technical. In the longer loop heads down a steep hill and work its way to the other side of the butte to view Rattlesnake Canyon. The view and natural beauty of many arches on this trail makes this treacherous hike worthwhile.

Check points are established at various points along the trail where hikers are to check in. Gabaldon and Santiavo had last checked in on Friday.

When Gabaldon was leaving

town he called his daughter, Jordan Stransky with instructions on where they were going and that they were to return on Sunday morning. He also told her to call him on his cell phone each day and if he did not answer it meant he was in the canyon where there was no reception.

On Sunday when he had not called to say they were returning home and still no response by phone, his daughter became concerned. Early Monday morning she drove by his house and his car was not there so she called the Search and Rescue Services and alerted them. They began their search from Point A and found they had checked into all check points up to the canyon. This is where Stransky lost cell phone service with them.

Both of these men were experienced hikers. Gabaldon had hiked the same area five times before and, for Santiavo, it was his eighth time. They packed plenty of food, bedding, warm layers of clothing, fully charged cell phones, items needed to build a fire and had everything hikers are taught to take and do as precautionary measures.

They had completed 36 miles of the 50-mile loop when the trail became wet and slippery. After the point where the trail became too slippery making it too dangerous to continue, they debated on whether they should try to return the way they came in, or just make camp and sit it out. It was too dangerous to continue on, but decided it would be more treacherous to try returning back the way they came. The final decision was to make camp and wait it out.

After setting up their camp they staked out their rescue flag, started a fire and had just settled down to enjoy the beauty of the natural in-

habited land and sip on a cup of hot chocolate. Gabaldon heard this "tisk," "tisk," "tisk," sound of whirling from helicopter blades and asked Santiago, "Did you hear that?" They pulled their flags and started waving them. The rescuers had already seen their camp and fire and were ascending down to the canyon. The rescue unit called Stransky and reported, "We found the hikers and one person is out as we can only take one person at a time, but they were both okay." This message was relayed to his mother in Bird City.

When they got back to the point where they had left their car, the rescuers told them, they had done everything just right. This rescue, they said, is what rescue is all about. "If all hikers would follow the rules of hiking as they did," they said, "they would not have to deal with as many tragedies".

Mom, Thomas said, this was the most awesome place. If it wasn't for the worry I brought to my family, this would have been the most awesome experience I've ever had.

The only thing I would have done different, he said, is I would not have taken the dog.

They kept him on a leash, but some of the places on the trail were so narrow it was difficult for them to maneuver and watching for the dog's safety on the trail made it more difficult. He also assured his mother, "Mom, we were not lost." adding, "We knew where we were and what we were doing!"

Thomas and Santiago are now in the process of logging information and photos from this trip into the "Back Packing Club Log." This website is established to give safety tips and information on how to safely hike treacherous trails such as the Mee Canyon loop near Grand Junction.



ANDREW WELLS is singing tenor while Will Arasmith sings Baritone and Chris Rowe the lead tenor, Jared Kannady sings bass, and Dave Arasmith sing Bass in the background.  
Times staff photo by Norma Martinez

## Quartet performs at local church

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It has always been said, "Laughter is good for the soul." Recent articles on the heart have said, "Fifteen minutes of laughter does more toward stimulating the heart than an hour of walking." With the recent tragedy in Boston, all the talk on the television, radio and everyone's conversations focused on that tragedy, it has appeared to add to everyone's stress levels.

Those who came to hear the Armouraires Quartet at the Wesleyan Church on Saturday gained a much needed evening's heart stimulating treatment and time of relaxation. It could be said that listening to this group of five gospel singing men did more for the heart than the best heart doctor, or psychiatrist can do. They were not only in complete harmony with their singing, but their theatrical

actions and expressions had the mind and heart dancing to their harmony. Their dress gave the feeling of being back in the 50s, or listening to the top gospel singers of that time as if they were performing in Branson, Mo.

Members of the Armouraires Quartet are Andrew Well, singing tenor, and the owner of the group; Chris Rowe, singing lead tenor, Jared Kannady, singing bass, Will Arasmith, singing baritone, and Dave Arasmith with his deep bass voice. They all come from Salina, Wichita, and Phillipsburg. Jared is a student at Friends University where he is working toward his master's in Marriage and Family Therapy.

The Armouraires have only been performing as a group for a year and a half. Last October they were selected as a nominee for the 2012 Music Guild Heritage Award Group of the Year. They did not

win this award last year, but are up for nomination again this year.

The attendance for Saturday's performance was down because of the promenade, prom and other events taking place, but those who attended were focused on the two hours of entertainment, and fellowship with the group afterwards. Dave and Mary Gibbons drove in from Palisade, Neb., Dan and Yvonne Fields from Atwood, and Jim and Carolyn Plotts came from Oberlin. They had heard them previously and were anxious to hear them again.

The group left town headed for their next performance on Sunday morning in Phillipsburg, and Mingo in the evening. Those who missed them can catch them at Sharon Springs Wesleyan Church for the Sunday morning church service on July 27.

# Light the way to a cure

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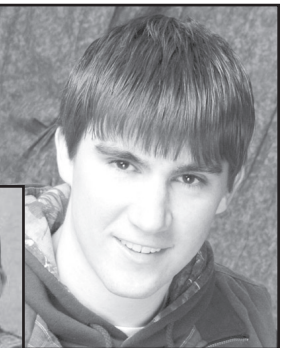
## Congratulate Your Graduate ....

The Saint Francis Herald and Bird City Times are now planning the Senior Graduation Supplement and will be giving parents a chance to put a baby picture in along with a short message from the family for \$20 extra. This feature is optional. Senior pictures will be sponsored by parents, grandparents, individuals and/or businesses for \$40 each or three for \$100. Deadline for baby picture and message is Friday, April 26.

### Heath Antholz

I plan to attend Colby Community College and major in farm and ranch management.

Heath, It has been a joy watching you grow up day to day and year to year. We are blessed to have you as our son. You have many roads ahead of you. Remember to hang on to your faith; cling to the verse in Prov. 3:5-6 The Lord will guide you if you let him. Love, Mom and Dad



Parents: Craig and Jeri Antholz

For more details, contact Tim Burr at the Saint Francis Herald at 785-332-3162

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