

Autopsy confirms man's cause of death

Eleanor C. Hasenbeck
Steamboat Pilot & Today

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS — An autopsy determined Marc Sehler died by suicide, according to Routt County Coroner Rob Ryg. Routt County Search and Rescue volunteers found Sehler's body in a difficult-to-access area of Emerald Mountain on Sunday Ryg said. Prior to his death, Sehler was last seen Friday evening. He was reported missing around noon the following day.

Sehler's friends and family remembered the longtime Steamboat Springs resident as a kind-hearted man and mentor. Sehler, along with his wife, Gretchen, was instrumental in building and maintaining trails on Emerald Mountain. When the bike trails were snowed in, Sehler worked as a ski school instructor at Steamboat Ski Area.

A memorial is planned at 9:30 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 15 at the top of the gondola at Steamboat Ski Area. No pass or ticket



SCOTT FRANZ/FILE

Marc Sehler runs a trail-building machine in 2014.

is necessary. A memorial fund to improve local trails has been established in his memory at the Yampa Valley Community Foundation.

In Routt County, 69 people have died by suicide since 2004, according to data from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and the county coroner's office.

White men between the ages of 35 to 60 are the most common demographic to die by suicide in Routt County, said Tom Gangel,

Mind Springs Health's regional director for Routt County.

Among the 63 recorded deaths due to suicide in Routt County in which the age of the deceased was reported, 69 percent were people age 35 to 64, and among the 67 reports that included the gender of the deceased, 78 percent of deaths due to suicide were men. These include deaths by suicide reported from 2004 to 2016.

"It's important to

AUTOPSY, 12



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 - Is the soil clay, silt, sand or organic?
- ◇ What is the anticipated site use?
 - Hay, pasture, residence, reclamation
- ◇ Evaluate seed mixes and choose one appropriate for site conditions and intended use
- ◇ Prepare site, choose seeding method and rate
- ◇ SEEDING NOT RECOMMENDED from 9/10 to 10/14
 - Grass seedlings require 4 leaves to survive winter
- ◇ SAFEST is DORMANT seeding after 10/15



PREVENTION

Practice good pasture & rangeland management!
Monitor your land closely and reduce bare ground.

Read herbicide labels to understand intervals between spraying and seeding!

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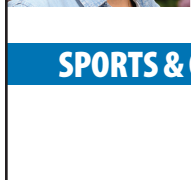
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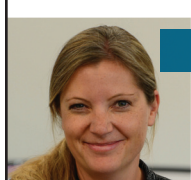
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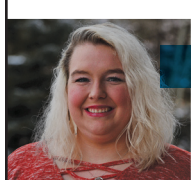
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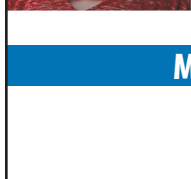
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AUTOPSY

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mention, though, that we (Routt County) have lost people to completing suicide of both genders and throughout the age spectrum," Gangel said.

Routt, Moffat, Jackson, Grand and Rio Blanco counties have a combined average suicide rate of 25 deaths per 100,000 people, which is higher than the statewide average of 20.5, according to data from the Colorado Health Institute, a non-partisan public health research organization. Overall, the Rocky Mountain states have the highest suicide rates in the nation.

Some signs that someone might be struggling with suicidal ideation include withdrawing from his or her normal level of activity, Gangel said. That can mean any activity he or she usually participates in, be it exercise, grooming habits, sexual activity or interactions with others.

"They might start giving things away that you just kind of wonder 'Why are they giving me that now?'" Gangel said.

The person might give away things you might not expect them to or start giving lots of items away. A person who doesn't often cry might cry more frequently, he said, and he or she might start using substances like alcohol and drugs more.

"There might be some unusual goodbyes," Gangel said. "Maybe extended goodbyes or extended long hugs maybe just at the end of a workday, or something just a little unusual about the goodbye."

Though these signs are associated with suicide, these symptoms might not be what causes a death.

If you're worried about someone you care about, Gangel said you should engage him or her directly.

"Talk to them," he said. "Ask them gently with non-judgment, but ask them, 'You know I notice that you're not eating as much. You're not exercising as much. You're not coming out with the workmates as much. What's going on? Are you not feeling well?' Then you listen for the answer."

If in that conversation you have any inkling that someone might be thinking of taking his or her life, address it directly and ask outright if he or she is considering suicide, Gangel said.

"It's not an easy question to ask, but you want to go ahead and ask and say very directly, 'Are you thinking of suicide or are you thinking of killing yourself?'"

He said you can approach it first by asking someone if think of hurting themselves, but it is important that you directly ask if he or she is considering suicide.

"Once you finally ask them, it takes a little of the pressure off to complete suicide," Gangel said. "They start to look at other ways to think."

Asking can also show the person you are willing to engage with him or her about suicide. Frequently, Gangel said, people who might be considering it are afraid that talking about it will place a burden on people they care about.

Gangel said people who attempt suicide and seek treatment typically stay alive for a long time.

"Treatment does work, and treatment can be effective," he said. "There are lots of people in Routt County who are able and willing to help people who are in that condition ... Recovery is possible. These

RESOURCES

If you or a loved one is thinking about suicide, consider these actions.

- Don't leave the person alone.
- Remove items that could be used in a suicide attempt, such as firearms, sharp objects, drugs and alcohol.
- Seek help from a medical or mental health professional.
- If someone has made an attempt, immediately take the person to an emergency room. If the threat to his or her life does not seem so immediate, consider talking to a crisis line first.

For more information, contact the following resources.

- **Mind Springs Health**
Crisis line: 888-207-4004
Steamboat Springs office: 970-879-2141
- **Reaching Everyone Preventing Suicide (REPS)**
Crisis line: 970-846-8182
Office: 970-819-2232
- **HEARTBEAT, Steamboat Springs**
970-871-0682
- **Colorado Office of Suicide Prevention**
303-692-2539
- **Suicide Prevention Coalition of Colorado**
Crisis line: 844-493-8255 or text "TALK" to 38255
Office: 720-934-2387

WARNING SIGNS

Some warning signs that someone could be struggling with suicidal thoughts include the following.

- Withdrawing from normal activity level
- Talking about wanting to die or expressing a fascination with the topic of death
- Looking for a way to kill oneself
- Unusual or longer than normal goodbyes
- Talking about feeling hopeless or having no purpose
- Talking about feeling trapped, isolated or in unbearable pain
- Talking about being a burden to others
- Increasing the use of substances
- Loss of libido
- Acting anxious, agitated or recklessly
- Changes in diet, appetite or sleep patterns
- Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge
- Displaying extreme mood swings

The more of these signs a person shows, the greater the risk. Warning signs are associated with suicide but might not be what causes a death.

symptoms, these feelings of hopelessness, can go away."

Editor's note: It is rare for the Steamboat Pilot & Today to report on suicides except in cases when the suicide involves a public person, occurs in a public place or involves public resources. In the case of Marc Sehler's death, all three of these conditions existed,

so we made the decision to report his cause of death. Suicide is a public health issue, and it is our intention to raise awareness in a responsible manner and encourage those who are at risk to seek help.

To reach Eleanor Hasenbeck, call 970-871-4210, email ehasenbeck@SteamboatPilot.com or follow her on Twitter @elHasenbeck.

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