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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – February 10, 2011

Local author to give presentation about women prisoners at “Old Max”

CANON CITY – “Forgotten Female Felons,” a presentation by local history author Sherry Johns, will be held at 6 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 26, at the Fremont Campus of Pueblo Community College. It is another in a series of events being held to raise funds for the Fremont Campus’ Capital Campaign expansion project.

Johns will be assisted by costumed colleagues telling the stories of a number of female inmates incarcerated at the Canon City prisons. Their stories will bring to life the experiences and humanity of the women prisoners from the early years of “Old Max.”

“When I was in the prison museum archives, I looked at tiny photos of the female felons’ faces, looked into their eyes and wondered what they were really like,” explained Johns, who is a PCC graduate. “Were they truly evil women? Did they use poor judgment? Did they steal to feed their children? Did they kill to escape abuse?”

“My research led me to a deeper reason for sharing what I learned about the forgotten female felons from ‘Old Max’,” Johns continued. “It made me want to help in a small measure to restore their dignity.”

Johns’ published books include: “Pioneer Women of Beaver Creek,” “The Forgotten Cemeteries of Beaver Creek” and “San Juan Bautista Cemetery.” Upcoming books include historical looks at early Penrose, Florence and Buckskin Joe. She also is authoring “Fremont County Sesquicentennial.”

Johns currently serves as chair of the Fremont County Heritage Commission along with Mary Chamberlain and Carol McNew, who will also assist her in the “Forgotten Female Felons” presentation.

Tickets for the show are \$10 per person, and they are available at the PCC-Fremont Campus, from the program participants and from members of the Capital Fund Drive Committee. For information, call 296-6106.

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Founded in 1933, Pueblo Community College is a premier teaching institution focused on providing academic and service excellence to help its students acquire the 21st Century skills needed to better their lives. An educational and technological leader, PCC fosters economic development and utilizes strong partnerships in the communities it serves through its Pueblo, Fremont and Southwest campuses.