



Thunderbirds hold off Bobcat rally for 42-37 win

— Page 6



What anyone can do to honor the memory of Martin Luther King Jr.

— Page 7

San Luis Valley Colorado Genuine

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VOLUME 98, NO. 8

# Valley Courier

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LOCAL NEWS... LOCAL VIEWS

January 13, 2024

\$1

## Victim in Dec. 31 camper fire identified

### STAFF REPORT

**ALAMOSA** — The person who died in a camper fire in the early morning hours of Dec. 31 has been identified as Justin Armijo, a 35-year-old resident of Alamosa. The identity was released by Joe Dzuris, Alamosa County's

coroner, on Wednesday evening.

When asked if the cause of Armijo's death has been determined, Dzuris said that information obtained from the medical examiner's autopsy will likely not be available for another five or six weeks.

As was reported in the Valley Courier, shortly after midnight on New Year's Eve Day, the Alamosa Fire Department (AFD) and the Alamosa Police Department (APD) responded to a location in the 1300 block of Alamosa Avenue on a report of a camp-

er trailer on fire. When they arrived on scene, the camper trailer was fully engulfed in flames with witnesses on site saying there was possibly someone inside.

Once the fire was extinguished, officials discovered Armijo's body, an initial as-

essment of the scene determined that a make-shift fireplace was the likely cause of the fire. According to the APD, a preliminary investigation did not reveal any suspicious circumstances leading to the cause of the fire or the Armijo's death.

## SLV Today

### Martin Luther King Jr. Day trash pickup schedule

**ALAMOSA** — The City of Alamosa's Martin Luther King Jr. announced its trash pickup schedule for Monday, Jan. 15.

- Commercial Routes: Monday, Jan. 15, will be collected Tuesday, Jan. 16.
- Residential Routes: Will remain the same.
- Recycling Center: Will be closed Monday, Jan. 15, and will reopen Tuesday, Jan. 16.

For more information, contact the City of Alamosa Public Works Department at 719-589-6631.

City facilities will be closed Monday, Jan. 15, and will reopen Tuesday, Jan. 16.

## CORRECTIONS

There was an error in the story "Mari Felix charged with one count of accessory to sexual assault on a child" by a person in a position of trust that ran in the Jan. 9 edition of the Valley Courier. While Felix was charged as an accessory, the Colorado Revised Statute incorrectly referenced in the story was related to being charged as complicit. That was the initial charge when Felix was taken into custody but being officially charged as an accessory is considered a lesser crime, which is a felony class five and reflects a reduction in charges. The Valley Courier apologizes for the error and any confusion it may have caused.

There was an error in a photo cutline for the first SLV baby of 2024 that ran in the Jan. 9 edition of the Valley Courier. It incorrectly indicated that the San Luis Valley Regional Medical Center in Alamosa has a neonatal intensive care unit. The baby was born at SLVRMC but received care at a NICU outside of the Valley, where the photo was taken. The Valley Courier apologizes for the error and any confusion it may have caused.

## SLV WEATHER

Snow Showers Likely 80/51

Wed: Sun/Clouds 85/ 48

Thurs: Cloudy 84 / 46

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## Spadefoot Story Slam

Because everyone has a story to tell

By PRISCILLA WAGGONER

**ALAMOSA** — Every third Saturday of the month, people of different ages, interests and backgrounds gather together at the Narrow Gauge Book Co-operative in Alamosa to continue a tradition among human beings that dates back thousands of years.

### Storytelling.

The gathering is called Spadefoot Story Slam, begun by veteran storyteller and Alamosa resident Al Stone.

Spadefoot Story Slam started more than two

■ See SLAM page 3



Photo by Al Stone

Telling a story from the heart during Spadefoot Story Slam held at the Narrow Gauge Book Co-op in Alamosa.



Photo courtesy of Al Stone  
Al Stone, veteran storyteller who leads Spadefoot Story Slam at the Narrow Gauge Book Co-op.

## Democrat announces candidacy in CO Senate District 6

By PRISCILLA WAGGONER  
Courier Reporter

**ALAMOSA** – Vivian Smotherman, a Democrat and resident of Durango, announced her candidacy this week for Colorado Senate District 6, currently represented by Republican Colorado Senator Cleave Simpson.

A press release quotes Smotherman as saying, "It is time for new representation for Southwestern Colorado and the San Luis Valley. I will fight to bring down housing costs, increase access to well-paying jobs in our community, support our public schools, and protect our natural resources. I believe my leadership experience in the US Navy, in the oil and gas industry, and as a small farmer makes me uniquely qualified to represent Senate District 6."

On her website at [www.votevivian.org](http://www.votevivian.org), a description of Smotherman's

experiences includes being "a sailor, a farmer, a teacher, an oil field worker, and a non-profit organizer and volunteer". She has "worked alongside English, Romanian and Brazilian crews" and has a "formal education" in both History and Anthropology.

Her website further states that Smotherman's top priorities include education, access to health care and affordable housing.

"For a representative of this diverse landscape to properly serve their community," she is quoted as saying, "they must have an equally diverse background informing their perspective and helping them see problems from a variety of viewpoints. To simply say 'I've lived here all my life is not enough.'"

Smotherman was raised in Colorado. She and her wife, JoAnn, live in Durango.



Vivian Smotherman

## City of Alamosa to begin interviewing candidates for chief of police

Process could begin as early as next week

By PRISCILLA WAGGONER  
Courier Reporter

**ALAMOSA** — With the final work session addressing concerns about management concluded, the City of Alamosa is preparing to begin interviewing applicants for the position of Alamosa Police Department's Chief of Police, possibly as early as next week.

During a regularly scheduled meeting of the Alamosa City Council in November 2023, Ken Anderson, Alamosa Police Department's former Chief of Police, handed his badge to Alamosa Mayor Ty Coleman and officially resigned.

In the past two months, there was a hold on filling Anderson's position, although, according to Alamosa City Manager Heather Sanchez, the city has been advertising for a new chief since Anderson left.

"Working with Interim Chief

■ See CHIEF page 3

ALAMOSA POLICE DEPARTMENT

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Police Chief  
\$107,869 - \$113,300  
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# Record

## SLV REC accepting applications for scholarships

**STAFF REPORT**  
**MONTE VISTA** — San Luis Valley Rural Electric Cooperative has seven scholarships that high school seniors can apply for — the application deadline is Feb. 1.

A completed application can be mailed to San Luis Valley Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc., P.O. Box 3625, Monte Vista, CO 81144; or dropped off at the SLV REC office located at 3625 US Hwy 160 W, approximately three miles west of Monte Vista; or emailed to [jalonzo@slvrec.com](mailto:jalonzo@slvrec.com). All applications must be received in the office no later than 5 p.m. on Feb. 1.

General eligibility requirements for a scholarship includes:

- The student or the student's parents or legal guardian must be an active member who receives electric service from SLVREC.
- Unless stated otherwise for a

specific scholarship, the student must be graduating from a local area high school (or equivalent), and the student must be entering college or vocational school as a freshman.

- If funding is available, Adams State University sophomores, juniors or seniors may be considered for the Adams State University Scholarship.
- Dependents of SLVREC board members and employees are only eligible for the Basin Scholarship specifically identified for dependents.
- Applicants will be rated on grade point average (GPA), SAT/ACT score, school and community activities, achievements and an essay stating his/her career goals (two pages maximum).
- All scholarships awarded must be used the same year they

are granted.

Available scholarships include:

- Martin Christensen Memorial Lineworker Scholarship, \$5,500
- SLVREC's Adams State University Four-Year Scholarship
- Robert Wolfe Scholarship, \$4,000
- Michael Rierson Scholarship, \$4,000
- SLVREC Past Director Scholarship, \$2,500
- SLVREC Past Retired GM Ray Villyard and CEO John Villyard Scholarship, \$2,500
- Basin Electric Power Cooperative Scholarship, \$1,000

Applications are available online at <https://slvrec.com/scholarships>. For more information, contact SLV REC Marketing and Sales Coordinator Jennifer Alonzo at 719-852-6660 or [jalonzo@slvrec.com](mailto:jalonzo@slvrec.com).

## Dominguez named Director of Lending at SLVDRG

**By SAN LUIS VALLEY DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES GROUP**  
**ALAMOSA** — Cony Dominguez, of Alamosa, has been named manager of the San Luis Valley Business Loan Fund at San Luis Valley Development Resources Group (SLVDRG). She will be responsible for originating and servicing loans to local businesses from the Business Loan Fund.



**Cony Dominguez is the new Manager of the San Luis Valley Business Loan Fund at San Luis Valley Development Resources Group.**

"We are excited to have Cony on board at SLVDRG," said Sarah Stoerber, executive director of San Luis Valley Development Resources Group. "She is a seasoned banking professional who most recently worked with First Southwest Bank in Alamosa. Present and future clients of the SLV Business Loan Fund will appreciate her personal touch and dedication to meeting their financial needs."

working with SLVDRG managing the Business Loan Fund," Dominguez said. "I look forward to building strong working relationships with our loan customers and local lenders. My commitment is to our mutual success in growing businesses in the Valley and to providing outstanding service."

The San Luis Valley Business Loan Fund provides financing to businesses looking to expand or to keep jobs, and to new business start-ups. It has assisted nearly 200 businesses with loans totaling more than \$10 million.

More information about the San Luis Valley Business Loan Fund, contact Dominguez at 719-589-6099 or email at [cdominguez@slvdrg.org](mailto:cdominguez@slvdrg.org). Information is also available online at <https://www.slvdrg.org/slv-business-loan-fund/>.

## Motorists should be prepared for challenging winter driving conditions through a busy travel weekend

*Multiple rounds of mountain snow, along with arctic cold anticipated*

**By COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

Several rounds of snow and blowing snow will occur in the mountains over the next several days, alongside severe cold, which may cause wind chills from -20 to -30 degrees in the foothills and plains.

The Interstate 70 mountain corridor typically sees the most traffic over the Martin Luther King holiday weekend, so it is crucial that motorists be prepared for winter driving conditions. Heavy snow and strong winds are expected through the holiday weekend starting Jan. 12, over western and southern Colorado, including along the foothills and Raton Mesa. This could cause localized ground blizzards and zero visibility.

Snow is anticipated to taper off later in the afternoon on Saturday, with another round of

heavier snow likely to develop Saturday night through Sunday. Areas of concern include Georgetown to West Vail on I-70 and US 40 to Steamboat Springs. An avalanche warning and avalanche advisories have been posted for nearly all of the Colorado mountain regions. Motorists should also be prepared for the possibility of safety closures for avalanche mitigation operations along the I-70 mountain corridor and other high mountain passes, especially on Tuesday morning.

On the plains, arctic cold will settle across the area Friday night into Saturday, with dangerously cold wind chill readings expected to last through Tuesday morning. This extended cold snap may result in icy and slick road conditions.

In the event of severe winter weather and deteriorating road conditions, CDOT may close state-owned roadways to protect the traveling public. Highway safety closures are a proactive approach to highway safety and are used to eliminate long-term closures of the interstates or highways, allowing CDOT to deploy snow-

plow and operations crews during the most intense periods of the snowstorm. CDOT may also implement safety closures if there are spin-outs or other incidents along the highways. Motorists can visit [COTrip.org](http://COTrip.org), the COTrip Planner app or call 511 for the latest road conditions and updated information about highway closures.

With the below freezing temperatures, it is imperative that motorists make sure their vehicles are packed with equipment that may be necessary in the event of a closure. While it is always encouraged to have these items in your vehicle, motorists should not travel without these this weekend: sturdy scraper/snow brush/snow shovel to clear snow; flashlights; blanket or sleeping bag; water and food/snacks; first aid kit and essential medications; tire chains and tow strap; jumper cables; flares/reflectors to signal for help and warn other motorists; coats, hats, mittens, boots, etc.; hand warmers; non-clumping kitty litter/sand for traction; and a deck of cards or board game for enter-

tainment.

If a driver feels anxious, unsafe or does not feel confident about driving in adverse conditions, it may be best to wait for conditions to improve as driving in white-out conditions can cause distress and limit driving abilities. CDOT offers bus and shuttle services that offer stops at Colorado's various ski resorts and can help alleviate the stress of driving through winter conditions. Snowstang offers stops at Arapahoe Basin, Copper Mountain, Loveland Ski Area, Steamboat Springs, and Breckenridge. CDOT also offers Pegasus, a van shuttle service that offers stops at Idaho Springs, Frisco, Vail, and Avon.

Chain and Traction Laws

When weather conditions warrant, CDOT will activate the Traction Law. If weather conditions deteriorate, CDOT will activate Chain Laws for passenger and commercial vehicles. Motorists will be alerted to an active Traction or Chain Law by highway signage, [COTrip.org](http://COTrip.org) and traffic/roadway condition alerts. For more information on the Traction Law and Passenger Vehicle Chain Law requirements, visit [codot.gov/travel/winter-driving/tractionlaw](http://codot.gov/travel/winter-driving/tractionlaw). For more information on the Commercial Vehicle Chain Law requirements, visit [codot.gov/travel/colorado-chain-law](http://codot.gov/travel/colorado-chain-law). To learn more and view helpful tips for winter driving, visit [winter.codot.gov](http://winter.codot.gov).

[COTrip.org](http://COTrip.org) and COTrip Planner app

Motorists are urged to visit [COTrip.org](http://COTrip.org) and download the COTrip Planner app before traveling. Motorists can now sign up for travel alerts through [COTrip.org](http://COTrip.org) to see if there are any highway closures or impacts along their favorite routes. The COTrip Planner app also offers a "Trip Planner" feature that allows motorists to map out their routes and receive updates about road closures or incidents along the way. Motorists can turn on the "Hands-Free, Eyes Free" feature to receive these alerts via voice notifications and avoid routes with impacts.

### OBITUARY

#### Raymond Toby Rael



Raymond Toby Rael, 69, passed away on Jan. 7, 2024, at his home in Commerce City, Colo.

Raymond was born on Aug. 18, 1954, in Alamosa, Colo., to Celsa (née Vialpando) and Raymond E. Rael. He was raised in Romeo, Colo., alongside his four sisters and three brothers. He graduated from Centauri High School in 1972 and went on to study Chemistry at Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colo., graduating in 1975 with a Bachelor's in Science.

After several years, Raymond relocated to Omaha, Neb., and worked as chemist with Future Foam, eventually landing a position as Chief Chemist and Quality Manager with William H. Harvey Company for many years. He retired from there in 2011.

Much more importantly, Raymond was the proud father of two children, Reanna Leigh (born 1982) and Marco

Phillip (born 1984). He enjoyed taking his family camping, going for bike rides in the park, and taking them to baseball games. He was a leader in his son's Boy Scout troop and helped coach little league. He often reflected on those times as being some of his happiest memories. He moved back to his native Colorado in 2022.

Raymond was a lifelong Denver Broncos fan and never missed watching a game. Later in life, he found joy in conversing

with his daughter while going for walks around the neighborhood and playing bingo and pool with his friends at his apartment community.

He was preceded in death by his son, Marco Rael; Father, Raymond E. Rael; Brother-in-law, Victor Martinez.

Raymond is survived by his Daughter, Reanna (Michael Lewis) Rael; Mother, Celsa Rael; Siblings — Sara Lee, Julia (Donald) Chavez, Sally (Gilbert) Lopez, Cathy Martinez, James (Cindy) Rael, Randy (Lynn Craigo) Rael, and Ken (John O'Brien) Rael; Ex-wife and mother of his children, Diana (Ronald) Sandoval; Former partner of over 20 years, Patricia Tyson. He is also survived by many much-loved nieces, nephews and friends.

Per his request there will be no funeral service. A gathering of family/friends will be held at a later date.



**Eric Guttormson**

## First Southwest Bank announces appointment of Guttormson as Sr. Lending Officer

**By FIRST SOUTHWEST BANK**  
**DURANGO** — First Southwest Bank (FSWB), a locally owned, independent community bank, and one of two Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) banks in Colorado, announces the appointment of Eric Guttormson as Sr. Lending Officer.

Commercial Credit Analyst at MinnWest Bank. He finds fulfillment in continued learning and mentoring others to expand their knowledge and skills.

"I'm thrilled to have Eric as part of our First Southwest Bank Team! Eric brings energy and CDFI lending experience that will allow FSWB to elevate our small business solutions and expand our reach to underserved rural communities. We are grateful to have Eric's leadership and mission-focused mindset to further support the social and economic landscape of rural Colorado." Kristy Esquibel, EVP, Chief Credit Officer, First Southwest Bank.

Guttormson will be responsible for providing strategic direction for the Lending Department, while also ensuring compliance with all applicable laws and regulations. He will provide lending solutions to business customers, including those in underserved rural communities.

"I'm thrilled to join the committed and innovative team at First Southwest Bank" said Guttormson, "and look forward to forming new relationships with colleagues and customers who are making a positive impact every day by bringing social capital partners together to empower equitable economic progress in Southern and rural Colorado."

Guttormson spent the past seven years at Sunrise Banks in Minnesota, a CDFI bank focused on financial empowerment, where he served as a Commercial Credit Analyst, Commercial Portfolio Manager, Commercial Loan Officer, and VP Commercial Loan Manager. Prior to Sunrise, he was a

**School Menu**

**Monday**

**January 15, 2024**

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**BREAKFAST**  
 Cereal/Graham Crackers  
 Fruit & Milk

**ELEMENTARY**  
 Beef Ravioli/Steamed Broccoli  
 Bread Stick  
 Veggie Bar  
 Fruit & Milk

**MIDDLE SCHOOL**  
 Beef Ravioli/Steamed Broccoli  
 Bread Stick  
 Veggie Bar  
 Fruit & Milk

**HIGH SCHOOL**  
 Beef Ravioli/Steamed Broccoli  
 Bread Stick  
 Veggie Bar  
 Fruit & Milk

Breakfast & Lunch Free for all students  
 Alamosa School District  
**To sponsor the School Menu call 589-2553**

# Valley News

## Adams State awarded \$500,000 grant to enhance campus safety

By ADAMS STATE UNIVERSITY

ALAMOSA — The U.S. Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) awarded Adams State University \$500,000 to develop a Coordinated Community Response (CCR) team to address domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking on campus. To be funded over four years, the campus-wide project is entitled "JUNTOS: Initiative for Campus Safety and Cultural Responsiveness," according to Dr. Heidi Schneider, chair of the Sociology Department and Adams State's Inclusive Excellence Liaison (IEL), principal investigator-grant administrator.

mestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking Program support community-based organizations that address victims' critical needs in a manner that affirms their culture. Adams State's diverse student body includes those who are Hispanic/Latinx, Native American, Black, Asian and Pacific Islanders, immigrants, first-generation college students, and LGBTQ+, as well as athletes and students with disabilities.

"Because we are a diverse nation with numerous affinity groups and many cultures, sexual violence prevention programs that are monocultural ignore the different ways in which people might learn, communicate, and respond, specifically regarding issues like sexual assault," Schneider explained. "The best way to address sexual

violence is to create a program that reflects and is responsive to all cultures." As Inclusive Excellence Liaison, Schneider will oversee the Project Director; a search is underway to fill that position.

"This grant will build ASU's capacity to develop programming that fits our student demographic. We are collaborating with community organizations to address concerns of Native Americans and immigrants — two of Adams State's most vulnerable groups," Schneider added. "Technical advisors will come to campus to conduct training and outreach to help us find additional resources for other marginalized groups."

Alamosa's Tu Casa, Inc., which serves victims of domestic and sexual violence, is the overarching victim service and educa-

tion provider. The grant award includes \$10,000 each year for Tu Casa, Inc., consulting services, including a Peer-Educator-Student Outreach Coordinator. Tu Casa's Chenoa Candy, an ASU nursing major, will be the on-campus peer educator for 10 hours a week. Adams State will also coordinate with the SLV Immigrant Resource Center (IRC) and the SLV Area Health Education Center (SLV AHEC)/SLV Indian Center.

The Project Director will work with the technical advisors, external agencies, and various campus offices to develop the Coordinated Community Response Team, which will create a mandatory prevention/education program for all students, tailored to culturally specific student needs.



Photo courtesy of DA Kelly

District Attorney Anne Kelly and Alamosa Mayor Ty Coleman at Rio Frio Dunking 2023.

## Rio Frio Ice Fest January 26-28

ALAMOSA — In one of the coldest cities in Colorado, residents and visitors alike can take to the outdoors for the Alamosa Rio Frio Ice Fest. This year, the Ice Fest will begin Friday, Jan. 26, and last through the 28. There's no better way to shake the mid-winter cabin fever than to embrace the bitter cold with an ice festival. This year's theme will be a Penguin Party.

one-of-a-kind race experience. The "icy bonfire" downtown brings crowds of people to witness a spectacle. Ice Fest-themed drinks are offered on San Juan Avenue for a Local Flights Drink Testing. After dark cross-country skiing, an ice bowl disc golf tournament, an ice climbing trip, ice skating, and an ice carousel all add to the broad appeal of this winter weekend. Don't forget to participate in the polar plunge at Blanca Vista Pond on Sunday.

The over decade-long tradition provides festivity for the entire family. Intricate ice carvings line the streets of downtown Alamosa all weekend.

Visit rioraces.com for a full schedule of events and to register for the Rio Frio 5k.

The famous Rio Frio 5k on Ice is what it sounds like, a 5k run on the frozen Rio Grande; a truly

For questions, contact the Alamosa Family Recreation Center at 719-589-2105.

## Chief

Continued from Page 1

Spangler," Sanchez says, "we decided that the hiring process could wait while we worked on better understanding the needs of the department and providing information to city council as they worked through the concerns of former Chief Anderson.

Spangler, City Attorney, City Clerk, Fire Chief, Public Works Director, Economic Development Director, Monte Vista Police Chief, former Durango Police Chief, and three representatives from the department."

"With the work session on Jan. 3 addressing the remaining concerns, we are now able to move forward, and I anticipate the process to begin in earnest next week."

When asked about the absence of anyone from city council being on the interview team, Sanchez responded, "City council is not involved in personnel matters."

The posting is advertised as "open until filled with no closing date" and the city has received eight applications to date. The city will continue to accept applications up until a decision on a candidate is made.

Sanchez anticipates working with the interview team to review applicants and create questions.

Sanchez has also identified a "tentative" interview committee with "some possible changes" that might occur.

"My guess is that we would hold Zoom interviews to narrow down the search to those candidates who we want to bring in for an in-person interview," she says. "The day of the in-person interview would also include a meeting with the police department and a tour of the community."

"Thus far," she says, "the committee includes myself, Interim Chief

Sanchez further added that the identity of those individuals who have applied for the position are being kept confidential.

## Slam

Continued from Page 1

years ago and is an event devoted to people telling a story from their life. Each Story Slam has a theme — such as "harvest", "light", "rebirth", "resist", "luck", "the seeds we plant", to name just a few.

"You prepare a story based on that theme," Stone says, "and it needs to be true and about something that happened to you. It also needs to be a story told from the heart, not off the page."

The point of Story Slam, she says, is not to tell a story that is rote or memorized but to be natural and have that natural kind of cadence. She encourages folks to practice saying their story out loud ahead of time because the more a person tells a story, the more they "dig into it" and the more it changes.

"We meet at the Narrow Gauge, and it's popcorn style. Whoever wants to, starts first. We have some veterans who come every month, but we always have new people who are trying it for the first time. It's funny as I say that because we have people who say they just came to listen — which is great — but, after a while, three or four people will be inspired by someone else's story and will want to share one of their own." She then adds, "I love that."

Stone is clear that many of the people who come to Story Slam are not writers or poets or even very experienced with telling stories, but they all have one thing in common.

"Everyone is a storyteller," Stone says. "Everyone has a story. Just thinking back to the big stories in your life, everyone has at least one story they can tell."

Even the name Spadefoot Story Slam has its own sto-

ry, one that Stone has heard numerous times from both people who have lived here for years and AmeriCorps people, as well.

"Back in the day," she says, "the valley was full of water and frogs really thrived here. When the water disappeared, so did the frogs but their spirits remained. Legend has it that, if you're a valley native or a transplant and try to leave, the valley frog spirit on your shoulder will always draw you back. That happens quite a lot — people may leave but something always brings them back. It's that mystical draw to this place."

"When I was researching for a mascot, I discovered the toad called a spadefoot that can be found in the Great Sand Dunes National Park. It camouflages with its surroundings and I thought it would work really well. Actually, it just seemed kind perfect."

Stone also believes that stories hold great importance in people's lives. "Stories are what connect us," she says. "Things are really divided in the country right now, and stories break down those divisions and help people find common ground. The more you can share your story, the more you find commonalities with other people."

She then shares a story from her own life.

"I had a big accident in 2020 when I fell off the rock wall at Adams State," she says. "After that happened, I was quite devastated. But the more I shared my story, the more I connected with other people who had had accidents in the rock-climbing world or accidents of different kinds. The more we're brave and vulnerable with each other about those big moments in our lives — whatever they are — the more we can share and be less insulated and



Photo by Al Stone

Spadefoot Story Slam encouraging people to come because everyone is a storyteller.

isolated." Throughout the conversation, Stone emphasizes that Spadefoot Story Slam is a warm, welcoming experience because telling stories is not unique to a certain group of people.

Of course, being a writer can give a person a "leg up", she says. "But we're always telling stories, every single day. To our parents, to our families, to our friends, to people at work. It may be about a big event but we're also telling stories about what happened over the weekend or what we did for the holidays."

Stone also sees people benefiting just from the experience itself. "It can really build confidence for people who might be shy or a little closed off. Telling a story to people can be scary and conquering that fear...it can be a beautiful thing and show how much you can grow. And I think it also helps people to feel seen and heard."

She then recalls an article "The Many Ways to See a Story" she read in the magazine High Country News.

"The article was an interview with [acclaimed

indigenous author] Debra Magpie Earling, who said, 'Do not trust anyone who tells you cannot tell your story. Do not trust anyone who tells you there is only one story. If there were only story or only one way of thinking, all stories would die,' she says.

Stone's vision is to hold a "Grand Slam" at Cole Park this summer and, possibly within a year, to hold Spadefoot Story Slam in different communities throughout the Valley.

"I just want to encourage people to come," she says. "I want to see Spadefoot Story Slam really grow. Everyone's story is valid."

The next Spadefoot Story Slam is Saturday, Jan. 20 and this month's theme is "Resolutions."

"It's not just for stories about New Year's but have you had to resolve something personal or a conflict with someone else or something you've just resolved yourself to do. I encourage people to really think out of the box."

Spadefoot Story Slam, will be held Saturday, Jan. 20, 6 p.m. at Narrow Gauge Book Co-op in Alamosa, 602 Main St.

## ADAMS STATE UNIVERSITY COLORADO Great Stories Begin Here

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## January

SUNDAY • 14	MONDAY • 15	TUESDAY • 16	WEDNESDAY • 17	THURSDAY • 18	FRIDAY • 19	SATURDAY • 20
www.adams.edu	MLK Jr. Day - No Classes	2024 Spring Semester Begins  Larry Holder Exercise and Cancer Survivorship Program Pre-registration: 12 p.m. East Campus 109 Info: 720-272-4635  MLK Week Keynote Address: MLK: Nonviolence in a Violent World Dr. Ed Crowther 6 p.m. McDaniel Hall 101 Free	Larry Holder Exercise and Cancer Survivorship Program Pre-registration: 12 p.m. East Campus 109 Info: 720-272-4635	Zacheis Planetarium Opens January 24	W Basketball vs Colorado Christian University 5:30 p.m. Plachy Hall  M Basketball vs Colorado Christian University 7:30 p.m. Plachy Hall	W Basketball vs Chadron State College 5:30 p.m. Plachy Hall  M Basketball vs Chadron State College 7:30 p.m. Plachy Hall
<p>January 22, 2024 Through February 22, 2024</p> <p>Cloyde Snook Gallery: FINS a Department of Art Exhibition</p> <p>Gallery Hours: 8:30 a.m. until 5 p.m. Monday through Friday</p>						

# Opinion



## January, the break-up, and put-back month

The white light streams through the blue planet's atmosphere on a mission to melt the snow and icy trails around here, and with the help of hardy house finches and speckled sparrows, my mind travels back to a

### Movin' On with Nellie



Nelda Curtiss

walk in the woods outside the Turpin Road condo in Anchorage. There I found sleeping bears clinging to the fir tree limbs then blowing away in one thought or another.

The walk was in January or February or some wintery month when family emotions raced rancid. People say January is the break-up month because feelings mimic the climate's growing iciness. It was one evening like that when parents prowled through the consequences of distances, dips, and duties.

The white light streams through the ailing planet's air on its way to bring spring and new life. Already ranchers and part-time sheep stewards worry about a goat or sheep due to birth. The thirty-below temperatures would strike a lamb before gasping and snuffing out a wool-less heartbeat. Still, the pull to bring water and feed conquers the human resolve to stay a while longer by the fire.

Somewhere strategies for the New Year plod past one memory and then another; frost in the tundra melts even more; ice from a Greenland glacier drops into the ocean — an unexpected tragedy of carbon gone amuck. Not unlike the dire detonator of feelings gone by, the once green and thriving mother earth has CO2 astronomical flu, or Covid19, where waves push deeper into the coasts, where icy roads catch fossil-fueled machines and drivers in a blizzard and southern style oxy-morons, where science and fact are denounced and ignored.

A cataclysm, the type that fished and squirmed until species of another time died and changed into crude oil knocks at our Jungian strings, and for sure our culture of violence and consumption. Our species no longer honor our ancestors or the prairie schooners and aborigines traversing the wilderness; we no longer embrace a loving God's edict to take care of the world and all within; instead, we honor plastic, pumps, and pearls ripened in oil. The cataclysm that wakes now could turn back the time when the earth was sparse and humanless without the forming community built from one cell to another.

Still, there's time to turn back the astronomical flu to open up to streaming lights but close the ozone rift established by too much carbon in the oceans, in the permafrost, and the forests. Carbon is muscling out the oxygen in favor of its own decay. This January journey begins with us when we choose to recycle, bicycle, and cycle through choices to promote survival of the planet, plants, and people. Walk along the trail with the dancing wildlife nibbling at the branches. Strike an arpeggio melody with the land, air, water, and life.

Nelda Curtiss is a retired college educator and long-time local columnist. Reach her at [columnsbynellie.com](mailto:columnsbynellie.com) or email her at [columnsbynellie@gmail.com](mailto:columnsbynellie@gmail.com).



## Bringing in the New Year — wiser

By HEATHER COMSTOCK  
ALAMOSA — Knowledge and education help the weak become stronger. With cold weather, and sometimes gloomy days, it is important to know where to turn to in case you need to become stronger, more resilient and knowledgeable.

When you are going somewhere, new or old, do you use a map? GPS? Today, more than ever, directions or maps are at our fingertips. It is good to know where the resources and information are. I am including a list of some great resources and “maps” that you may find beneficial.

With all the information on the internet, having a nice local go-to site is not only easy, but appreciated, [myslvconnect.com](http://myslvconnect.com); is a one stop shop, so to speak, for the San Luis Valley. Information in both English and Spanish is provided for most needed quick references. This particular website was developed by San Luis Valley residents and has a wealth

of information including childcare, mental health providers, SLV transportation options, and everything in between, all in one place.

Colorado weather is like a roll of the dice, we hope for good numbers, but never know for sure what we will get. This makes traveling, well, a gamble sometimes. At [www.cotrip.org](http://www.cotrip.org) you can see what the road conditions are in real time. Plan a trip and get some travel advice and tips as well. With the changes in the Colorado weather, it is nice to have somewhere to look to see what the next few miles will bring.

If you are someone that prefers to have a paper book on hand with numbers, addresses and other pertinent information handy you can print a resource guide from [www.eccslv.org](http://www.eccslv.org). Or perhaps you would like to download the resource guide available there directly to your phone. Either way, it is a bonus to have.

What happens in an emergency? How

To submit news, email:  
[news@alamosanews.com](mailto:news@alamosanews.com)

To submit sports, email:  
[khamrick@alamosanews.com](mailto:khamrick@alamosanews.com)

### Letters policy

Letters are welcome and encouraged. All letters submitted for publication in the Valley Courier must be typewritten, signed by the author, and must include a phone number and address where the author can be reached. Letters must not be libelous. The Courier will not run letters that are negative to specific businesses. We reserve the right to edit for clarity, civility and accuracy. Please limit letters to 500 words or less.

The Courier's editorial board reserves the right to reject a letter for reasons it believes are appropriate. Letters may be subject to editing to fit available space, or exclusion from the Opinion Page. Please, no poetry. Please send signed letters to P.O. Box 1099, Alamosa, CO 81101 or email them to [news@alamosanews.com](mailto:news@alamosanews.com). Letters to staff, not for publication, should be marked “personal.”

## Iowans set the political planets spinning

By DAVID M. SHRIBMAN  
The solar calendar tells us that, with the winter solstice swiftly receding, the days are getting longer. With the Iowa caucuses scheduled for Monday, the political calendar is getting shorter.

Shorter for former Gov. Nikki Haley of South Carolina and Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida to stop the ascendancy of Donald Trump. Shorter for Vivek Ramaswamy to make a move. Shorter for the backers of former Gov. Chris Christie of New Jersey to determine whether they shift their support to Haley in an effort to deny the presidency to Trump.

Big decisions loom, first from the Republicans of Iowa, a famously independent bunch who in this young century alone have given their caucuses to the unlikely Republican trio of former Gov. Mike Huckabee of Arkansas (2008), former Sen. Rick Santorum (2012) and Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas (2016). None came even close to the nomination. All made an impact on the trajectory of the race that continued eight days later in New Hampshire and then turned south and west.

“Iowa takes this responsibility very seriously,” Santorum said in an interview. “They decide late. If Nikki comes in second, then DeSantis is done. But if DeSantis has a strong showing, the whole dynamic could change.”

All the planets of the political solar system revolve, as have all things in American politics since 2015, around Trump.

The removal of one of those planets would change the orbits of all the other planets, perhaps to the benefit of Haley. The sun's seasons — it has them, as Trump does — could produce the political equivalent of a release of a solar stew of nuclei, transforming the political environment.

“It's unusual to have a former president campaigning with high ‘name ID’ and many of the advantages of incumbency,” said Brett Barker, Republican chair in Story County, home to Iowa State University in Ames. “But the caucuses will operate the way they always do. Iowans remain really open to the candidates, vetting them, listening to them at multiple locations. The caucuses usually break late, and people are beginning to solidify their choices. But Iowans are still open to hearing from all the candidates.”

It is not solar flames but prairie fires that Iowa can produce.

The pioneer youngster Etta May Lacey Crowder, recalling her childhood in Palo Alto County in north central Iowa a century and a half ago (population 4,131 at the time), described a prairie fire as a phenomenon that came “with racehorse speed, for the grass was long and a prairie fire always creates a strong wind.” Sen. Gary Hart triggered just such a conflagration with his surprising second-place in 1984, suddenly becoming the principal rival to former Vice President Walter F. Mondale.

The smart people say Trump has the whip hand here — high approval ratings, incomparable visibility, fervent supporters, a field wagon of endorsements. Some years that works; some years it doesn't.

“Endorsements here make candidates happy but don't mean all that much,” said Steve Scheffer, the Republican national committeeman who is president of the Iowa Faith and Freedom Coalition and is unaffiliated with any candidate.

The smart people also say that Trump is approaching the caucuses in a far different — which is to say, in a far more disciplined — fashion than he did eight years ago, when he was edged out by Cruz. At rallies across the breadth of this state, and in small meetings in rural crossroads, his aides have walked supporters through the intricacies of an Iowa caucus: how to have the most impact, how to cultivate patience in the service of political impact.

“You have to spend a whole evening there,” said Denise Brubeck, the deputy director of the influential Church Ambassador Network and president of the Capitol Region Republican Women. “You can't just pop into an Iowa caucus. On the same night, you have to elect our central Republican committee members and our delegates to our district, county and states conventions. There also will be speakers for the candidates before people vote.”

The unknown has real power in the Iowa caucuses.

Like a late burst of spending. That's important in a state where, in pioneer days, a third of Iowa's total land area was purchased by cash — and where, 24 years ago, a flood of money catapulted publisher Steve Forbes into

would you be alerted about possible threats or hazards? That, my friends, is the question of the hour, and I have an answer! Hop on over to [slve911.org](http://slve911.org) to sign up for San Luis Valley alerts. From there, you can also find a link to <https://slvemergency.colorado.gov/> where you will find information about Emergency Management in the San Luis Valley.

There may be overlapping information within these websites, however, I believe having the information you need is the best and first step to preparedness.

If you are reading this and you need help with anything, setting up a SLVE911 account, getting copies of resource guides, or just questions in general about emergency preparedness, please reach out. I am Heather Comstock, San Luis Valley Regional Emergency Preparedness and Response Coordinator, and I am here for you. I can be reached at [hcomstock@alamosacounty.org](mailto:hcomstock@alamosacounty.org) or 719-580-6779.

an Iowa second place.

Like COVID or a raging cold. “It's one thing to get someone signed up,” said former Sen. Tom Harkin, who represented Iowa on Capitol Hill for 40 years. “But on caucus night, sometimes a family gets sick, or the car isn't running. You never know whether people are going to show up.”

Like the weather. The weather always is a factor, as it will be Monday. “In bitterly cold weather,” Dorothy Schwieder wrote in her classic 1996 “Iowa: The Middle Land,” “people stayed in bed as much as possible, simply to stay warm.” That represents a particular threat to Trump, though it is unlikely that any of those who are discouraged by the weather will suffer the fate of one man in the 19th century, whose big toe froze because it poked out of the bedclothes.

Like pure exhaustion. Many agriculture-related innovations — the steel moldboard plow invented by John Deere, for example, or the reapers, mowers and horse-drawn rakes invented by Cyrus McCormick — were eagerly adopted by Iowa farmers. But, Leland Sage wrote in his “A History of Iowa,” published in 1974, “the improved machinery was a contributor to soil exhaustion rather than improved techniques of farming.”

The cause of modern-day exhaustion that has national implications is the pure fatigue caused by months of town hall meetings, casual candidate encounters on Main Street, meet-the-candidate sessions in Pizza Ranch restaurants, blizzards of television ads, and bursts of social-media entreaties.

It all will end in a two-hour explosion of political activity.

Iowans tend to say the soundtrack of their lives comes from the 1957 Broadway show “The Music Man,” written by Meredith Willson, the River City of the production a fictional version of his Mason City, Iowa, hometown.

But in caucus years it is “Brigadoon,” written a decade earlier by Alan Jay Lerner, carrying the threat that once a villager departs, the whole town vanishes. On Monday night, the candidates depart, and the Iowa caucuses vanish.

David M. Shribman is the former executive editor of the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette.

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# Valley Courier

(ISSN 1047-1170)

The Valley Courier is published daily, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday by San Luis Valley Publishing, 2205 State Ave., Alamosa, Colo. 81101. Web site: [www.alamosanews.com](http://www.alamosanews.com). Periodicals Postage: is paid at Alamosa, Colo., Monte Vista, Colo., La Jara, Colo., and Fort Garland, Colo. Phone (719) 589-2553. Postmaster send change of address to P.O. Box 1099.

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## Your FIRST Source for Local News

Editor's Note: The views expressed in individual columns on this page do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Valley Courier.





# Sports

## Thunderbirds hold off Bobcat rally for 42-37 win

By **KEN HAMRICK**  
*Courier sports editor*

**MOSCA** – The Sangre de Cristo High School boys basketball team took off to a big early lead when it hosted Custer County Friday at the Sangre gym only to see the Bobcats rally and actually take a lead in the fourth quarter.

But Sangre withstood the Custer County rally and pulled away for a 42-37 win.

Deagon Rogers gave the Thunderbirds the early lead with a 3-point basket two minutes into the game. Owyn Clark put the Bobcats on the board as he made one of two from the free throw line, and he later knocked down a jumper to tie the score at 3-3.

Kaiden Smit put Sangre back into the lead with a layup, but Grant Rusk scored in the paint to again knot the score at 5-5.

Rogers hit another 3-pointer, followed by a trey by Kolby Shellabarger. Smit scored a layup and added a free throw for a 14-5 advantage.

Shellabarger's layup increased the Thunderbird lead to 16-5 at the end of the first quarter.

The momentum carried into the second quarter as Jaron Mason drained a trey. He then split at the line, and Shellabarger made a jumper for the T-birds' largest lead at 22-5.

Christopher Mullett ended the run and that sparked a Custer County rally. Clark followed with a jump shot, and Kal-El Tunnel buried a three.

Mullett closed out the first-half scoring with a jump shot and the lead had been shaved to 22-14 at the intermission.

Clark opened the second half with a 3-pointer, and Mullett hit a jumper to reduce the lead to 22-19.

Shellabarger ended the run as he split at the line. Clark did the same on the other end, but Rogers drained another three to give the T-birds some breathing room at 26-20.

Levi Carichner made one of two free throws, and Rusk scored a layup to again bring the Bobcats within a 3-point deficit at 26-23. Rogers then buried his fourth trey of the game for a 29-23 advantage.

Rusk's jumper cut the Sangre lead to 29-25 at the end of the third quarter.

Mullett began the fourth quarter by nailing a jump shot, but Shellabarger scored in the paint. Rusk made a 3-pointer, and Mullett's jumper gave Custer County a 32-31 lead with 6:02 left in the game.

That would prove to be the Bobcats' only lead as Smit's layup put the Thunderbirds back into the lead. Shellabarger and Smit both had layups for a 37-32 advantage with 3:03 left in the game.

Clark made two free throws, and after Mason split at the line, Mullett scored to bring the Bobcats within 38-36 with 29 seconds remaining.

The T-birds made four out of six free throws in the final 23 seconds to seal the victory.

Rogers and Shellabarger led Sangre in scoring with 14 points apiece followed by Smit with nine.

Mullett was Custer County's top scorer with 12 points, followed by Clark with 11.

Sangre de Cristo (5-3) will host La Veta on Tuesday.



Courier photo by Ken Hamrick

**Sangre de Cristo's Deagon Rogers (2) drives to the basket against Custer County's Christopher Mullett (3) in Friday's game at the Sangre gym. Rogers scored 14 points including four 3-point baskets to lead the Thunderbirds to a 42-37 win over the Bobcats.**

It will be a girls/boys doubleheader with the first game scheduled to begin at 4:30 p.m.

### Girls game postponed

The Sangre and Custer County girls teams were scheduled to also play on Friday. However, many country roads in the Westcliffe and Silver Cliff area were impassible and several of the Lady Bobcat players were unable to get to the school.

The schools will attempt to reschedule the game later in the season.

The Sangre-Lake City girls game, which was

originally scheduled for Thursday, was also postponed because of impassible roads and it will be played later in the season.

### Sangre de Cristo 42, Custer County 37

Custer County – Clark 3 4-6 11, Stafford 0 0-0 0, Mullett 6 0-0 12, Rusk 4 0-1 9, Carichner 0 1-2 1, Thomas 0 1-2 1, Tunnel 1 0-0 3. Total 14 6-11 37.

3-point goals – Clark 1, Rusk 1, Tunnel 1. Total 3.

Sangre de Cristo – Rogers 4 2-2 14, Shellabarger 5 3-6 14, Mason 1 2-4 5, Clevell 0 0-0 0, Smit 4 1-1 9, Garcia 0 0-0 0, Cantu 0 0-0 0, Artachevarria 0 0-0 0. Total 14 8-13 42.

3-point goals – Rogers 4, Mason 1, Shellabarger 1. Total 6.

Custer County 5 9 11 12-37

Sangre de Cristo 16 6 7 13-42

Fouls – Custer County 18, Sangre de Cristo 14. Fouled out – Stafford, Smit.

## Sports Bulletin

Follow sports editor **Ken Hamrick on X. His handle is @KenHamrick1.**

### SCOREBOARD FRIDAY

#### Prep boys basketball

Alamosa at Ignacio - late  
Centauri at Pagosa Springs - late  
Cotopaxi 48, Centennial 42  
Center at Del Norte - late  
Moffat at Antonito - late  
Sangre de Cristo 42, Custer County 37  
Sanford at Escalante (N.M.) - late  
Sargent at Creede - late

#### Prep girls basketball

Alamosa 53, Ignacio 47  
Cotopaxi 57, Centennial 10  
Custer County at Sangre de Cristo - postponed  
Del Norte 33, Center 25  
Lake City at Sierra Grande - late  
Moffat at Antonito - late  
Pagosa Springs 44, Centauri 39  
Sargent at Creede - late

#### Prep girls wrestling

Alamosa at Palmer Ridge - late

#### College men's

#### basketball

Adams State at Regis - late

#### College women's basketball

Adams State at Regis - late

#### College men's wrestling

Adams State 23, Colorado Mesa 15

### SCHEDULE SATURDAY

#### Prep boys basketball

Las Animas at Center, noon  
Del Norte at Cotopaxi, 1 p.m.  
La Veta at Sargent, 1 p.m.  
Mancos at Sanford, 2 p.m.  
Moffat at Lake City, 2 p.m.  
Sierra Grande at Cherraw, 2 p.m.  
Montezuma-Cortez at Alamosa, 3 p.m.  
Bayfield at Centauri, 4 p.m.  
Creede at Antonito, 5 p.m.  
Trinidad at Centennial, 5 p.m.

#### Prep girls basketball

Las Animas at Center, noon  
Del Norte at Cotopaxi, 1 p.m.  
La Veta at Sargent, 1 p.m.  
Montezuma-Cortez at Alamosa, 1:30 p.m.  
Mancos at Sanford, 2 p.m.  
Moffat at Lake City, 2 p.m.  
Sierra Grande at Cherraw, 2 p.m.

Bayfield at Centauri, 2:30 p.m.

Creede at Antonito, 5 p.m.

Trinidad at Centennial, 5 p.m.

#### Prep girls swimming

Sargent at Durango, TBA

#### Prep boys wrestling

Alamosa, Centauri, Monte Vista at Florence Invitational, 9 a.m.

Antonito, Center, Del Norte, Mountain Valley, Sargent at Custer County Invitational, 9 a.m.

#### Prep girls wrestling

Alamosa, Monte Vista, Mountain Valley at Vista Ridge Invitational, 9 a.m.

#### College men's basketball

Adams State at Colorado-Colorado Springs, 7 p.m.

#### College women's basketball

Adams State at Colorado-Colorado Springs, 5 p.m.

### TUESDAY

#### Prep boys basketball

La Veta at Sangre de Cristo, 4:30 p.m.

#### Prep girls basketball

La Veta at Sangre de Cristo, 4:30 p.m.

#### Prep girls swimming

Pueblo Central at Sargent (at Plachy Hall pool), 5 p.m.

#### Prep boys wrestling

Sargent hosts dual meet tournament, 5 p.m.



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# Lifestyle

## What anyone can do to honor the memory of Martin Luther King Jr.

(METRO) — Martin Luther King, Jr. was one of the most influential and inspirational figures of the twentieth century. Born in Atlanta, Ga., on Jan. 15, 1929, King's life, tragically cut short when he was assassinated in Memphis on April 4, 1968, is now celebrated annually across the United States and beyond on the anniversary of his birth.



Courtesy of METRO

**Martin Luther King, Jr. is honored each year in the United States on the anniversary of his birth. Individuals can honor his enduring legacy in various ways.**

Though Martin Luther King, Jr. lost his life more than half a century ago, there is still much people can do to promote and secure the more equitable and just society he longed for. Honoring his memory and legacy is a good place to start, and the following are some ways to commemorate the life of Martin Luther King, Jr.

- Discuss his legacy with young people. There's much competing for people's attention as the world finds itself nearing the end of the opening quarter of the twenty-first century. That can make it easy to overlook the efforts of influential individuals like King who helped the world become the place it is today. Parents and educators can utilize Martin Luther King, Jr. Day as a catalyst to open a dialogue with their children and students about King's life and legacy. Highlight the injustices King fought against and emphasize his commitment to peace in the face of those challenges.

- Watch a film or films about the civil rights movement. Historians may dispute the timeline, but the civil rights movement in the United States is generally considered to have taken place between 1954 and 1968. Many films, including dramas and documentaries, examine important individuals and moments during this pivotal period in American history. "Freedom Song" (2000), "Ghosts of Mississippi" (1996), "Malcolm X" (1992), and "Selma" (2014) are just a handful of the many films that shed light on the African American experience during the civil rights era.

- Expand your knowledge of the era. While King was front and center during the civil rights era, many other brave men and women risked their lives in an effort to combat segregation and discrimination. Any effort to more deeply understand the civil rights era and the issues that African Americans were fighting to overcome can ensure the struggle that ultimately cost King his life was not for naught. Countless books and documentary films offer invaluable insight into the civil rights era, making them a great resource for individuals who want to honor King and promote his message.

- Listen. The simple act of listening can be a great way to honor the legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr. Sadly, many of the issues King fought against during his lifetime remain unresolved today. Individuals from all walks of life can honor King by listening to those who have taken on his mantle and continued the fight for a more just, equitable society.

## Rio Frio Ice Fest

### January 26TH - 28TH 2024 "Penguin Party"

**SCHEDULE OF EVENTS**

**Friday January 26th**  
 6pm - 7:30pm: Packet Pickup at Milagros Coffee House  
 6pm - 8pm: Cross Country Luminara Ski @ BV Pond

**SATURDAY JANUARY 27TH**  
 8-9:30am: Race Packet Pickup @ Alamosa Senior Center  
 10am: Rio Frio 5k @ Rio Grande River  
 11am (After Race): Race Awards (Race Start/Finish)  
 12pm: Ice Carving Demonstrations @ Main Street  
 12-2pm: Disc Golf (SOGO Ice Bowl) @ Disc Golf Course  
 12-3pm: Shop Local Raffle Extravaganza @ San Juan Ave.  
 1-4pm: Info Tent @ San Juan Ave.  
 4-6pm: Rio Frio Flights  
 6:30pm: Fire and Ice Bonfire

**SUNDAY JANUARY 28TH**  
 12pm: Polar Plunge/Ice Carousel & Pond Skating @ BV Pond  
 9am-4pm: Ice Climbing Trip

Website: [Rioraces.com](http://Rioraces.com)  
 Facebook: @RioRacesAlamosa, #RioFrioIceFest

# COLOR IT MERRY WINNERS!

## coloring contest



PRE TO KINDERGARTEN

1st Easton R. Alamosa      2nd Makai A. Alamosa  
 3rd Grayson B. Alamosa



UPPER ELEMENTARY

1st Jeremiah M. Bill Metz      2nd Olivia R. Alamosa  
 3rd Javonna M. Sanford



HIGH SCHOOL

1st Kayli G. Centauri      2nd Kaylynn M. Monte Vistal  
 3rd Makalan D. Centauri



MIDDLE SCHOOL

1st Alexia R. Monte Vista      2nd Angel Q. Alamosa  
 3rd Kira T. Centauri

# Public Notices

### NOTICE

Notice of Request for Bids to Source and Install a Variable Frequency Drive (VFD). Subdistrict No. 3 of the Rio Grande Water Conservation District is seeking bids to source and install a VFD on a well it owns just north of Antonito, CO. Bidders should itemize bids and should include the costs to: 1) Source a 3 phase VFD that would accommodate a 200 hp motor, plus all required connections, 2) Repair and/or replace all disconnects, as needed, and 3) Install the VFD at the well (as opposed to the power source). Bids should also include a description of the VFD, the equipment to be used, and the bidder's qualifications. The Subdistrict will be responsible for all costs associated with the completed installation of the VFD. The Subdistrict reserves the right to accept the bid it deems most accurate for the scope of work proposed. To schedule a site visit or to answer further questions and/or get more details please contact Angelo Bellah at 719-589-6301 or [angelo@rgwcd.org](mailto:angelo@rgwcd.org). Proposals will be accepted through January 15th, 2024, and may be submitted in person or by mail to 8905 Independence Way, Alamosa, CO, 81101, or by e-mail to [angelo@rgwcd.org](mailto:angelo@rgwcd.org). No. 3725. Published in the Valley Courier on December 19, 20, 22, 23, 26, 27, 29, 30, 2023, January 2, 3, 5, 6, 9, 10, 12, & 13, 2024.

### NOTICE

The Quarterly Meeting of the Board of Managers for Special Improvement District No. 5 of the Rio Grande Water Conservation District is set for January 17, 2024 and will begin at 5:00 p.m. The meeting will be held at the Rio Grande Water Conservation District Building, 8805 Independence Way, Alamosa CO 81101. This meeting will also be held by Zoom teleconference. The public may participate by attending the meeting in person or listen in to the meeting by dialing in to the Zoom/teleconference. To join please call either number: 1-719-359-4580 or 1-669-444-9171, enter the Webinar Id: 813 5541 9962##, and wait for the meeting to begin. There is no charge for this call. This meeting is open to the public. No. 3745. Published in the Valley Courier on January 13, 2024.

### NOTICE

The quarterly meeting of the Board of Directors of the Rio Grande Water Conservation District is January 16, 2024, and will begin at 10:00 a.m. The meeting will be held at the Rio Grande Water Conservation District Building located at 8905 Independence Way in Alamosa, CO, 81101. The meeting will also be held by Zoom teleconference. The public may participate by attending in person or listen in by dialing in to the Zoom/teleconference. To join please call either number: 1-719-359-4580 or 1-346-248-7799, enter the Webinar Id: 858 9159 4602##, and wait for the meeting to begin. There is no charge for this call. This meeting is open to the public. No. 3746. Published in the Valley Courier on January 13, 2024.

### District Court, Alamosa County, Colorado

Court Address: 8955 Independence Way Alamosa, CO 81101 (719) 589-4996 IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION OF: AMANDA LAYMAN PHARES AND JOHNS BARCLAY PHARES FOR THE ADOPTION OF A CHILD Case Number: 2023JA030002 Division: C Attorney for Petitioners: Kathleen M. Glynn, Atty. Reg. #39115 Grob & Ehrlich, LLC 12596 W. Bayaud Ave. Suite 390 Lakewood, CO 80228 Phone Number: 303-679-8266 FAX Number: 303-679-8960 Cell Number: 720-255-6383 [katie@grob Ehrlich.com](mailto:katie@grob Ehrlich.com) SUMMONS AND NOTICE CONCERNING PETITION TO TERMINATE PARENT-CHILD LEGAL RELATIONSHIPS AND PETITION FOR CUSTODIAL ADOPTION TO: ANY AND ALL UNKNOWN BIRTH FATHERS A/K/A JOHN DOE AND REINA ESTEFANIA PADILLA UCETA You are hereby notified that the District Court in this county will hold a hearing on the Petition for Custodial Adoption and Petition to Terminate the Parent-Child Legal Relationships, if any, filed by the Petitioners involving the child, H. E. P., born on February 16, 2011, in the Dominican Republic. The Court will hold the hearing on March 4, 2024 at 1p.m. in Division C of the Alamosa County District Court, State of Colorado. Please note this hearing will be held in person at 8955 Independence Way, Alamosa, CO 81101. Unless within thirty-five (35) days after the publication of this Summons and Notice you file an answer with the Court, or appear before the Court, your parental rights to the Child may likely be terminated. You have the right to waive your right to appear and contest, and your failure to appear and contest, either in person or by a representative, will result in the Court forever terminating your parent-child legal relationships and granting the requested adoption. Submitted by: Kathleen M. Glynn, Attorney for Petitioners No. 3747. Published in the Valley Courier on January 13, 2024.

### 101 - MEMORIALS



**BRAD METZGER**  
2/23/84 - 1/14/04  
Vincennial Still missing you Brother After 20 years All the memories we don't have w/you Still bring us to tears We try to stay positive Knowing we will see you again someday Try to be good & be good people So when its our time we can go your way This past year was rough We lost many more that went w/you The fact that you have more company now Helps to not feel so blue We have to keep going Keeping you in our daily thoughts & prayers While on Earth we will continue to do so Until we are there We miss & love you Brader J And keep your memory alive everyday As long as we are here We will never forget you not a single day Love Mom, Dad, Lis, Grav & Whit

### 221 - HELP WANTED

**V C L C A T HOMELAKE** is seeking permanent full-time CUSTODIAN, STRUCTURAL TRADES I (BUILDING & GROUNDS MAINTENANCE), and CNA (CLIENT CARE AIDE) positions for our 24-hour Skilled Nursing Home as well as TEMPORARY CNA, RN (PRN) & STRUCTURAL TRADES (BUILDING & GROUNDS MAINTENANCE) positions. We offer competitive salary, retirement plan (Public Employees Retirement Account (PERA), 401K/457), health and dental insurance options, life insurance, short term disability, 11 paid holidays/year, paid sick, vacation and bereavement for permanent positions. Must have a current driver license; pass a CBI/FBI background check, and drug screen. Interested candidates in the above positions must complete an official State application. <http://agency.governmentjobs.com/colorado> Contact Nina Esquivel for assistance at 719-852-8215. For questions regarding available open shift(s) for RN, & CNA positions, contact Sandra Qualls, DON, or Christina Gillenwater, ADON at 719-852-5118. (1/23/24)



**In Loving Memory of Alan G. Maestas** on his 25th Angelversary in Heaven. Not a day goes by that we don't think of you & miss you. Our hearts will always have an emptiness until we are reunited with you. Deeply missed, loved, and cherished by your Loving Family Forever.

**ALAMOSA WATER & SANITATION DISTRICT** is seeking a candidate for the position of MANAGER. The position reports directly to the District Board of Directors and is responsible for the administrative duties of the East Alamosa Water & Sanitation District. Candidate must have a strong knowledge of QuickBooks, Word and Excel, with the ability to quickly learn new software programs and applications. This a full-time salaried position with some benefits and a simple 401K. The schedule is Monday thru Friday from 8:00 a.m. thru 5:00 p.m. with some night meetings. Annual salary is \$45,000+ DOE. Resumes can be delivered to the District office at 10 Costilla, Alamosa or emailed to [jamie@eastalamosaws.org](mailto:jamie@eastalamosaws.org), no later than January 20, 2024 at 5:00 pm. A complete description of job duties is available upon request or can be viewed online at [eastalamosaws.org](http://eastalamosaws.org). (1/23/24)  
**NIGHT STAFF NEEDED AT LA PUENTE HOME.** Need Mature, dynamic, compassionate people that are able to deal with all types of clients. Must be able to work weekend and graveyard shifts (9:00 pm - 7:00 am). Must be at least 21+. Bilingual preferred. Looking for the unique applicants who will be a part of an awesome team of individuals helping others. Beginning pay is \$15.00 per hour. Some day shifts may also be available. Join our staff of dedicated professionals and learn the joys and satisfaction of helping others. (2/16/24)  
**EDUCATION COORDINATOR: RIO GRANDE FARM PARK** seeks Education Coordinator to empower the community through regenerative agriculture. Details at [www.sllocalfoods.org/jobs/](http://www.sllocalfoods.org/jobs/). (1/16/24AS)

### 173 - PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

**LICENSED PLUMBER DOES** all types of plumbing & plumbing repairs. Quick service! Call anytime, weekends & evenings: 719-580-0033 or 719-376-2593. (3/15/24-monthlyAS)

### 221 - HELP WANTED

**WE GOT THE HELP WE WERE LOOKING FOR WITH THE HELP OF THE VALLEY COURIER.** Smokin Spuds. (AS)

# 3 Ways To Advertise

## Valley Classifieds 589-2553

### Plan ONE Guaranteed Ad - \$24.00

Ads must be prepaid, private parties only. One item only, no real estate (rentals, sales, apts. etc...), and no professional services. If item does not sell within 14 days, you must call to renew before the expiration date at NO CHARGE up to 20 more days. No refunds or copy changes except price reductions. Up to 20 words, additional charge for extra words.

### Plan TWO Multiple Location - \$5.00

Any regular or guaranteed ad can be picked up into another classified category for the entire length of the running time. Must be same ad, no copy changes. Ads run multiple locations in same issues.

### Plan THREE Free Ad

As a thank you to our readers, any item placed in the Courier with an advertised price of \$50 or less will be published FREE for 1 week (4 issues). Here's how it works:

1. Private parties only.
2. Ad must be 20 words or less.
3. Price must be listed.
4. No yard or garage sales run free.
5. Multiple items in 1 ad may not equal more than \$50.00. (Limit one per customer per week)

## CLIP OUT AND MAIL

**VALLEY COURIER** Please Check One  
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**PLAN 1**  **PLAN 2**  **PLAN 3**   
**SKIP A SPACE BETWEEN WORDS**

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ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
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CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTICE**  
The Alamosa Housing Authority will be accepting bids for an office remodel. Please come by our office for a bid packet. The bid packet will be ready for pick up in our office at 213 Murphy Dr. Alamosa, CO, 81101 on January 12, 2024. No. 3755. Published in the Valley Courier on January 13, 16, 17, & 19, 2024.



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## Valley Courier

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# Classifieds

**221 - HELP WANTED**      **221 - HELP WANTED**      **221 - HELP WANTED**      **221 - HELP WANTED**

**12TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT PROBATION DEPARTMENT** currently has an opening for a full-time **PROBATION OFFICER** with a monthly salary range of \$4463 to \$8065. Minimum requirements are a Bachelor Degree from a four year college or university with major course work preferably in Criminal Justice, Sociology, Psychology, Social Work, or related field. Upon hire and as a condition of continued employment, the employee must complete all Mandatory New Employee Training. Prospective employees are subject to a background investigation prior to hiring. A Colorado Judicial Department Application, located at [www.courts.state.co.us/Careers](http://www.courts.state.co.us/Careers), under Job Title "PROBATION OFFICER", Location "ALAMOSA" must be submitted via the website no later than January 25, 2024. Please include a detailed resume as well. (1/24/24)

**CITY OF ALAMOSA** is seeking a full-time **WATER WASTEWATER TECHNICIAN I**. Hiring pay is \$19.63 to \$20.62 per hour DOQ. Fringe benefits include CO PERA Retirement employer contribution 14.73% & employee contribution is 9.00%, or Empower 401K, 10% match, 11.5 holidays per year, 2 personal days, 80 hours of sick leave and 80 hours of vacation leave per year. Employer paid life insurance, STD, LTD & AD&D, 75% of medical, vision, and dental premiums paid by the employer, Wellness Program, and discounted recreational memberships. This position performs a variety of preventative maintenance and repair of City public infrastructure and property related to water distribution and wastewater collection systems. Work varying shifts and schedules, including on-call, as needed and required by supervisor. Some overtime will be occasionally required and assigned as necessary. This position must work well independently and with teams, while providing excellent, respectful customer service. For a full job description and to apply, visit [cityofalamosa.org](http://cityofalamosa.org) or stop by City Hall at 300 Hunt Ave. The City of Alamosa provides Equal Opportunity Employment for accommodations, please submit them in writing with the application. Application deadline - open until filled. (1/31/24)

**MONTE VISTA SCHOOL DISTRICT** is accepting applications for a **ROUTE DRIVER FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**. Applicants for this position must have a current driver's license (a CDL IS NOT REQUIRED) and pass a drug test. For additional information contact Mark Hotz, Maintenance/Transportation Director, at 719-852-2881. Applications may be submitted through our online employment application <https://www.pirates.monte.k12.co.us/employmentopportunities> by January 25, 2024, or until the position is filled. For questions regarding the application process, contact the Administration Office at 719-852-5996. (1/31/24)

**CITY OF ALAMOSA** is accepting **VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER** applications. As a volunteer member of Alamosa Fire & Rescue, you will have the honor of serving your community in emergency situations. Additionally, all members have the opportunity to meet and work with other highly trained, motivated, and enthusiastic volunteers, and interact with numerous local, state, and national fire and rescue organizations. Please visit our website at <https://cityofalamosa.org/> for more information and to complete an online application. For questions please contact Fire Chief Stone at (719)587-2530. (2/14/24)

**CONEJOS COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH** is seeking a **PART TIME COMMODITIES DISTRIBUTOR**. 28 hrs/week. Distributes commodities, packs food boxes, lifts up to 30 lbs, drives and delivers boxes to clients, maintains client records and inventory, and basic computer skills, starting wage \$14.42/hr Valid driver's license required. Application Form Required available on our web site [conejoscounty.colorado.gov](http://conejoscounty.colorado.gov) or via email upon request at [cricci@co.conejos.co.us](mailto:cricci@co.conejos.co.us). Inquiries call 719-274-4307 or 719-376-6799. EEOE. (1/20/24)

**MONTE VISTA SCHOOL DISTRICT** is accepting applications for full-time **CUSTODIAN**. This is a full-time position with benefits. Preference will be given to applicants with maintenance experience. A full list of desired qualifications can be viewed on the district website. Monte Vista School District offers a competitive salary and an excellent benefit package including employee health, dental, vision, HSA match, and life coverage. The salary for this position will be paid from the current MVSD Maintenance and Custodial Salary Schedule, which can be viewed on the district website - Employment Opportunities page. Placement on the salary schedule will be determined by education and experience at time of hire. Applications may be submitted through our online employment application <https://www.pirates.monte.k12.co.us/employmentopportunities> by January 25, 2024 or until the position is filled. For application questions, contact the District Administration Office at 719-852-5996. (1/31/24)

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**Get Your Service Out there! call the Valley Courier Today! 589-2553**

# Classifieds

### 221 - HELP WANTED

**CITY OF ALAMOSA** is seeking a full-time **COMMUNITY SERVICE OFFICER**. Hiring pay is \$21.59 to \$22.67 per hour DOE. Fringe benefits include CO PERA Retirement employer contribution 14.73% & employee contribution is 9.00%, or Empower 401K, 10% match, 11.5 holidays per year, 2 personal days, 80 hours of sick leave and 80 hours of vacation leave per year. Employer paid life insurance, STD, LTD & AD&D, 75% of medical, vision, and dental premiums paid by the employer, Wellness Program, and discounted recreational memberships. This position performs a variety of professional and technical work necessary to identify, investigate and enforce violations of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Alamosa as specified by Article II, Section 2.37 of the Code of Ordinances authorized by the City Manager. For a full job description and to apply visit [cityofalamosa.org](http://cityofalamosa.org) or stop by City Hall at 3300 Hunt Ave. The City of Alamosa provides Equal Opportunity Employment for accommodations please submit them in writing with the application. Application deadline - open until filled. (1/19/24AS)

**MONTE VISTA SCHOOL DISTRICT** is accepting applications for two **SECONDARY SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS** for the 2024-25 **SCHOOL YEAR**. A complete list of desired qualifications and experience is posted on the district website. The District operates on a 4-day week (Monday - Thursday) and offers a competitive salary and an excellent benefit package including employee health, dental, vision, HSA match, and life coverage. The salary for this position will be paid from the current MVSD Teacher Salary Schedule, which can be viewed on the district website - Employment Opportunities page. Placement on the salary schedule will be determined by education and experience at time of hire. Applications may be submitted through our online employment application <https://www.pirates.monte.k12.co.us/employmentopportunities> by January 25, 2024 or until the positions are filled. For application questions, contact the District Administration Office at 719-852-5996. (1/30/24AS)

**DIRECTOR OF VOLUNTEER COORDINATION:** Local, well-respected non-profit agency seeking individual to recruit, train, and place community volunteers and service groups to assist La Puente's diverse programs. Additional responsibilities: presentations, special events, building community partnerships, management of support staff. Self-starter, values driven, comfort engaging a diversity of people, administrative skills. Join our staff of dedicated professionals and learn the joys and satisfaction of serving others. Salary \$43k-46k DOE, full benefit package. Start date: flexible between February 1-April 1st. Request job description; send resume/cover letter Emily: [hr@lapuente.net](mailto:hr@lapuente.net), 719 589-5909, ext238. [www.lapuente.net](http://www.lapuente.net) (1/24/24AS)

**HEAD VOLLEYBALL COACH** needed at DEL NORTE JR/SR HIGH SCHOOL. We are looking for the following abilities in our coach: Experience as a volleyball coach or assistant coach at the high school or college level is preferred. Must possess: effective coaching techniques and skills; a thorough knowledge of the rules, regulations, and techniques of the sport; and have the ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with school administrators, parents, and students. Please contact Gilbert "Gibbs" Sanchez, Athletic Director, at: [gsanchez@urtigers.co](mailto:gsanchez@urtigers.co), 719-657-4020; or Annie Hardy, Principal, at: [ahardy@urtigers.co](mailto:ahardy@urtigers.co), 719-657-4020. Applications may be found on our website; [www.urtigers.co](http://www.urtigers.co). (1/23/24AS)

### 221 - HELP WANTED

**CENTER FOR RESTORATIVE PROGRAMS** has the following positions open: **INTENSIVE CASE MANAGER III (ICM III)** Responsible for providing specialized intensive case management/wraparound services to assigned caseload, provide support, mentoring, training to CM team around crisis plans, challenges, and effective implementation. At least 5 years experience providing wraparound services, intensive case management, advocating and working with adults with substance use and/or mental health disorders, homeless population, recovery support, and collaboration with community partners and families. Will work closely with community partners such as justice system, law enforcement, behavioral health, medical, housing, human services, schools and workforce development. Must be willing to travel, work some nights and weekends. Spanish speaking is a plus. **INTENSIVE CASE MANAGER (ICM II)** Responsible for providing intensive specialized case management/wraparound services; working closely with community partners such as criminal justice systems, law enforcement, behavioral health, medical, housing, human services, schools and workforce development. Ability to work independently, needs strong organizational/communication skills, ability to establish wraparound plans and help navigate systems. Successful candidates will have at least 3 years relevant experience providing wraparound services, intensive case management, advocating and working with adults with substance use and/or mental health disorders, homeless population, recovery support, and collaboration with community partners and families. Must be willing to travel, work some nights and weekends. Spanish speaking a plus. **FOR BOTH POSITIONS:** See webpage for more details: [restorativeprogram.org](http://restorativeprogram.org) and Email resume & cover letter to [clarissa@restorativeprograms.org](mailto:clarissa@restorativeprograms.org) Positions open until filled. CRP is an EOE. (1/27/24AS)

**TOWN OF CENTER** is accepting applications to fill **TWO POSITIONS** in their **UTILITY DEPARTMENT**. Applicant should possess knowledge and skills in all aspects of high voltage power lines - lineman preferred, gas systems, water distribution, and sanitation. Applicant should accept duties of construction, repair, maintenance, and operation of these systems. Applicant must also have a valid driver's license and be able to operate trucks, backhoe, and other equipment in the performance of these duties. The duties also included are heavy manual labor and utilization of a large variety of hand tools. Some experience is preferred and continued training will be provided. Compensation will depend on experience. Applicant must also have the ability to interact with customers and possess good communication skills. Applicant must also pass a background check and pre-employment drug testing. The candidate will also be subject to random drug testing upon hiring per CDOT regulations. CDL license preferable but not required. The job description and the application is on the Towns website, [townofcenter.colorado.gov](http://townofcenter.colorado.gov). Please submit your application to Town Hall or email to [jhurtado@centercogov](mailto:jhurtado@centercogov) [centercogov](http://centercogov) The deadline is until positions are filled. (1/23/24AS)

**MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE PERSON, or TEAM,** wanted for a 12 unit apartment complex in DEL NORTE, CO. Duties include but not limited to office paperwork, cleaning, minor plumbing, minor electrical, drywall repair, painting, and grounds keeping. Fax or email a letter of interest and/or resume to 712-274-1230 or [nman@landmarkmanagement.com](mailto:nman@landmarkmanagement.com) Equal Employment Opportunity. (1/13/24AS)

### 221 - HELP WANTED

**HEAD HIGH SCHOOL eSPORTS COACH** is needed at DEL NORTE SR. HIGH SCHOOL. We're looking for a leader to develop & maintain our new eSports program promoting sportsmanship and teamwork. Our eSports coach will assist each student in gaining skills and confidence while learning game rules and strategies; as well as CHSAA eSports rules. The Coach must be professional, organized, dedicated, and well versed in gaming. The Coach is responsible for conducting practice times after academic classes and supervising the team at school activities. The Coach will also train, test, and receive our small-vehicle certification for driving school vehicles to gaming tournaments. CHSAA eSports competition games include Super Smash Bros. Ultimate, Mario Kart 8, Rocket League, Splatoon 3 on Nintendo Switch; Madden NFL & NBA 2K on PS4. Please complete our coach application found on our website, [urtigers.co](http://urtigers.co) please contact Gibbs Sanchez, Athletic Director, at: [gsanchez@urtigers.co](mailto:gsanchez@urtigers.co) 719-657-4020; or Annie Hardy, Principal, at: [ahardy@urtigers.co](mailto:ahardy@urtigers.co), 719-657-4020 for further information. (1/23/24AS)

**HEAD FOOTBALL COACH** needed at DEL NORTE JR/SR HIGH SCHOOL. The coach's responsibilities include: leading training sessions, providing motivation and advice during gameplay, developing game plans, and attending tryouts, as well as scheduling team meetings. The coach should be able to identify the individual abilities of each player and provide one-to-one coaching wherever required. The coach should demonstrate great love for the game of football, and be able to foster good sportsmanship in your players. Outstanding candidates are highly motivated, committed, disciplined, and patient. We are looking for the following abilities in our Coach: experience as a football coach or assistant coach at the high school or college level is preferred. Must possess: effective coaching techniques and skills; a thorough knowledge of the rules, regulations, strategies, and techniques of the sport; and have the ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with school administrators, parents, and students. Please contact Gilbert "Gibbs" Sanchez, Athletic Director, at: [gsanchez@urtigers.co](mailto:gsanchez@urtigers.co), 719-657-4020; or Annie Hardy, Principal, at: [ahardy@urtigers.co](mailto:ahardy@urtigers.co), 719-657-4020. (1/16/24AS)

**DELOSS INDUSTRIES IN ALAMOSA** is Hiring Full-Time, 40 Hours Per Week, Wages 24 to 40 Dollars Per Hour. Looking to hire: **EQUIPMENT MECHANICS, MECHANICS HELPER, WELDERS and MACHINIST**. The mechanics helper will be paired with a mechanic in the shop. Primary equipment serviced and maintained are forklifts and materials handling related equipment. This is a full-time position, 40 hours per week. Paid vacation and sick leave. Health insurance may be provided. Pay rate is 24 to 40 dollars per hour, depending on experience. Tools are provided. Must have clean driving record, CDL is a plus. Must pass drug test and background check. Must have stable work history. This is a career opportunity with a stable company that has been in the Valley for 36 years. Shop is located in Alamosa, CO. Call 719-589-3213 for interview or send resume to [DelossJohn@aol.com](mailto:DelossJohn@aol.com). (1/13/23AS)

**307 - APPLIANCES**

**PAT SOLD HER ELECTRIC STOVE IN JUST 3 DAYS THROUGH THE VALLEY COURIER'S CLASSIFIED ADS.** (AS)

**324 - SEED & FEED**

**NATIVE GRASS HAY** for sale. Small bales, HORSE HAY QUALITY. Contact Ed, if interested leave a message (719) 852-3069. (2/14/24AS)

**HORSE & COWHAY:** GRASS, GRASS/ALFALFA, ALFALFA. 3x3 bales, various quality and pricing. 719-850-8917. (2/14/24AS-monthly)

### 221 - HELP WANTED

**307 - APPLIANCES**

**PAT SOLD HER ELECTRIC STOVE IN JUST 3 DAYS THROUGH THE VALLEY COURIER'S CLASSIFIED ADS.** (AS)

### 307 - APPLIANCES

**324 - SEED & FEED**

**NATIVE GRASS HAY** for sale. Small bales, HORSE HAY QUALITY. Contact Ed, if interested leave a message (719) 852-3069. (2/14/24AS)

### 324 - SEED & FEED

**341 - GARAGE SALE**

**INSIDE GARAGE SALE**, afternoons only, starting at 1:00 p.m. Call for appointment 719-298-6110. (1/24/24)

### 341 - GARAGE SALE

**345 - WOOD**

**THANK YOU, VALLEY COURIER. I SOLD MY WOOD SPLITTER!** Frank.

### 345 - WOOD

**353 - FARM & LIVESTOCK**

**I SOLD MY HORSE IN 2 DAYS TO A GOOD HOME. THANKS VALLEY COURIER!** Rick. (AS)

### 353 - FARM & LIVESTOCK

**360 - MISC. FOR SALE**

**SOLD MY WHEELCHAIR IN 2 DAYS. WONDERFUL HEARTWARMING EXPERIENCE. A WIN-WIN FOR BOTH OF US!** Yolanda. (AS)

### 360 - MISC. FOR SALE

**387 - WANTED TO BUY**

**TOYOTA TRUCKS ONLY:** 4x4 from 80's to early 90's, running or not, wrecked ok. 719-580-8101 call or text. (2/10/24)

### 387 - WANTED TO BUY

**401 - BUSINESS PROPERTIES**

**Century Property Management & Sales, LLC**  
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### 401 - BUSINESS PROPERTIES

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### 410 - AUCTIONS

**410 - AUCTIONS**

**AUCTION. STORAGE UNITS;** 1824 State Ave #136, ALAMOSA, CO 81101. January 13, 2024, at 10:00 AM. (1/13/2024AS)

### 410 - AUCTIONS

**410 - AUCTIONS**

**AUCTION. STORAGE UNITS;** 2049 Mullins Ave, ALAMOSA, CO 81101. January 20, 2024. #4 at 10:00 AM, #62 at 11:00 AM, #181 at 12:00 PM. (1/20/2024AS)

**AUCTION. STORAGE UNITS;** 131 Price #22, ALAMOSA, CO 81101. January 13, 2024 at 1:00 PM. (1/13/2024AS)

### 420 - LOTS & ACREAGES

**420 - LOTS & ACREAGES**

**MULTIPLE 35+ ACRE TRACTS** For Sale. The Rio Grande Water Conservation District is accepting sealed bids for tracts of land LOCATED AT 14355 G.S, ANTONITO. The minimum acceptable bid is \$2,000/acre. Bids must be received by U.S. mail or hand delivered to the RGWCD's office at 8805 Independence Way, Alamosa, CO 81101. Detailed information regarding the tracts is available for review by appointment at the RGWCD office or by visiting the District's website at [www.rgwcd.org/subdistrict-no-3/publicbid](http://www.rgwcd.org/subdistrict-no-3/publicbid). The land may be inspected with District personnel by appointment only. Appointments can be made by calling the District office at (719) 589-6301 or by emailing [angelo@rgwcd.org](mailto:angelo@rgwcd.org). Bids must be received no later than 4:00 p.m. on January 31st, 2024. Late bids will not be accepted. The District reserves the right to reject any bid in its sole discretion. (1/27/2024AS)

### 426 - MOBILE HOMES FOR SALE

**426 - MOBILE HOMES FOR SALE**

**FOR SALE IN ALAMOSA County:** 1980 GLENWOOD TRAILER HOUSE \$6,700. Must be moved. 402-269-7172. (E-TFN-AS)

### 525 - GUNS

**525 - GUNS**

**ZACH'S EUROPEAN MOUNTS.** Professional work, low prices. 719-580-0398. (TFN-AS)

### 601 - APARTMENTS FOR RENT

**601 - APARTMENTS FOR RENT**

**TWO BEDROOM DUPLEX.** Double garage. Rent \$1,000/mo (first & last) \$500 Deposit. REFERENCES. No pets, No smoking. No water beds. 2630 Clark, ALAMOSA. Call 719-588-3431. (1/16/24AS)

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**Cielo Vista Apartments**  
166 S. Wills Center, Colo  
**754-3664**

TTY  
1-800-659-2656  
This institution is an equal opportunity provider & employer

Accepting Applications for waiting list for 2 & 3 bedroom family units

**Valley Grande Apts.**  
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**852-4302**

TTY  
1-800-659-2656  
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Accepting Applications for waiting list for 2 & 3 bedroom apartments. Family units available

**West View Villas**  
510 Dunham Monte Vista, Colo  
**852-3949**

TTY  
1-800-659-2656  
This institution is an equal opportunity provider & employer

### 611 - HOMES FOR RENT

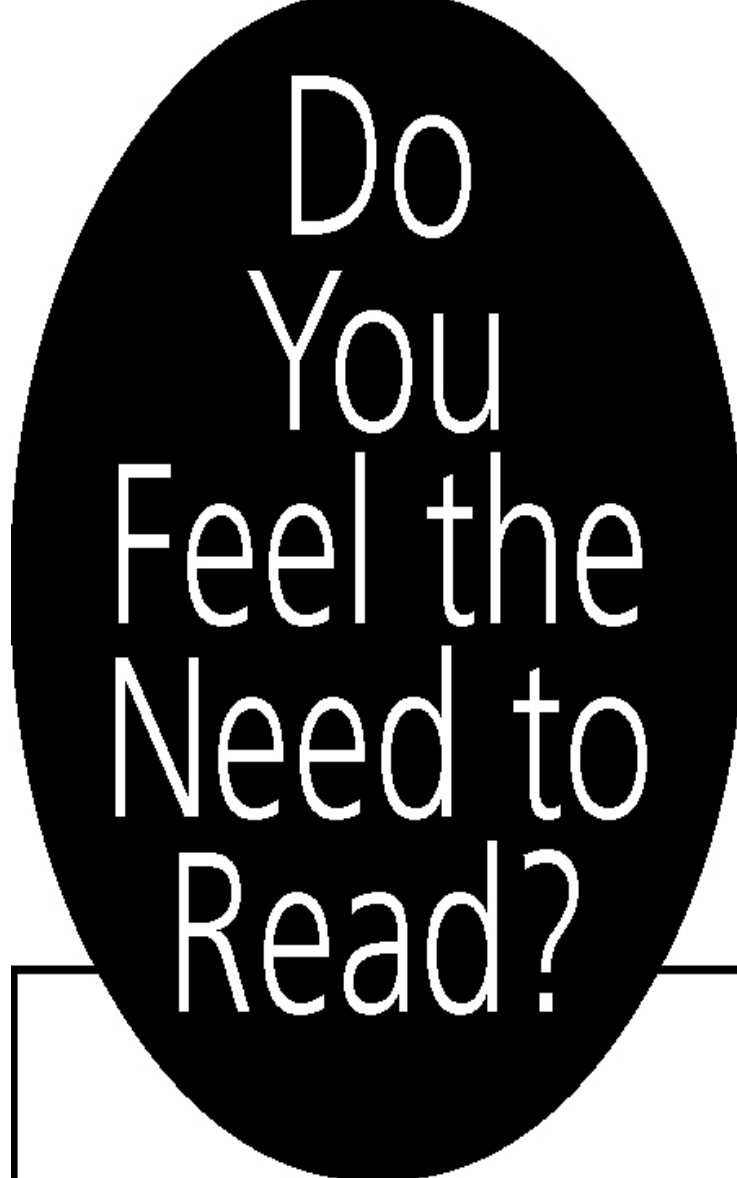
**611 - HOMES FOR RENT**

**KUDDOS TO THE VALLEY COURIER FOR RENTING OUR HOUSE IN 2 DAYS!** Thanks, Gerry. (AS)

### 701 - AUTOS FOR SALE

**701 - AUTOS FOR SALE**

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# Comics

## CROSSWORD PUZZLE

### NEA Crossword Puzzle

- ACROSS**
- 1 — -de-sac
  - 4 Final
  - 8 Hem and —
  - 11 Eager
  - 13 Humdinger
  - 14 "My lips — sealed"
  - 15 Partly
  - 16 One opposed
  - 17 Close a certain way
  - 18 Pad
  - 20 Distinquished
  - 22 Drive mad
  - 25 Furthers
  - 28 Tease
  - 31 Filament
  - 32 Wound's result
  - 33 Do sums
  - 35 Actor — Wallach
  - 36 Not so bad or good
  - 37 In the center of
  - 38 — de corps
  - 40 Banded stone
  - 41 North Carolina's capital

- 43 Inert gas**
- 46 Scarcity**
- 50 Author — Grafton**
- 51 Ship part**
- 54 Marsh bird**
- 55 Pewter ingredient**
- 56 Old instrument**
- 57 — de force**
- 58 Acct. earnings**
- 59 "The Seven — Itch"**
- 60 Lawyer's charge**
- DOWN**
- 1 Group of actors
  - 2 Eyeball part
  - 3 Branch
  - 4 Reluctant
  - 5 — Arbor, Michigan
  - 6 Term in tennis
  - 7 Set off
  - 8 "Lavender —"
  - 9 Prima donna's song

**Answer to Previous Puzzle**

G	A	V	I	V	R	I	M	E
O	R	I	D	E	A	C	E	D
D	O	N	K	E	E	R	O	A
S	K	E	W	A	D	D	E	N
E	R	I	E	S	T	A	R	
A	T	M	S	T	E	A	M	
A	W	L	S	C	A	T	E	P
M	I	L	S	C	A	T	E	P
A	N	Y	A	P	E	E	G	O
I	M	P	E	T	I	T	P	
R	E	I	N	R	O	A	R	
A	M	E	N	E	L	M	O	
S	O	D	A	D	O	I	T	

- 10 Cried**
- 12 Water down**
- 19 Print measures**
- 21 "The Hunt for — October"**
- 23 Stir up**
- 24 At hand**
- 25 Solemn fear**
- 26 Liver secretion**
- 27 Discord goddess**
- 29 Dalai —**
- 30 Use a blue pencil**
- 32 Spinnaker**
- 34 JFK's predecessor**
- 36 "To tell the truth ..."**
- 37 Shocked and upset**
- 39 — rata**
- 40 Period**
- 42 Slacker**
- 43 Wine city in Italy**
- 44 Go to rack and —**
- 45 Lady's escort**
- 47 Housetop**
- 48 "— Lies"**
- 49 Rabbit**
- 52 Storm's center**
- 53 Stat. in baseball**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
11			12					14		
15				16				17		
18				19			20	21		
			22			23	24			
25	26	27				28		29	30	
31					32			33	34	
35					36			37		
	38		39				40			
			41				42			
43	44	45				46		47	48	49
50				51	52	53		54		
55					56			57		
58					59				60	

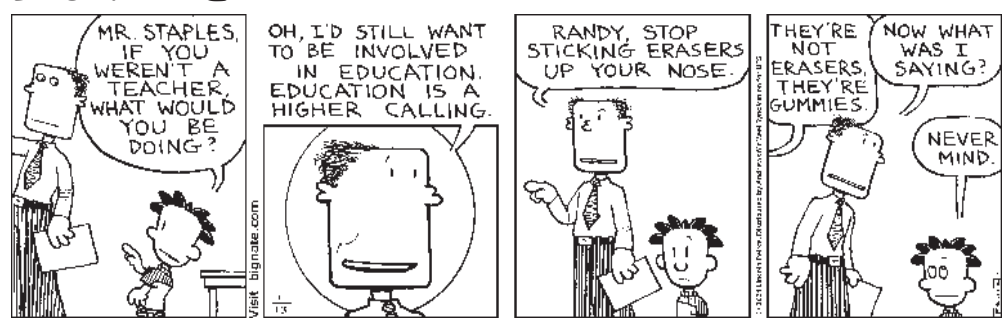
## ALLEY OOP



## ARLO & JANIS



## BIG NATE



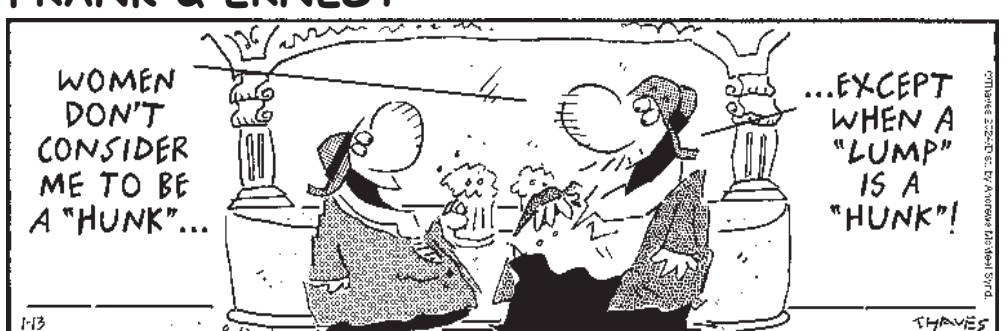
## THE BORN LOSER



## FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE



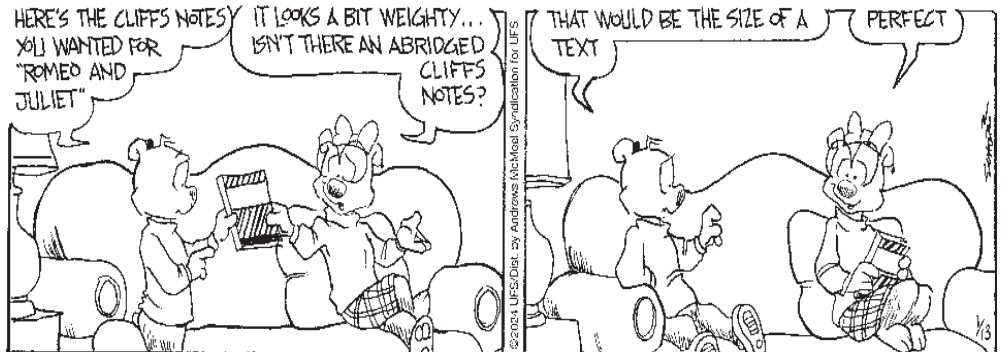
## FRANK & ERNEST



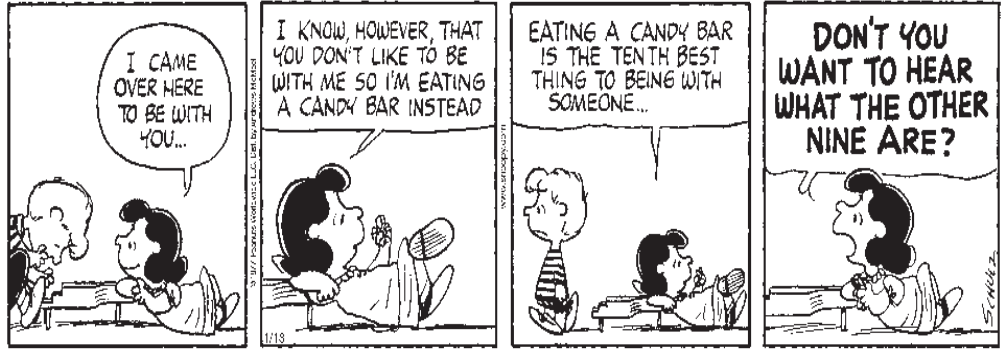
## GARFIELD



## THE GRIZZWELLS



## PEANUTS



## SUDOKU

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

9				4	7	6	3
			5	3			
	3			7			8
7	4		8				3
	5				2		
1			7		5	8	
8			3			1	
			7	6			
7	3	6	5				4

**PREVIOUS SOLUTION**

8	9	1	2	7	5	4	3	6
2	7	5	3	6	4	1	9	8
3	4	6	9	1	8	5	7	2
9	8	3	1	2	6	7	5	4
5	2	7	8	4	3	6	1	9
1	6	4	7	5	9	2	8	3
7	5	9	6	3	2	8	4	1
4	3	2	5	8	1	9	6	7
6	1	8	4	9	7	3	2	5

**HOW TO PLAY:**  
Each row, column and set of 3-by-3 boxes must contain the numbers 1 through 9 without repetition.

## HERMAN



# Relatives made promises that they've never kept

DEAR ABBY: Before we had children, my stepmother dropped many "hints" encouraging us to have kids, and promised multiple times that she would retire when we did to help out with them. We now have a 6-year-old and an 18-month-old. When we ask my father and stepmother to babysit or watch the kids, they say, "We'd love to, but now is not convenient."

They live seven minutes away, but have never offered to babysit. They watch the kids maybe once out of 20 times that we ask. They do drop by to see us as a family when it's convenient for them, and my children adore them. Whenever they drop by, we stop whatever we're doing to spend time with them because those relationships are important for us and our children.

Culturally, it's the norm for grandparents to watch children. My grandparents watched us often as children, especially after my mother died. I never expected my stepmother to actually quit her job to watch our kids, but I really did anticipate more support than we receive. I don't know how to express that we need more support than they are offering.

NEEDY MOM IN NEW ZEALAND

DEAR MOM: You were fortunate to have a grand-

mother who had the time AND THE DESIRE to look after you, but not all families are the same. If you are a regular "Dear Abby" reader, you likely know I often receive mail from folks complaining that they don't have enough access to their grandchildren.

I'm sorry your stepmother raised your expectations and hasn't followed through. If you think she and your dad will change their ways, explain to them that you need their help. However, if it isn't forthcoming, accept that you will have to hire a babysitter on those occasions.

DEAR ABBY: My husband, "Dan," died 4 1/2 years ago. We were together for 17 years. I have stayed in touch with his mother and one of his sisters. His family is politically the opposite of my daughter and me, and very religious (we are not). He had twin adult children I also stay in contact with. They are the only family I have in the area. We also have a 20-year-old daughter together.

Am I obligated to stay in contact with his family because of our daughter? They are kind and courteous when I call, but no longer invite us to visit. My mother-in-law has also stopped sending me and my daughter gifts on special occasions.



**ABIGAIL VAN BUREN**

How healthy is it to stay in contact, and for how long? I feel bad because my daughter doesn't really have any family anymore. How should I continue with his side of the family? -- A BIT LOST IN WASHINGTON

DEAR LOST: I see nothing to be gained by slamming any doors. Relationships evolve, and the relationship you have with your late husband's family seems to be evolving away. Keep things as cordial as you can, if only for your daughter's sake, by sending cards on appropriate occasions. Do not burn any bridges. If your daughter wants to reach out to these family members, she is old enough to do it without your help.

# Lifestyle

## Colorado avalanche forecasters sound red alert as new snow piles deep for MLK weekend

By JASON BLEVINS  
Colorado Sun

Avalanche forecasters are sounding the alarm, warning backcountry travelers that after a couple weeks of low danger and dry weather that new snow piling deep atop weak layers will spike the risk of large slides this holiday weekend.

"There are going to be dangerous areas in almost all mountain ranges throughout Colorado this week," Brian Lazar, the deputy director of the Colorado Avalanche Information Center, said Thursday. "People have been really jonesing for the return of snowfall and the return of winter and now we've got the most dangerous avalanche conditions we've probably seen all season coinciding with some people having some time off, and that makes us really nervous. There's not going to be many places in the state that are going to be safe this weekend."

The storms started Wednesday with a daily flow of storms through Monday expected to leave several feet of new snow across the state's mountains. Forecasts show high winds with snow on Friday and Saturday, compounding the avalanche hazards as blown snow builds dangerous slabs.

In the past 12 seasons in Colorado, four of the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday weekends have seen fatal avalanche accidents. After an unusually dry December and early January, there have been no fatalities so far this season.

Colorado Avalanche Information Center forecasters this week are on a mission to keep that number at zero. It's a

daunting task trying to reach backcountry skiers who have enjoyed several weeks of low danger and been able to ski and snowmobile just about anywhere without exposing themselves to excessive avalanche threats.

"Making the shift for people can sometimes be challenging," said Ethan Greene, the director of the avalanche center. "What we really want people to do is check the forecast and look at what conditions are for the day wherever they are planning to recreate and make sure they make a plan that is appropriate for that forecast. So that stuff you were eyeing last week, probably is not going to be on the menu anymore."

Greene and Lazar rarely tell people not to go backcountry skiing. But when danger climbs to "considerable" or "high" — which are ranked as No. 3 and No. 4 on the universal avalanche danger scale of 1 to 5 — they urge travelers to avoid, not engage, avalanche terrain. Recognizing that terrain can be a challenge for some backcountry travelers.

New tools deployed by the Colorado Avalanche Information Center offer backcountry skiers more precise forecasts for nearly a dozen different zones across the state.

"We are teaching people to plan ahead and so we want to give them the information so they can do that effectively," Greene said.

On Wednesday night, the center issued an avalanche advisory warning of pending increases in the avalanche danger scale and Thursday morning, most zones were ranked with a

"considerable" danger. The western edge of the Elk Mountains west of Crested Butte collected a foot of snow overnight Wednesday and the danger climbed to "high," which is illustrated with bright red on the center's map. With feet of snow predicted to blanket the high country this weekend, the increase in avalanche danger in the Elks "is an early indication of what is going to happen in a lot of other places," Lazar said.

"A lot of other places are going to follow suit. We think we are going to see the areas go to high avalanche danger and red, expanding into the weekend," Lazar said. "Everywhere is going to be dangerous because everywhere is going to get snowfall and it's going to fall on those weak layers we've been talking about for weeks, which developed during the drought spell."

It's easy to direct folks to ski resorts during this kind of spike in avalanche danger. But resorts do have avalanches. On Wednesday morning as ski patrolers at California's Palisades Tahoe ski area opened the renowned GS terrain beneath the KT-22 chairlift for the first time this season, a massive avalanche caught four skiers, burying and killing a 66-year-old local man.

"It's not that it can't happen," Lazar said. "The resorts are orders of magnitude safer because there are people working actively and working really hard to reduce the risk but you can never get it to zero."

"There's always risk when you are in the mountains," Greene said.

## Xcel Energy provides tips for conserving energy as wholesale natural gas prices increase

By XCEL ENERGY  
DENVER

Xcel Energy would like its customers to be aware of an increase in wholesale natural gas prices that may last a few days, as cold weather across a majority of the U.S. affects production of and demand for natural gas, which Xcel Energy purchases to deliver to customers and to generate electricity.

With the increased cost of natural gas, customers may want to consider conserving natural gas for the next few days, because the wholesale cost is passed on directly to customers. For additional context, while wholesale natural gas prices have increased as a result of supply and demand in this cold weather, at this time, the increase in price is significantly smaller than the increase experienced three years ago during Winter Storm Uri.

The biggest step customers can take to conserve is by lowering their thermostats a few degrees if they have a natural gas furnace. Savings tips include:

- Lower your thermostat — During winter months, set the thermostat between 65-70 degrees while you're home,

- and 58 degrees when you're away. A programmable thermostat automatically adjusts the temperature based on your routine and could help you save on heating costs.

- Let the sunlight in and keep the cold out — Open blinds to take advantage of the sun's warmth during the day but close them at night to insulate against the cold air outside.

- Make sure exterior doors are fully closed — A major source of a home's heat loss is from exterior doors that are left cracked open or not latched.

- Use fans to your advantage — During colder months, run ceiling fans clockwise, so the warm air near the ceiling is forced down.

- Keep your oven's heat where it belongs — Use your oven light or timer to avoid opening it often while you cook; each time the door is opened even for just a few seconds, the temperature drops 25 degrees.

- Lower your water heater's temperature or insulate it — The proper temperature for a water heater is 120 degrees Fahrenheit. By lowering it 10 degrees, you can save 3-5% on your water heating costs; you can

also insulate it to maximize efficiency.

- Keep filters clean — Dirty furnace filters reduce airflow, requiring your furnace to work harder and use more energy. Change the filter once a month during the winter to reduce your heating costs by 5-15%.

- Don't let the heat escape — Affordable window sealing kits can be found in most local home improvement stores and can help you save. Have your home evaluated for leaky ducts, drafts around doors and windows, fireplace dampers and other places where air might escape.

- Improve insulation — Improving the insulation of walls, crawl spaces, floors and heating ducts is one of the fastest and most cost-effective ways to reduce energy costs, saving you up to 10% on your monthly energy bill.

More information on ways to save energy can be found on the Energy Saving Tips page at [xcelenergy.com](http://xcelenergy.com). While natural gas price increases primarily affect the bills of natural gas customers, the company also purchases natural gas to generate electricity, so electric customers may see some savings by conserving as well.



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