



# CLEAR CREEK COURANT

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## G-town narrows city administrator candidates to four

By IAN NELIGH  
*Courant Editor*

The list of candidates for Georgetown city administrator has been narrowed from 30 applicants to four finalists.

Those four have gone through a rigorous battery of interviews, which have involved the community, town employees, town board members and professionals from outside Georgetown. The final choice will be made Feb. 9 at the next regular meeting of the Georgetown Board of Selectmen.

Mayor Tom Bennhoff said the tough application and interview process was

essential to narrowing the choices to the best candidate.

"It is extremely important to this town to get the right person — and we want to make sure that we do everything possible to get that done," Bennhoff said.

Bennhoff said the four candidates were interviewed Jan. 25 by two different groups — one consisting of selectmen and the other members of the community, town staff and several professionals, which included a town manager from Breckenridge and the former manager of Grand Junction.

That evening Georgetown hosted a meet-the-candidates night at the Gateway Visitors'

Center, at which community members came to ask their own questions.

Bennhoff said the next stage includes background and reference checks, and time to allow the public to respond and share their opinions of the four with their representatives.

"They're all very good candidates, so any one of the four might get the position," Bennhoff said.

The candidates are:

- **Thomas Hale:** Hale has a background in local government management and land-use planning, which has included municipal annexations in mountain communities.

Hale was the town manager for Granby from 2000 to 2006. His resume lists planning and construction of a town hall and police station among his accomplishments. Hale is also a former county administrator and county commissioner for Chaffee County.

- **Robert Todd:** Todd has worked for more than 20 years at First National Bank of Stratton as president, chief executive officer and chairman of the board. Todd is also a former Navy officer.

- **Yvonne Kimball:** Kimball is city manager for Bowling Green, Fla., and has held

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## An uphill fight

*Goldiggers' ski coach determined to save a sport cherished by him and his students*

By CELSEY WOODS KLEIN  
*For the Courant*

Resurrection and renewal. Conradt Fredell has seen his share of both over the years.

A biology teacher at Clear Creek High School for the past 29 years, the one-time standout skier has coached the Goldiggers' ski team for the past three decades and is an assistant with the football team. He is a father, husband and musician. He wears a variety of hats, and he wears them well.

Fredell the musician was part of the revival of the Original Cow Boy Band, a group of classically trained musicians dressed as 1800s cowboys. As Clear Creek's ski team faces the possibility of elimination due to budget constraints, Fredell might have to engineer a similar feat to keep more than four decades of tradition alive.

"Because of modern economic times, many ski teams don't exist now that used to be originally in the ski league," Fredell said. "... We have a declining enrollment, we have less kids in ski team and still having the costs and additional increase in transportation costs, due to fuel costs."

Clear Creek principal Jeff Miller said the district is facing a 7 percent funding reduction and that the ski team, which is "a very expensive program," has seen dwindling numbers. Miller broke the news in December that the team was facing the possibility of

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**CLEAR CREEK SKI COACH** Conradt Fredell is facing the elimination of his favorite sport. He has been coaching downhillers at the high school for three decades.

**Photo by MATTHEW JONAS**  
*| The Courant*



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**United Center to start offering movies, lectures**

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**SKI COACH**

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elimination but said nothing would be final until June.

"The situation right now is that certainly it has been a recommendation that the program may be held at bay this next year due to the lack of funding, or we can look at other options just to go ahead and provide the funding for the program, and we are still exploring those," Miller said. "By no means is the program off the table for next year. It is still possible that the program can continue for next year."

"I still have high hopes that the program can continue."

Other ski teams, such as the

one at Platte Canyon High, cut out transportation costs and did fund-raising to keep going. Whatever the future may hold, Fredell could be the perfect man to make sure the Goldiggers don't leave the slopes for good.

**Music to his ears**

Fredell grew up in Flagstaff, Ariz., and was raised in a family in which everyone played at least one instrument. Fredell plays the trombone and the piano. He attended Colorado State University for one year before returning home to finish college at the University of Northern Arizona. His first teaching job was in Kingman, Ariz., where he taught for eight years. He and his wife moved back to Colorado for a job.

Fredell interviewed at two schools — Clear Creek High and Lake County High School in Leadville. He was offered a full-time position at Clear Creek or a one-year position that might have turned into a full-time position in Leadville. Fredell took the job at Clear Creek, and he later found out the Lake County position was eliminated.

Fredell has always found time to keep his love of music alive and has been in several rock bands, including The Goats. At one point, Fredell came to a fork in the musical road — choose to be a professional musician and embrace the travel, or pursue a master's degree in science and settle into a life with a family and a job that could change lives.

He chose the latter. Fredell met

his wife, Jeri, in college, and music was one of their bonds. Fredell asked his wife to join the Cow Boy Band with him. At first, Jeri wasn't sure she wanted to (she is a classically trained clarinetist), but when she found out that the other members of the band were well-trained musicians, she relented.

"The story of (the Original Cow Boy Band) resurrection begins (in 2005) with a man out of Evergreen named Will Swart," Fredell said. "Swart saw a picture in a museum of the Original Cow Boy Band standing in the streets of Idaho Springs in 1905."

It was an unusual picture, so Swart started doing some research and, according to Fredell, decided to resurrect the band, starting with an ad for musicians in the paper. The idea to re-form the band was sparked by the fact that there were no bands set to play at the Memorial Day celebration in Idaho Springs, and the 1905 picture was taken at the Memorial Day fete.

And so the Original Cow Boy Band was reborn. It even found some old sheet music that the first band played.

**Fredell's team is 'one big family'**

According to Fredell, the state's first scholastic ski league was founded in 1965. There were eight teams, Clear Creek being one. Over the years, there was a push to incorporate the teams into the sports controlled by the Colorado High School Activities Association. With the high costs of club skiing, high school ski racing is the only affordable outlet for many athletes.

"When I'm racing ... everything goes away," skier DiDier Bonnette-Forenz said. "There are coaches and people on the sidelines yelling at you usually, but everything disappears and you are in the

tunnel of (focusing on the run), and it's euphoria."

The Clear Creek team is a tight-knit.

"We all get along so well," said Megan Smith, 16. "We are one big family."

Said team captain DiDier Bonnette-Forenz: "It's so much of a family here. It's so much a part of my life now that I don't know what I would do without it."

Clear Creek assistant coach Jeff Miller (no relation to principal Miller) fears what could happen if the program is cut this summer.

"I know that when a program is eliminated, as a general rule, 99 percent of the time it's gone for good," Miller said. "And that is the travesty of cutting something."

Coach Miller, who teaches physical education, health and coaches cross-country, sometimes sleeps at the school during the week to cut down on his commute from Denver. He and Fredell have become friends.

"He doesn't even know this," says coach Miller, fighting back tears, "but (Fredell) is my best friend in Colorado."

Fredell loves his life and is proud of who he is and what he does, but in a way that is utterly humble.

Fredell was named Colorado biology teacher of the year (in 2004) by the National Association of Biology Teachers. He has also been recognized three times as skiing coach of the year for his dedication to the Clear Creek team.

"I've worked very hard, and I love what I do," Fredell said. "I don't know many other people that are as happy with their work in their life as I am — and I find that very sad, that they can't find that fulfillment, whether they are looking too short-term or whether they are looking for fulfillment all of the time — because there are no perfect jobs."

sidewalk construction and street lighting.

• **David Ventimiglia:** Since 1996, Ventimiglia has been the executive director of Georgetown's Monarch Center. Ventimiglia is also a co-founder of the wilderness-therapy program. During his time with the Monarch Center, Ventimiglia has overseen 60 employees and worked with an operating budget of \$1.5 million. In his application, Ventimiglia said he spent the first 25 years of his career working in psychology, mental health and educational services.

Former Georgetown city administrator Cory Nicholson resigned Oct. 6 after only eight months on the job. Nicholson, a former town administrator of Sebago, Maine, was paid \$58,000 a year to carry out the duties as requested by the Board of Selectmen and oversaw the town's employees.

Nicholson had replaced former Georgetown administrator Chuck Stearns, who left the position after a four-year stint to be the city manager of Whitefish, Mont.

Contact Ian Neligh at [courant.editor@evergreenco.com](mailto:courant.editor@evergreenco.com), and check [www.clearcreekcourant.com](http://www.clearcreekcourant.com) for updates and breaking news.

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**Worship Directory**

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GEORGETOWN**  
812 Taos St., Georgetown. Serving the community since 1874. Sunday worship 10:45 a.m. Nursery and children's Sunday school provided. Sept.-May. Dr. Lannie Howell, pastor. 303-567-3300.

**UNITED COUNCIL UNIT**  
METHODIST UNITED CHURCH OF EVERGREEN 14th & Col. Hwy., Idaho Springs. A welcoming & inclusive place to worship. Sunday Worship Service, 10:45 a.m.; Nursery also provided. Mary Ann Howell, pastor. 303-567-3307. Email: [mcu@idahosp.org](mailto:mcu@idahosp.org)

**CONGREGATIONAL UNITED METHODIST**  
A warm, welcoming community church. Robin Jason Howell, Weekly Bulletin, Hymnals, Religious School. 2081 Bergen Pk. Dr. (Behind City Hall) PO Box 415, Evergreen. 303-567-3307. 800-670-4200 ext 3 [www.bethel.org](http://www.bethel.org) for calendar

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF EVERGREEN**  
100 Colorado Blvd., Idaho Springs. Sunday Worship Services and Children's Sunday School, 9:30 a.m. Pot Luck Fellowship, service every first Sunday. Sunday School, 11:30 a.m. 303-567-3300 Pastor Ed Johnson

**GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF GEORGETOWN**  
408 Taos St., Georgetown. Sunday worship services at 9 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.; prayer group meets at 8:30 a.m., Tuesday, at Grace Hall, 415 Taos St. 303-567-3300. Telephone: 303-567-3300.

**SECOND LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
1024 Virginia St., Idaho Springs. Serving the Clear Creek Valley since 1966. 10:30 a.m. Worship service; Sunday school 9:30 a.m.; Bible Study Wednesday evenings 7:30 p.m.; Office hours 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. 303-567-4670. Pastor: Tim Murchison [www.2ndlutheran.org](http://www.2ndlutheran.org)

**ST. PAUL'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
1022 Colorado Blvd., Idaho Springs. Mass. 8:30 a.m. Sunday; workshops at 8 a.m. (Our Lady of Lourdes, 8th and 10th, Conifer); Mass at 5 p.m. Saturday. Fr. Michael J. Sipek, pastor. 303-567-4622.

**ROCKY MOUNTAIN COMMUNITY CHURCH, R.M.C.**  
Georgetown Community Center, 1520 Main St. 9:45 a.m. Friday and Saturday, Sunday 10 a.m. Pastor: Marshall E. Ogren, 303-567-3300.

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**Discussion and Q&A with**

**Dr. Pieter Tans, NOAA  
Atmospheric Chemist**

**ADMINISTRATOR**

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that position since October 2008. Kimball has a master of arts degree in public administration from the University of Central Florida. She cites in her application that she obtained \$2.9 million in federal stimulus funding for road paving,

