

## Center school students, staff support beloved staff member



Photo by Marie Mccolm

Center Consolidated School District staff and students walk on Monday, Oct. 23, to the football field to make a heartfelt video for beloved staff member Steve Martinez, who was diagnosed with cancer and is in hospice care.

By MARIE MCCOLM

CENTER — Center Consolidated School District staff and students gathered Monday, Oct. 23, on the football field to make a heartfelt video for beloved staff member Steve Martinez, who was diagnosed with cancer and is in hospice care.

Students and teachers carried blue and white balloons, led by the Center Vikings mascot onto the field for the video.

Some students held signs up with well wishes for Martinez as a camera drone flew overhead. Others made human letters together on the field

while the drone took pictures.

In September, a benefit dinner was also held for Martinez, to help with his medical expenses. Katrina Ruggles organized the dinner that raised \$3,299 for Martinez.

“Steve handles all our discipline support for teachers and students,” Ruggles said. “He is a really kind, helpful, leader and mentor for our students and staff. He is an overall beloved member of our school community. He has had cancer for a while now. His cancer had gotten better but then came back. He is

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### Shorts

#### Bobolicious grand opening Nov. 1

MONTE VISTA — A grand opening and ribbon cutting for Bobolicious Gourmet Coffee will be held from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 1, with the ribbon cutting at 10 a.m. at 139 Adams St., Monte Vista. Free coffee and baked goods will be available. Special coffees and coffee specials — 20-50 percent off — will be available for purchase.

There will be “Coffee and Conversation.” The event is being organized by the Monte Vista Chamber of Commerce.

#### Alamosa County online tax lien sale Nov. 6-8

ALAMOSA — The Alamosa County Treasurer’s Office is hosting the annual online tax lien sale on Nov. 6-8. The APY for investors this year is 15%.

Registration is open until 4 p.m. on Oct. 31. More information is available online at [alamosacounty.org](http://alamosacounty.org), departments, treasurer, tax lien sale, or by calling 719-589-3626.

#### Alamosa Clerk and Recorder’s Office election hours

ALAMOSA — The Alamosa County Clerk and Recorder’s Office will be closed for regular business on Tuesday, Nov. 7, for the Coordinated Mail Ballot Election. The office will be open for election purposes only and will reopen on Wednesday, Nov. 8, for regular business.

All registered electors are encouraged to vote their Ballots they receive in the mail. The ballots may be mailed to the County Clerk’s Office or hand delivered to the drop box at 8999 Independence Way by 7 p.m. on Nov. 7. Ballots received after that time will not be counted.

For more information, call the Alamosa County Clerk and Recorder’s Office at 719-589-6681.



Courtesy photos

Center Elementary second-graders visited the Center Fire Department on Wednesday, Oct. 18, for Fire Safety Month.

## Center second-graders learn about fire safety from firefighters

By MARIE MCCOLM

CENTER — Center Elementary second-graders visited the Center Fire Department on Wednesday, Oct. 18, for Fire Safety Month.

Elementary teacher Christine Mikeljack said it is something the second-graders have been doing for the past three years.

“The firefighters show the kiddos various things,” Mikeljack

said. “They take the kids through the stop, drop, and roll technique. The firefighters also talk to the kids about what to do, in the instance a firefighter would need to come into their house. They let the kids know that they should run toward the firefighter and not away from them. They allow the students to also try on the gear.

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A Center Elementary second-grader tries on firefighter gear during a visit to the Center Fire Department on Oct. 18.

## Neighbors help neighbors at Firewood Fiesta

By MARIE MCCOLM

CRESTONE — Approximately 20 people participated in the fourth Annual Crestone Firewood Fiesta on Sunday, Oct. 22. The event was held at 19850 Camino Del Oro Rd. in Crestone.

The 20 volunteers chopped the wood and piled it for the Community Firewood Program.

Business Advisor Donovan Spitzman spoke about the Fiesta and the program, the beginning of the program, and how it benefits the community.

“The Community Firewood Program is a product of the Crestone Energy Exchange,” Spitzman said. “The Crestone Energy Exchange was created as an extension of the Crestone Energy Fair. The community Firewood Program basically ensures that nobody

in the community will be without firewood for the winter.”

It grew and morphed from the Neighbors Helping Neighbors program, according to Spitzman.

“We heard they were buying retail wood for their emergency program for like \$5,000 to \$6,000 every year. Neighbors Helping Neighbors is a grant and community funded program. Which means the community is spending \$5,000 every year to buy their neighbor’s wood. I have a business

*Please see FIESTA on Page 2A*

Approximately 20 people participated in the fourth Annual Crestone Firewood Fiesta on Sunday, Oct. 22.

Photo by Marie Mccolm



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## Rep. Martinez seeking re-election in 2024

By PRISCILLA WAGGONER

DENVER — In a press release sent to the Valley Courier, Representative Matt Martinez (D) has announced his intention to run for re-election in November 2024. He represents District 62, which includes all six counties in the San Luis Valley as well as Huerfano and Pueblo.

Martinez is a 7th generation Colorado native, a Veteran of the United States Marine Corps where he served during Operation Iraqi Freedom and an alumnus of Adams State University.

Martinez was first elected to represent Colorado House District 62 in 2022. He was appointed as the Vice Chair of the House Education Committee and sits on the House Agriculture, Water and Natural Resources Committee and the Joint Select Committee on Rising Rate Increases.

*Please see MARTINEZ on Page 6A*

# Why the Forest Service?

Until recently, if you'd asked me what a forest ranger looked like, I'd have told you it's the guy with the funny hat, collecting campground fees and telling you what you can't do in the forest. My only interaction with Forest Service personnel was when I went in to buy my Christmas tree permit once a year, and even then, I'd done that online the past couple of years.

Then I started working here at the Divide Ranger Station in Del Norte and discovered there are a lot of people behind that front desk, most of whom are not Rangers. They supervise the range lands, the resources, the roads, and the recreational facilities. They watch over the wildfire situations and the plants and animals. And yes, there are a few who collect campground fees and others who tell you what you can't do in the forest, although no one wears the funny hat anymore besides Smokey.

What's the point? Why do we need all that? The answer for me is best illustrated in a story shared by former Rio Grande National Forest Supervisor Dan Dallas. Years ago, he had been part of an inter-agency project to provide aid to Ethiopia. In the 80s, a political decision there had required large groups of citizens to gather in one place. When they did, they took their livestock with them, and while they were gathered so densely, the livestock grazed the land, severely depleting the organic matter and rendering the land infertile. Decades later, the land had still not recovered, and the livestock and people were starving. A veterinary effort had

been made to help improve livestock health, but until the land was healed, nothing living there could thrive.

This is Who We Are, a Forest Service publication states: "As a Federal agency in service to the American people, the Forest Service cares for shared natural resources in ways that promote lasting economic, ecological, and social vitality." In other words, the Forest Service strives to manage the resources in the National Forests and Grasslands to serve a wide variety of uses and ensure that those resources are available for a long time to come. Sustainability is the key here. And yes, sometimes ensuring sustainability requires actions that someone disagrees with. In fact, every decision and action taken or untaken by the Forest Service has the potential to be disagreed with by someone. OHV drivers want more trails and terrain while wildlife enthusiasts want less noise, and ranchers just want their cows to graze in peace. And the Forest Service is the agency tasked with finding the solution that best fits everyone's needs.

So, what is the solution that best fits everyone's needs? I don't know, but I do know if we want our National Forests to be around for our grandkids to enjoy, we're all going to have to be a part of the solution.

Respect the land and the creatures that live there, it's their home, we're just visiting. Keep vehicles on designated roads and trails to avoid damaging fragile plants. Believe it or not, those little meadow grasses play an important role in the forest ecosystem. And of

## Land Water and People

By Kelly Defaye

course, it's safer. People get stuck when they take jeeps down motorcycle trails. Practice Leave No Trace principles. We've all come across the unpleasant sight of broken bottles and rusted cans at campsites, or worse, used toilet paper. Don't be that guy.

Respect other uses and the people around you. If you come to a gate across the road that says, "Please Close the Gate", please close the gate. The rancher whose cows stay where they are supposed to will be grateful. And speaking of cows, they're actually good for the land, so stepping over a few cowpies on the trail is a small price to pay.

The situation in Ethiopia was a good example of the damage caused by extreme use: too many cows, too many OHVs, too many woodcutters or hunters or whatever it may be will cause deterioration that may be hard to reverse. So, let's all take ownership of our public lands, and protect them so that they may continue to provide so many services to us and remain the beautiful, abundant places they are now.

*Kelly Defaye is the San Juan Mountains Association's Visitor Information Coordinator for the Rio Grande National Forest. Having grown up in the San Luis Valley, she has always considered the surrounding mountains her happy place.*

# FIESTA

Continued from Page 1A

background so when I looked at this, I was like woah, we have a legit need in the community and firewood should not be a \$5,000 line item on your budget."

Spitzman said he sat down with a spreadsheet, and started rounding some numbers and made some phone calls, looking at it as if it were a business.

"I looked at it as if we bought logs, and started our own little business, what we would have to do to make it work," Spitzman said. "I mean it just all worked out. Neighbors Helping Neighbors bought in, with an initial investment of what they used as their normal contribution of \$5,000. They gave that to us. The county gave us another \$5,000 for equipment. Last year, I was able to secure a federal grant for wood banks that bought us a trailer, and another load of wood as a backup for our cash flow."

Spitzman said that at this point, they did not have to ask Neighbors Helping Neighbors for any more money, except that initial capital investment of \$5,000 almost four years ago.

Spitzman said this was possible because of the help of the volunteers year in and year out.

"We have about 20 people here today that are really helping out," Spitzman said. "You can see them cutting up

all this wood just to help out. This is what you call community, the work, teamwork, all of this at its best. This program is honestly collaborative, but it has so many parts to it. You have all these community members that are willing to help out. We have these organizations and grants that helped make all this possible. We have this program that ensures that nobody goes without firewood. This is all just great."

Spitzman said that it was apparent that people were doing this for themselves and for others.

"I had a guy out here this past weekend," Spitzman said. "Apparently where he lives in his little area, two single moms moved in recently. He approached me and said I have two single moms and they have no idea if they are going to need wood. So, he came out and said can I come out and work and help them out. So, he came out and worked all day, he crushed it all day. He cut up a big pile and even more, and just hung out with us. He asked is that enough to help them, I was like heck yeah, no worries we got them. We appreciated his work. This is still about neighbors helping neighbors really." For more information on the Crestone Energy Exchange, visit their website at [crestoneenergyexchange.org](http://crestoneenergyexchange.org).

# SUPPORT

Continued from Page 1A

getting some treatments, but it's really expensive and we really wanted to support him."

Media teacher Alondra Maldonado was a big part of the process in making the video at the school.

"As staff we decided that we wanted to put together some get well wishes for Steve and have anybody who wanted to do a message for him, to come out. We asked teachers, and we thought the kids should say something as well. We had a lot of people who were very emotional, and it was going to be hard. We had a lot of people say, we want to say something, but we can't get it together, just too emotional."

Maldonado said one of her video students said they should do a hype-up video for Martinez instead of something sad.

"Let's pump him up with energy and positivity. So, very quickly, we shifted from just individuals, to speaking with all the teachers and the principal, and everybody to say yes, do what you need to do. We had so many students say we want to do this. They also

wanted to bring balloons and make signs. Just wonderful, positive things for Steve," Maldonado said.

Maldonado said that knowing Martinez's strength and faith, they wanted the video to be full of strength and faith.

"He is part of us. He is family to us. We want the kids and everyone to know that we are still fighting for him. We won't give up," Maldonado said. "Right now, I still have kids in my room working on getting videos done and downloaded for him. The turnaround on a video sometimes is 3 days to a week. I am asking my kids to turn around a video in like 3 hours. In my mind the hope is that he can see some of it, see these videos and some miracles can happen. We still have hope for him. We don't want any of this to be a goodbye that is not what this video, what these videos mean. We won't give up fighting for Steve."

Approximately 250 people, including students and staff, took part in the video. Plenty of tears were shed for Martinez.

# OBITUARIES

## Marvin Lee Davis



Longtime resident Marvin Lee Davis, 89, passed away on Oct. 19, 2023, at the Parkview Hospital in Pueblo, Colo.

Marvin was born on Dec. 20, 1933, to PH "Bud" and Ethel (Coop) Davis in Monte Vista, Colo. Marvin married Helen Anderson on Aug. 29, 1954, at the St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Monte Vista, Colo. They were married for 69 years and were able to raise a family and travel.

Marvin enjoyed being a farm machinery salesman for most of his life throughout the San Luis Valley, and enjoyed all the people he came in contact with. He was an active board member of Tri-County Senior Citizen, a former Jaycee of Monte Vista, a member and President of the Kiwanis Club of Center, and his entire life an active member of the St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Monte Vista. He also enjoyed hunting and fishing and

five great-grandchildren, nieces, nephews, and his brother Leo (Jane) Davis, and brother-in-law Ken (Dallas) Anderson.

Marvin was preceded in death by both of his parents, his parents-in-law Harry and Ruth Anderson, his sister and brother-in-law Betty and Wayne Jefferson, his brother-in-law Wayne Anderson, his infant son Stephen, and his son-in-law Bill Spruce.

A Funeral Service will be held 1 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 27, 2023, at the St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Monte Vista, Colo. Interment to follow at Monte Vista Cemetery.

Memorials may be made to MV Ambulance or St. Peter's Lutheran Church toward youth activities.

Rogers Family Mortuary is in care of the arrangements. To leave online words of comfort, condolences, and remembrances for Marvin's family, please visit [www.RogersFunerals.com](http://www.RogersFunerals.com).

was known for always having a full creel at Santa Maria Reservoir.

Marvin is survived by his wife Helen, his children; Janet Spruce of Mansfield, Texas, Daniel and (Barbara) Davis, of Monte Vista, Colo., and Cindy Davis of Brighton, Colo., eight grandchildren,

## Alfred Theodore Schaak, Sr.

Alfred Theodore Schaak, Sr., passed away peacefully at his home on Oct. 19, 2023, at the age of 95. He was surrounded by love from his family.

Alfred was born in Monte Vista, Colo., at the Monte Vista Hospital to Adolph T. Schaak and Mary Van Treese Schaak on Aug. 23, 1928. He was their miracle baby.

Alfred farmed for many years of life until he joined the Monte Vista COOP, where he provided propane services to so many around the San Luis Valley. If you knew Alfred, you knew he carried a bag of yummy suckers in his truck to give to all his customers and their children. Alfred retired with the Monte Vista COOP after 33 years of service.

Alfred loved the outdoors. He always had one of the best-looking gardens. He also loved to ride motorcycles and snowmobiles. Alfred was also a member and past president of a 4-Wheeling club. He was a past member of the Monte

Vista Elks, a member of the Silver Threaders Snow Mobile Club. He liked hunting, fishing, camping and roasting weenies and marshmallows over a campfire. He was an avid Denver Broncos fan.

Alfred was preceded in death by his wife, Betty A Schaak, mother of eight of his children, his parents, Adolph T. Schaak and Mary Van Treese-Schaak, his children, Danny Schaak, Robert Schaak, Cynthia Schaak (infant), Terri Holman and Michael Schaak.

He is survived by his wife, Betty Worley-Schaak, his children, Rodney Schaak, Grand Junction, Colo., Karen Schaak, Alamosa, Colo., Michele Schaak, Alamosa, Colo., Alfred (Allison) Schaak Jr., Monte Vista, Colo., and Alan (Marcia) Schaak, Krugerville, Texas, his 11 grandchildren, four step-grandchildren and 23 great-grandchildren. He was loved by his family, and he will be greatly missed.

Services were held Monday, Oct. 23, at 11 a.m. at Rogers Mortuary



in Monte Vista, Colo., with burial to follow at the San Luis Valley Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, please donate to the Hospice del Valle, who assisted the family with Alfred's care.

Rogers Family Mortuary is in care of arrangements, to leave online condolences, tributes, and words of comfort, please visit [www.RogersFunerals.com](http://www.RogersFunerals.com).

## San Luis Valley Scoreboard 2022 -2023

### Football

<b>Hayden 58</b>	<b>Sargent 14</b>
<b>Del Norte 36</b>	<b>Trinidad 0</b>
<b>Primero 80</b>	<b>Mountain Valley 52</b>
<b>Sangre de Cristo 56</b>	<b>Manzanola 20</b>
<b>Mancos 58</b>	<b>Sanford 0</b>
<b>Monte Vista 58</b>	<b>Center 6</b>
<b>Centauri 38</b>	<b>Ignacio 6</b>
<b>Alamosa 27</b>	<b>Florence 25</b>

### College

<b>Colo Mesa 42</b>	<b>Adams State 7</b>
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# OPINION & EDITORIAL

## The great escape



**Trout Republic**  
by Kevin Kirkpatrick

Many of you probably remember the movie “The Great Escape” produced back in 1963 and had a star-studded cast like no other films before or since. Steve McQueen was the main protagonist in the movie and his motorcycle stunts are still talked about today.

He was all man for sure and always did most of his own stunts in any film he was in. Tragically he died at age 50 and I guess the old saying “only the good die young” was true in his case, at least.

This past weekend just so happened to be Grand #1’s birthday and we celebrated all weekend long. Saturday she felt the urge to get poor old Grandpa up on a pair of roller skates at the local rink. It had been about two years since the last time I went with the grands and way back then I did pretty good. This time however was a horse of a different color. I was shaky, wobbly, and just could not seem to get the hang of it. About my third trip around the rink my wrist began to ache, and I was reminded of when I fell on the jetty at South Padre and how bad that hurt. This sent me to the sidelines as Ol’ Dutch is in the middle of building a house and I cannot afford to be hurt. Now before you make too much fun of me for quitting like that, let me tell you that soon my son Bubs also took the bench as he said he could not afford to be hurt either.

Of course, his wife Tinkerbelle the dancer, skated forward and backward and sideways all over that rink and laughed at us for our cowardice.

Right out of Shakespeare however comes some wisdom that addresses those actions, and a slight warping of the actual quote says, “discretion is the better part of valor.” Meaning don’t be brave and skate and get hurt trying to look cool. So, we survived without any pain and even Miss Trixie skated until all the wild rollers drove her to the sidelines with their roller derby, bumper car skating techniques.

The next day meant more birthday fun and we went to an Escape Room. Now for those of you that do not know what that is you basically pay a lotta money to be locked in a room to solve puzzles to get out. I know, right? Grand #1 chose the Mad Scientist

experience and soon we were all locked in a tiny room trying to solve a mystery about some virus and needing to find the antidote, so we didn’t all die. We were given one hour to figure it out and they all dove into it like lemmings over the proverbial cliff. They scurried around like rats in a sinking ship all the while a running clock showed us just how much time we had left to solve the mystery.

Cooper and I sat over on a chair and watched the madness as they tried to unravel the clues. They were pretty good at it and Miss Trixie dove in like the senior crowd at the local buffet. She loved it. Finally with four minutes to spare they found the last clue and got us out of the room just in time to miss being infected by the virus and all dying a miserable death.

Toward the end of the experience when we feared time would run out, Grand #1 came and sat on my lap and told me goodbye and we fake cried about our failing to solve the puzzle and our impending death. She is always good for a laugh for sure. And true to her nature to cheat at games, she always wanted to hit the button on the wall for tips on progress.

If you get a chance to go to one of these rooms for your own “great escape” my suggestion is don’t. It’s too much like detention in high school where you have to perform certain tasks to gain your freedom. You can thank me later.

*Kevin Kirkpatrick and his Yorkie, Cooper, fish, hunt, ATV, or hike daily. His email is Kevin@TroutRepublic.com. Additional news can be found at www.troutrepublic.com.*

## Safety planning

By MEGAN LANG

Tu Casa Program Director

Tu Casa, Inc. is a nonprofit, that provides free, confidential, bilingual advocacy, and outreach services to children and adult victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, human trafficking, and child sexual abuse throughout the SIX rural counties of the San Luis Valley. Tu Casa, Inc. strives to ensure our services are trauma-informed, person-centered, and interactions with clients are founded in an empowerment philosophy.

Tu Casa, Inc. recognizes the choice to leave an abusive partner can be difficult — and sometimes — our clients simply aren’t ready to leave their partners, but still want to find a way to be safe in their homes and relationships. As a primary service offered, Tu Casa, Inc. staff work diligently to create safety plans with every survivor we meet. Often, when survivors are in abusive relationships, they feel powerless, because their partners use abusive behaviors to gain and maintain power and control over them. Creating a safety plan can help survivors take back control over their situation by allowing them to identify if they are in a dangerous relationship, providing them with tips on how to stay safe, and assisting them in preparations to leave an abusive relationship should they choose to do so.

What makes a relationship dangerous?

All relationships are unique, but abusive relationships tend to share similar patterns of power and control being exerted over one individual. There are several ways power and control can be exerted and it looks different in every relationship. However, research on abusive relationships has shown there are several patterns of abusive behavior that can be considered a “lethality indicator”. Lethality signifies a situation that could cause extreme harm or death to an individual. By learning about these lethality indicators through conversations

with advocates, survivors become empowered to predict whether or not their abusive relationship might become lethal.

What are examples of lethality indicators?

The list of lethality indicators can be lengthy, but here are a few major lethality indicators:

- **Strangulation.** Has your partner ever put their hands, arms, or other body parts around your neck and applied pressure, cutting off your air flow? Most people use the term “choking” to describe this behavior, but there’s a difference between the terms choking and strangulation. Choking describes when something is stuck internally in your esophagus, limiting or prohibiting your ability to breathe. Strangulation describes something much more insidious; strangulation is when someone or something applies external force to neck, cutting off air flow or blood flow to your brain. Strangulation is one of the most intimate forms of domestic violence, as your life becomes dependent on the actions of your partner.

- **Gun ownership.** We live in a rural valley; we know most people have guns in the home either as a method of self-defense or for hunting. But did you know that having guns in the home increases the risk of being murdered by your abuser by five times?

- **Stalking.** Stalking is defined as a pattern of behavior meant to make a reasonable person fearful of another individual. Perpetrators of abuse often harass their victims or make threats to make you fear for the safety of yourself or your family.

- **Leaving or attempting to leave an abusive relationship.** Research shows that when a survivor is ready to end an abusive relationship, the risk of being murdered by their abuser increases significantly. This is because the perpetrator feels a loss of power and control over the survivor and they may exert deadly force to try to regain it. A question you might want to ask when

creating a safety plan may include: “what threats has the perpetrator made to me if I’ve attempted to leave in the past?”

If you’ve experienced any of these lethality indicators in your relationship, we hope you’ll consider reaching out to Tu Casa, Inc. for help creating a safety plan. Tu Casa, Inc. recognizes survivors are the experts of their own relationships, and we urge you to trust your own instincts. If you feel you may need help determining if you’re in an abusive relationship, or if you’re in need of help to feel safe again, Tu Casa, Inc. is here to help.

Creating a Safety Plan

A safety plan is a personalized document that includes ways you can remain safe while in a relationship, planning to end a relationship, or after you leave a relationship. Tu Casa, Inc. likes to describe these documents as “living”, meaning they grow and adapt as needed, as your relationship or situation changes. Safety plans often include ways to stay emotionally safe, financially safe, and physically safe.

Tu Casa, Inc. isn’t here to tell you what to do, but we’re here to help you determine the best plan of action for your own situation. We recognize every relationship is different, so every safety plan is going to be different too!

Well thought out safety plans will include all the important information you need and will help you walk through several possible scenarios, unique to your own lived experience. It may seem silly to plan it all out, but when we’re in crisis situations, sometimes our brain doesn’t allow us to make logical decisions in the moment, so having a written safety plan to look back on can be helpful.

If you’re ready to make a safety plan, reach out to Tu Casa, Inc. via our 24-hour hotline at 719-589-2465 and ask to speak with an advocate. Advocates and volunteers are ready 24/7 to work with you if you have questions regarding your safety and to offer guidance to anyone who wants help creating their own safety plan.

## LETTER

### Saguache County Board of Commissioners vote to oppose Prop HH

Editor,  
Saguache County Board of Commissioners have voted to oppose proposition HH, a measure on the upcoming November ballot.

If approved by voters, this measure would greatly impact the next 10 years of budgets for county governments as they rely largely and sometimes solely on property taxes as their revenue source.

Our Saguache County constituents request improvements to transportation, housing,

public safety, and other services, and we, the Saguache County Commissioners are concerned that Prop HH could reduce our local governments’ ability to respond to these public expectations, unfunded mandates, and additional regulatory requirements.

If Proposition HH were to pass it would mandate reductions in local property taxes for at least 10 years, resulting in billions of dollars of lost revenue for county governments without any reduction in service

obligations.

Saguache County Commissioners said, “Prop HH will have a long-term negative effect on TABOR with a minimal short-term benefit.”

Property taxes are crucial for county governments to provide services, facilities and infrastructure needed and desired by their communities for public health, welfare, and safety.

*Lynne Thompson, Chairman  
Liza Marron, Commissioner  
Tom McCracken, Commissioner*

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Brian Williams..... GM/Editor  
Marie Mccolm .....  
Monte Vista Journal/Center Post Dispatch Reporter  
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# Del Norte Chamber's Scarecrow Bash hits town

BY LYNSIE FERRELL

**DEL NORTE** — Displays of pumpkins, skeletons and scarecrows of all shapes and sizes are hitting the streets in Del Norte for the annual Del Norte Chamber of Commerce Scarecrow Bash and now is the perfect time to take a drive or walk

through town to vote for any one of the displays.

The chamber began this event several years ago to spruce up town for the fall season and promote different business and community involvement. The event has grown the last two years and has become an anticipated event

for visitors and residents alike.

Each contestant participating in the event receives bragging rights for the next year and a chance to help brighten the streets of Del Norte. The event is a great way to celebrate the end of summer and beginning of the chilly winter months in the Valley.

Through the next week, the chamber will be highlighting each participating display on their Facebook Page under Del Norte Chamber of Commerce and people are encouraged to vote for their favorite. There are two categories to vote for, favorite business display and favorite residential display! To vote, please visit the chamber's Facebook page or by going to [www.delnortechamberofcommerce.wildapricot.org](http://www.delnortechamberofcommerce.wildapricot.org).

The Scarecrow Bash ends Oct. 28 and winners will be announced

shortly after.

Next up for the chamber is the annual Parade of Lights held on Dec. 15 this year. Though the event is a ways off, the chamber is seeking fireworks donations now to make the night even better. The event will feature business open houses, a presentation at the Rio Grande County Museum on the infamous "Christmas Camp, John C. Fremont's Fatal Fourth Expedition," several chances to enjoy warm beverages, bonfires, and a chance to meet Santa.



Photo by Lyndsie Ferrell

Scarecrow Bash displays, like this one at Del Norte Bank, can be seen over Del Norte. The community can vote online for their favorites in both residential and business categories until Oct. 28.



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**Saturday**  
Nov. 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023

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Photo by Marie McColm

A grand opening was held at The Salon on Saturday, Oct. 14. The Salon owner Corina Settle, left, and her partner AJ Ryker Longseth, right, cut the ribbon.

# Grand opening held at The Salon in Monte Vista

By MARIE MCCOLM

**MONTE VISTA** — A grand opening was held at The Salon on Saturday, Oct. 14. The Salon owner Corina Settle was all smiles as she cut the ribbon in front of her new shop at 258 Adams St. with her partner AJ Ryker Longseth.

The Monte Vista Chamber and the OptiMystics Citizen's Action Network organized the event.

Settle and Longseth both received a plaque from Monte Vista Chamber Board Member Gary Wilkinson and chamber manager Heather Hillin, with the name of their business on it.

Settle was excited for the opportunity to have a storefront.

"I haven't been in business for two years because I was teaching cosmetology at the college. I came back and I can't believe the people, I mean the welcome from them has been so good. I am excited," she said.

Settle said she was in business in Del Norte 23 years ago. She said she started her business with \$500 and did not know anyone in Del Norte. She remembers hearing from many people that she would never make it but that the words were never discouraging to her. She also owned a shop in South Fork, stating her current shop was her fifth.

"I have just moved forward. I have been in business for 21 years, and then went on to teach for 2 years, and now I have come back to the salon. Each business has been a salon just moving forward, and now we are here," she said.

Settle said her partner was one of her students.

"AJ and I met there, and we talked about things," she said. "I got to know her, and we decided to do it together. I trusted her. I saw how she did everything at the school. She did her homework, always did everything I told her to do. I saw that she did well and worked hard. Also, my daughter-in-law Angela Vanderpool was one of my students, she is the nail tech here. So, it was wonderful to get both of them to start this. This is quite a journey."

Settle said she loves working with people and being behind the chair. She is hoping to put in a couple more stations at the salon and bring in more people to work.

"We are a full-service salon," Settle said. "We do haircuts for men, women, and children. We do color. I also do skin care. AJ does eyelashes, and she does haircuts and a lot of color. We have pedicures, waxing, facials, and acrylic nails. Angela Vanderpool does nails. I am also thinking of doing like a Tuesday night after work haircut time. There's a lot of people who need that after work. On Saturdays, we will be here for half a day, or possibly longer, depending on how the day turns out."

Settle said she has a good crew to work with.

"We all respect each other and get along with each other. The other day we were a little slow and we were line dancing together. It was just a lot of fun," she said.

Settle said people have welcomed her back and she is happy about that.

Settle said opening the business felt right.

# Lightning strike sparks Trail Springs Fire

By JOHN WATERS

**SANJUANNATIONALFOREST**

— Fire investigators have determined that lightning caused the Trail Springs Fire located 12 miles northwest of Pagosa Springs that ignited on Saturday.

The Trail Springs Fire is burning on thickly forested, sloped terrain above West Devil Creek, about 3 miles northwest of Chris Mountain. Unseasonably warm temperatures and low humidity have contributed to aggressive fire behavior.

The cause of the Mill Creek Fire located 10 miles northeast of Pagosa Springs, is still under investigation.

According to the forest service and based on new overnight satellite mapping, the Trail Creek Fire is now 521 Acres. The Mill Creek Fire is 110 Acres.

Closure Notice: Forest Service Road 630 (The East Monument Road) has been closed due to increased fire activity and to provide access for firefighting apparatus. The closure is being set at the intersection of FS 630 and FS 629 (Turkey Springs Road).

A Temporary Flight Restriction order is in place over the Trail Springs Fire. Officials ask that drones not be flown in the area of the fire. The forest service notes, "If you fly, our firefighting aircraft may not be able to."

Fire smoke has drifted into the Valley and can be seen from as far east as the Sangre de Cristo Mountains.



Photo courtesy U.S. Forest Service

The Trail Springs Fire as seen in this photo from Sunday.

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# Fall Flavors and Fancies Luncheon set for Nov. 9

CONTRIBUTED

The GFWC Woman's Citizenship Club of Alamosa is having their "Fall Flavors and Fancies" Luncheon fundraising event from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 9, at the United Methodist Church, located on the corner of Murphy and Mullins Avenue in Alamosa.

The "Flavors" includes a hearty vegetable soup or chili con carne, cornbread, a spinach salad with cranberries, walnuts, feta, and a delicious pumpkin dessert for only \$15. As an added bonus, the "Fancies" will be a variety of creative baskets filled with wonderful items available to purchase. This will be a perfect opportunity to shop for birthday or early Christmas gifts.

The funds will be used to support scholarships for women at Adams State University, Trinidad State College and the club's many community projects. The tickets can be purchased by contacting Theresa Rudder at 719-588-7913 or email womancitizenshipclub@gmail.com.

There will only be 100 tickets available, so be sure to get your ticket as soon as possible.

The Woman's Citizenship Club was established in 1922, is celebrating 100 years of Living the Volunteer Spirit in Alamosa and is a member of the General Federation of Women's Clubs.

The General Federation of Women's Clubs is a unifying force, bringing together local women's clubs, with members dedicated to strengthening their communities and enhancing the lives of others through volunteer service. With nearly 80,000 members in affiliated clubs in every state and more than a dozen countries, GFWC members are community leaders who work locally to create global change by supporting the arts, preserving natural resources, advancing education, promoting healthy lifestyles, encouraging civic involvement, and working toward world peace and understanding.

For more information, visit www.GFWC.org

# SAFETY

Continued from Page 1A

The kids also got to climb in and out of several of the fire trucks and the ambulance that was there. The kids really enjoyed it. They are still talking about it now, almost a week later."

Mikeljack said that she incorporates some fire safety activities for the children in class, usually the same week that the students are scheduled to visit the fire department.

"This year, we read a scholastic newspaper about firefighting. I also put together a little packet of fire safety games and worksheets for the kids to do, too," Mikeljack said.

Mikeljack said the kids got to spray the water hose.

"The kids were so excited, they got to spray the water hose this year, every single second-grader got to spray the hose," Mikeljack said.

Mikeljack said at the end of the tour each child received a bag of treats from the firefighters.

"One of the best things that the kids were given in their treat bag was a sticker that they can put on the

outside of their window at home, to alert firefighters that there are kids in that room. So, if there ever was a fire, the firefighters know to look for that sticker," Mikeljack said.

Mikeljack said that the tour was really nice and fun for the kids.

"The kids don't know that they do it every year, but we do, and it's cute to see how they have so much fun. The firefighters are always super kind, nice, and very patient with the students, too," Mikeljack said.

Mikeljack said that the trip to the fire department went well.

"As a class we will do little thank you cards, and notes. The teachers will also do some kind of baking or some kind of a treat and take it to the firefighters to thank them," Mikeljack said.

## PUBLIC NOTICES

**ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE**  
**The SAN LUIS VALLEY IRRIGATION DISTRICT**  
will hold their annual meeting on **Wednesday, November 8, 2023 at 1:00 PM in the Ski Hi Conference Center (East End of Building)**  
Refreshments will be Provided  
Please plan to attend!  
No. 1685 published in the Center Post Dispatch, Thursday, October 26, 2023.

### NOTICE OF BUDGET

Notice is hereby given that a proposed budget has been submitted to the Board of Directors of the San Luis Valley Irrigation District for the ensuing year of 2024; that a copy of such proposed budget has been filed in the office of the San Luis Valley Irrigation District where same is open for public inspection; and that such proposed budget will be considered at a Regular Meeting of the San Luis Valley Irrigation District Board of Directors to be held at 296 Miles Street, Center, Colorado, on November 8th, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. Any interested elector of the San Luis Valley Irrigation District may inspect the proposed budget and file or register any objections thereto at any time prior to the final adoption of the Budget.  
No. 1683 published in the Center Post Dispatch, Thursday, October 19 and 26 and November 2 and 9, 2023.

### NOTICE OF ELECTION

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN, and particularly to the electors of the San Luis Valley Irrigation District in Alamosa, Rio Grande and Saguache Counties, Colorado.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that an election will be held on Tuesday, the 5th day of December, 2023, between the hours of 8:00 o'clock a.m. and 6:00 o'clock p.m. At that time, one (1) Director for Division III will be elected to serve one (1) 3-year term.

Nomination petitions are available from:

Amy S. Dean, District Secretary  
296 Miles Street  
Center, Colorado 81125  
amy@slvid.org

Nomination petitions must be filed no later than Friday, the 3rd day of November, 2023, and no earlier than Friday, October 27, 2023.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that applications for absent voter's ballots may be filed with the Secretary of the District at the above address not earlier than forty-five days (Friday, the 20th day of October, 2023) before the election, not later than 4:00 o'clock p.m. on the Friday immediately preceding the election (Friday, the 1st of December, 2023).

San Luis Valley Irrigation District  
By s/s \_\_\_\_\_ Amy S. Dean

No. 1684 published in the Center Post Dispatch, Thursday, October 26, 2023.



Photo courtesy of Matt Martinez campaign

Rep. Matt Martinez with group of constituents. He is in the center of the front row.

# MARTINEZ

Continued from Page 1A

"It's been an honor and privilege to represent the people of the district and rural Colorado, and I want to continue being the voice for Southern Colorado that is much needed in Denver," Martinez says.

Although Martinez has been in the legislature less than a year, his first year in office led to passage of meaningful legislation with significant bi-partisan support.

He was the lead sponsor on HB-1037, which grants early release from the Department of Corrections for non-violent offenders for certificates and degrees that they earn while incarcerated.

He also sponsored SB-205, establishing a \$25 million dollar scholarship fund for high school seniors seeking a degree for in-demand job fields.

SB-291, another bill Martinez sponsored, added accountability for

utility companies in response to the high natural gas rates citizens experienced in the winter of 2022.

Martinez also passed HB-1088 which provides Veterans in state nursing homes mental health resources at no cost to the Veteran.

HB-1093 allows for higher educational staff members to take sabbaticals without using their leave time.

Martinez also passed two bills that will provide enhanced, more easily understood data related to recidivism rates and re-entry programs currently being provided by the Colorado Department of Corrections and probation departments.

"I am proud of the legislation that I have passed that will directly impact Southern Colorado," Martinez says. "From ensuring that Veterans have improved mental health care that won't cost them a dime to additional support for our rural higher education

institutions and holding the utility companies accountable when it comes to rate increases, I've rolled up my sleeves and gotten to work for the people of Southern Colorado.

"The work is far from over, and the San Luis Valley, Huerfano and Pueblo still need a strong voice in Denver. I want to continue to fight to ensure that Southern Colorado always has a voice and a seat at the table," he said.

Out of Martinez's 10 bills that passed, 80% were bi-partisan. He also had two bills that were passed unanimously out of both chambers, a rare feat for any legislator.

"I have dedicated my entire life to public service, to being the voice for the underserved, advocating and influencing change, and above all, listening to the needs of the people. I will continue to be your champion, your fighter and above all else, your voice in Denver," he said.

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1 "Medicare & You," Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, 2021. 2 "How might my oral and dental health change as I age?," www.usnews.com, 11/30/2018. 3 American Dental Association, Health Policy Institute, 2018 Survey of Dental Fees, Copyright 2018, American Dental Association.

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# The Adams State Chemistry Magic Show is Oct. 27

**By ADAMS STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**ALAMOSA** — The Adams State University Chemistry Department will host the live Chemistry Magic Show in-person, at 4 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 27, in Carson Auditorium, located in the Student Union Building. The event is free and open to the public.

The magic show is a fun presentation for people of all ages. Continuing the now 30-plus year tradition, chemistry students and faculty will engage the audience in a fast-paced series of demonstrations involving changing colors, high and low temperatures, bright lights and loud noises, all illustrating the entertaining side of science.

children can participate in safe and fun hands-on activities in Porter Hall, third floor. Activities are free of charge. Younger children should be accompanied by supervising adults.

Although seating should be plentiful, larger groups are asked to notify Chris Adams, professor of chemistry, at [cladams@adams.edu](mailto:cladams@adams.edu). The parking lot north of the Student Union Building has free parking for visitors.

**The free Adams State Chemistry Magic Show begins at 4 p.m. on Oct. 27, in Carson Auditorium.**

Courtesy photo



## Child Protection Ombudsman helping kids, families work with agencies

**By PRISCILLA WAGGONER**

**ALAMOSA** — Children, youth, and their families who find themselves interacting with systems much larger than themselves — such as, for example, the Division of Youth Services (DYS), the foster care system, or other child protection services — may feel that they don't have a voice or the understanding they need of how those systems work.

In the state of Colorado, the Child Protection Ombudsman Program (CPO) of Colorado was created for exactly that reason. In CPO's own words, they "serve by helping people find answers to their questions and solutions to their problems" and "help Coloradans navigate the complex child protection system and connect them with resources."

If this sounds like news to the people of the San Luis Valley, that's because, historically, people in the Valley who could benefit from their services have not reached out for help, according to CPO.

Determined to change that and familiarize agencies in the Valley with their services, staff from CPO recently spent an afternoon meeting with local organizations whose focus is on kids and their families, introducing their organizations and learning, in return, what organizations in the Valley are offering.

CPO works independently of all other state agencies — including Colorado Department of Human Services, DHS, the court system and law enforcement — with a goal of improving

services provided and experiences of youth and families impacted by those agencies and systems.

They are available to answer questions people may have that aren't easily answered anywhere else, such as how a parent can get visits with their child, explaining who makes decisions about where a parent's child lives, how the parent can advocate for their child, why their child was disciplined, how to get documents about their child's case and what to do if they think their child is being hurt by someone.

CPO starts by, most importantly, listening to kids and parents in conversations that are free and confidential. They then investigate any concerns reported to them by any Coloradan about what's happening with



**CHILD PROTECTION OMBUDSMAN**  
of COLORADO

their case and the child protection system.

They then determine what is the best way to resolve the concerns they've heard, which might mean improving communications or resolving conflicts that are based on misunderstanding.

In terms of the bigger picture, CPO also identifies trends where the community's needs have changed, and the system hasn't had the funding or the resources or the organizational practices to keep up with the change.

As a result of that process, CPO will make public recommendations for a system to improve.

Finally, CPO takes what they've learned and meets with lawmakers, professionals and others to advocate for legislation and policies that bring lasting, positive change impacting the lives of children and families.

The best way for someone who needs to understand how systems work in

a better way or has a concern about something that is happening is to reach out to CPO directly. That can be done in several different ways, including calling 720-625-8640 or by filling out a complaint online at [coloradocpo.org/complaint-form](http://coloradocpo.org/complaint-form).

In the meeting they held with local groups, staff with CPO assured the group that there will be someone specifically assigned to the San Luis Valley to address concerns coming out of this area. They also emphasized that all conversations and concerns are held in the strictest of confidence.

Local groups that attended the meeting included the Boys and Girls Club of the San Luis Valley, the Alamosa School District, the Center for Restorative Program, the San Luis Valley Behavioral Health Group, Alamosa County Department of Human Services and Tu Casa.

## Community food access program offers grants to small food retailers and family farms

**SLV Local Foods Coalition can provide technical assistance**

**CONTRIBUTED**

The San Luis Valley Local Foods Coalition is recently announced the availability of Small Food Business Recovery and Resilience Grants provided through the Colorado Department of Agriculture (CDA) — the maximum grant award available per business, per year, is \$50,000.

These funds are meant to support small food retailers and family farms in expanding access to healthy food for all Coloradans. These grants aim to promote better access to nutritious food in low-income communities. All the counties of the San Luis Valley qualify — Alamosa, Conejos, Costilla, Mineral, Rio Grande, and Saguache.

The SLV Local Foods Coalition has been contracted with CDA to offer

Outreach and Technical Assistance to anyone applying in the region.

The Colorado Department of Agriculture plans to host up to three grant rounds before September 2024, with a total allocation of \$5.5 million in funds through this program.

The grants can be used to cover various expenses, including equipment, operating costs, accounting, book management, and point-of-sale machines.

**Who Should Apply?**

- Small Food Retailers (corner stores, grocers, farm stands and farmers markets)

- Small Family Farms (gross income less than \$350,000 annually)

- Nonprofit and For-Profit businesses can apply.

The first application round closes on Tuesday, Nov. 7, 2023.

For detailed information, eligibility criteria, and the support with the application process, visit online <https://slvlocalfoods.org/cfa-grant> or contact

our technical assistance team:

- Jae Sanders: Phone — 575-999-519, Email — [jae.slvlocalfoods@gmail.com](mailto:jae.slvlocalfoods@gmail.com)

- Iava Williams: Phone — 719-298-0330, Email — [iavaw.slvlocalfoods@gmail.com](mailto:iavaw.slvlocalfoods@gmail.com)

## The Reality of Being More Than a Conqueror in Life

Romans 8:37 (NIV) says, "...In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us." But do we really know what it means to be more than a conqueror? I know it took many years for me to learn what it means and how to live the victorious life Jesus died to give us as believers.

I remember many years when I went to church faithfully every week, yet my private life was pathetic. It was so frustrating because I really loved God and was a born-again believer, but I wasn't experiencing victory over the problems in my life so that I could really live for God and help people.

As I eventually grew in my personal relationship with Jesus and spent time studying the Word, I came to understand what it means to be more than a conqueror and how I could get there. And if I can do it, so can you.

To be more than a conqueror means that before you ever get a problem, you already know that whatever problem comes your way, you can overcome it through Christ! You live with confidence that God loves you no matter what and He will never leave you nor forsake you. And when you have this kind of relationship with God, you aren't constantly afraid of bad news or of things that may happen that aren't in your plan. When the unexpected happens or you're disappointed, you won't be devastated by it.

See, when you truly understand who you are in Christ—who God says you are and everything that's yours through a relationship with Jesus—you discover there's nothing that can happen that is too much for you...because there's nothing that's too much for Him! First John 4:4 confirms it: "Little children, you are of God [you belong to Him] and have [already] defeated and overcome them [the agents of the antichrist], because He Who lives in you is greater (mightier) than he who is in the world" (AMPC).

It's so important for us to get this truth down in our hearts and see ourselves as more than conquerors through Jesus, because if we don't, then our enemy, Satan, will be able to confuse us and keep us from victory. And all the enemy wants to do is kill, steal, and destroy what God wants us to have (John 10:10). He wants to diminish you—make you small-minded and small in spirit so you'll live a small, frustrated life.

But we don't have to live that way. Every person who declares that Jesus is Lord, repents of their sin, and gives their heart to God is a child of God and belongs to Him (Romans 10:9-11). In Christ, we are forgiven and made right with God. We have the strength and power to do what His Word says to do and live the full and fulfilling life He has for us.

Do you realize what this means? It means that as we spend time with God in prayer and studying the Bible, we can access the wisdom and strength we need to make right choices and behave right. It doesn't happen all at once or overnight, but we will make progress every day that we seek God this way.

I really want you to understand who you are in Christ as a born-again believer. You were never meant to be frustrated, discouraged, or feel like you're always just trying to get through the day. God has more for you than that!

When you make a mistake and the enemy comes and tells you, "You're no good," you don't have to take on the guilt and condemnation he wants to put on you. No! You can immediately confess your mistake to God, thank Him for forgiving you and cleansing you with the blood of Jesus, and move forward in the victory of His grace and forgiveness (1 John 1:9).

Here's a scripture that has helped me take hold of who I am in Christ and live with victory over the hardships of this world: "In this [union and communion



with Him] love is brought to completion and attains perfection with us...because as He is, so are we in this world" (1 John 4:17 AMPC).

I encourage you to learn who God really is. Get a deeper understanding of His character and His heart for you. Spend time with Him, read His Word, and let Him love you. Know that He loves you unconditionally. God is good, and He wants to bless you and help you. When we know this truth, we don't have to be tormented by doubts about whether God cares or whether He will take care of us.

Whatever your situation is today, God knows about it. He sees you and hears the cry of your heart. And if you will give Him your problems and do what He tells you to do, you will access His overcoming love, grace, and power and be more than a conqueror. Because in Christ, as He is, so are we in this world!

For more on this topic, order Joyce's five-part teaching resource *Bold, Confident and Courageous*. You can also contact us to receive our free magazine, *Enjoying Everyday Life*, by calling (800) 727-9673 or visiting [www.joycemeyer.org](http://www.joycemeyer.org).

Joyce Meyer is a New York Times bestselling author and founder of Joyce Meyer Ministries, Inc. She has authored more than 140 books, including *BATTLEFIELD OF THE MIND* and *OVERCOMING EVERY PROBLEM* (FaithWords). She hosts the *Enjoying Everyday Life* radio and TV programs, which air on hundreds of stations worldwide. For more information, visit [www.joycemeyer.org](http://www.joycemeyer.org).

Please note: The views and opinions expressed throughout this publication and/or website are those of the respective authors and do not necessarily reflect those of Joyce Meyer Ministries.

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## Educator Highlight Award for September goes to Lawrence

*Beloved AES custodian 'makes all of the kids feel welcome'*

By ADAMS STATE UNIVERSITY

ALAMOSA — To the students and staff at the Alamosa Elementary 3-5 Building, Freddy Lawrence is a superhero. His unique power is simply caring for others.

Lawrence was recognized on Tuesday, Oct. 10, with the Educator Highlight Award presented each month by the Adams State School of Education. He is the first school custodian to be selected for the

award and judging by the serenading he received from students, a hugely popular selection.

"He makes all of the kids feel welcome. Every kid feels like they can go to him and ask him for any help," said Leah Shawcroft, one of the teachers who nominated Lawrence for the award.

"He gets at least 600 high-fives a day," she said. "Every kid feels like **Please see AWARD on Page 2**

**Pictured, Alamosa Elementary 3-5 Custodian Freddy Lawrence, Adams State September Educator Highlight Award recipient, with his biggest fans.**

Courtesy photo



## Escherman receives DAISY Nurse Award at SLV Health

By SAN LUIS VALLEY HEALTH

ALAMOSA — Taylor Escherman, RN, San Luis Valley Health, works alongside a great team of caregivers in the Emergency Department at the Regional Medical Center in Alamosa, taking care of some of the most critical and vulnerable patients. Some days are chaotic with multiple traumas and some nights are slower, with fewer patients. A recent patient's close friend nominated Taylor to receive the DAISY award, for nursing excellence.

"Tonight, I almost lost a dear friend due to an overdose. Taylor provided exceptional care even though the ER was completely full! She took her time and made absolutely certain that my dear one fully understood her discharge instructions," the person stated.

"I want to thank the entire staff! The care we received was prompt, professional, and loving. It's my opinion that Miss Taylor went above and beyond her call of duty! Taking time to tend to every need and being not only extremely thorough but also upbeat! Thank you so much!"

Taylor is the third recipient of the DAISY award at SLV Health. Her supervisor, Monica Hinds, and SLVH's CNO, Roberta Bean, both agreed that Taylor was well deserving of this award, which brings national recognition.

SLVH hosted a reception where her family (see pictures below) and co-workers attended to celebrate with Taylor. Her supervisor, Monica Hinds, commented to her, "Taylor, you are so deserving of this recognition. I hear positive comments from patients all the time."

Why DAISY? Patrick Barnes woke up with some blood blisters in his mouth. A visit to the doctor revealed he had a dangerously low



Courtesy photos

**Taylor Escherman adds her name to the banner that will be displayed in the ED where she works until the next recipient is announced. Handing off the banner is Amy Oaks, RN, Cancer Center, who received the award several months ago.**

platelet count and he was admitted to the hospital. The diagnosis was the auto-immune disease ITP (Idiopathic Thrombocytopenic Purpura). The DAISY Foundation was established in 1999 by the family of J. Patrick Barnes who died from complications of the autoimmune disease Idiopathic Thrombocytopenia Purpura (ITP) at the age of 33. DAISY is an acronym for Diseases Attacking the Immune System. The family wanted to recognize the nurses for providing extraordinary care to their loved ones.

Who can recommend an excellent nurse? Patients, family members of patients, co-workers, and visitors to SLV Health are all welcome to recognize a nurse for their outstanding care. Click here for a link to recommend a nurse at SLV Health for the DAISY award.

Which credentials qualify for a DAISY nomination? Registered Nurse (RN), Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA), Certi-



**Taylor Escherman, left, is the third recipient of the DAISY award at SLV Health. Her supervisor, Monica Hinds, right, and SLVH's CNO, Roberta Bean, both agreed that Taylor was well deserving of this award, which brings national recognition.**

fied Nurse Mid-Wife (CNM), Nurse Practitioner (NP), or Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN).

Visit [www.slvh.org/about-us/daisy-nursing-excellence](http://www.slvh.org/about-us/daisy-nursing-excellence) to read about SLVH's other recipients, submit an application, or learn more.



Courtesy photos

**The annual South Fork Chili Cookoff saw more than 200 people decide the winners.**

## South Fork Chili Cookoff heats up bowls of success

By LYNDISIE FERRELL

SOUTH FORK — The South Fork Visitor Center Chili Cookoff was considered a smashing success on Thursday, Oct. 12. Eager tasters filled the South Fork Community Center and more than 21 contestants competed in the best of the best in three categories.

This year's theme was "Star Wars," and each competitor did a wonderful job decorating the tables and surrounding room which made for a wonderful evening of neighborly fun. Chili contestants lined the

expansion of the community center offering their own take on green chili, red chili, and salsa. People gathered outside and waited for their chance to come in and taste some of the best chili and salsa around.

Like many of the other events that took place in South Fork over the past summer, the Chili Cookoff was given new life thanks to the partnership of the Town of South Fork, the South Fork Visitor Center, and the South Fork Friends Foundation.

**Please see CHILI on Page 2**



**More than 21 contestants participated in the South Fork Chili Cookoff on Thursday, Oct. 12.**

# CHILI

Continued from Page 1

Over the past month, the event came close to being canceled until one last marketing ploy from South Fork Friends Foundation president Luke Brennan paid off and brought in about 15 contestants who were eager to keep the event going. Brennan's determination coupled with new visitor center Director Larry Tumbleson and his wife Sharon's creative spark made for an evening of fun, hospitality, and the chance to meet with family, friends, and neighbors. In the years past, the event was something everyone looked forward to and now that the cookoff has received new life, the hope is that the community will look forward to it once again. "Great job and thank you to all our wonderful supporters and volunteers. Thanks goes out to the Rio Grande Club and Resort for their generous contribution of two food and beverage certificates and rounds of golf certificates for raffles and awards. Huge thanks to the

South Fork Friends Foundation for supporting, getting the word out and rounding up more contestants. To Dennis Shepherd and the Silverthreeder Club for providing drinks and desserts. To volunteers Travis Cross, Dustin Hund and wife Casey for cleanup and support and to all the contestants for their time and effort in providing some of the best and uniquely flavored chili in Colorado!" The event's winners were as follows: first place for the Red Chili Category was Ali Butler and Caitlyn Steffens and second place for the Red Chili Category went to the South Fork Friends Foundation. First place for the Green Chili Category was Jim and Monica Pemberton and second place went to Ramones Mexican restaurant. First for the Salsa Category went to South Fork Fire Rescue and second place went to Jones Riley. The South Fork Friends Foundation also earned the Best Table Decoration award for the night.

# AWARD

Continued from Page 1

they know him and are special to him. That's special because we have so many kids and for each kid to feel like they have a place here is awesome." Color Lawrence humbled by the recognition. When Adams State's Chrissy McKinney made the surprise presentation along with Curtis Garcia, director of the Adams State School of Education, the students cheered and Lawrence choked up. "I didn't know I was even involved in this stuff," the senior custodian said. "My purpose is honestly for the kids. I'm here for the kids every day and try to do my best and try to be here for them for whatever they need. I was not expecting this at all. Thank you everybody." AES 3-5 Principal Michelle Rubidoux-Wilson wasn't surprised that Adams State chose to honor the school's custodian. Nor was she surprised by the reaction among students who performed a song for Lawrence with their youthful voices and through sign language that the

students are learning. Rubidoux-Wilson said she has worked with Lawrence since he started his custodial job at the old Polston Elementary School more than 20 years ago. It was five years ago that he was promoted to chief custodian at the Alamosa Elementary 3-5 Building. His work ethic, said the school principal, is off the charts. "He's just overall really amazing. Everybody needs a Freddy, but you can't have ours." Every day, educators in the Valley make a difference to our kids and families. To make a nomination for the Adams State Educator Highlight Award, email teachered@adams.edu. This monthly award recognizes Adams State University School of Education alumni, prominent local teachers, and other educators working within or hailing from the San Luis Valley. In so doing, Adams State University hopes to build familiarity with the community as a serious destination for future educators.



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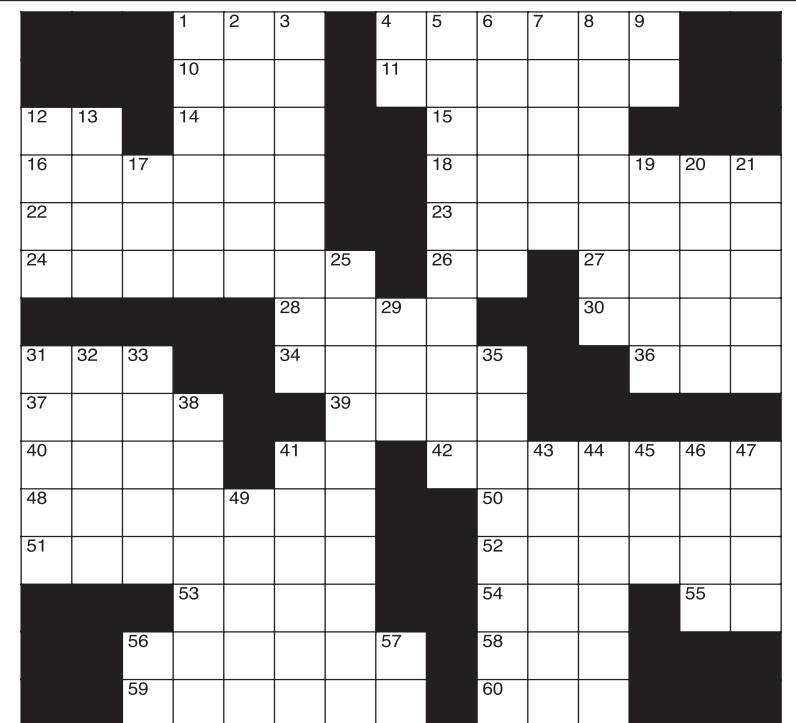
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- CLUES ACROSS**
1. Basics
  4. In a new way
  10. \_\_\_ Paulo, city
  11. Jailhouse
  12. Expresses surprise
  14. Trigraph
  15. A small stream
  16. Dissimilar
  18. Promote
  22. Gives a boost
  23. Lawmaker
  24. Orthodox Jews
  26. Actor Harris
  27. Wild cherry
  28. Participate in democracy
  30. Opposite of begins
  31. A Brit's mother
  34. Set of moral principles
  36. Very fast airplane
  37. Czech river
  39. Private school in New York
  40. Israeli dance
  41. Electron volt
  42. Adjusting
  48. Duct by the bladder
  50. Small burger
  51. Begin again
  52. Unstuck
  53. Jai \_\_, sport



54. Get free of
55. For instance
56. Hotel chain
58. A team's best pitcher
59. Extracts from various sources
60. Indefinite period of time
20. Tailless amphibians
21. German expressionist painter
25. What drives you
29. N. Vietnamese ethnic group
31. Gold coin used in British India
32. Have deep affection for
33. Ponds
35. Breaks between words
38. Hairstyle
41. Print errors
43. Family of iron alloys
44. Sidelined in bed
45. Many couples say it
46. Brazilian hoopster
47. Allman Brothers late frontman
49. German city
56. One hundred grams (abbr.)
57. One billionth of a second (abbr.)

- CLUES DOWN**
1. St. Francis of \_\_\_
  2. Supported
  3. United in working
  4. It cools your home
  5. Predicting
  6. Irritated
  7. Popular talk show host
  8. Fabric edge
  9. A resource for employees
  12. Broadway's Jackman
  13. Small water buffalo
  17. City of Angels: \_\_\_ Angeles
  19. Asteroids

**Solution to last week's puzzle**

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



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## CLASSIFIED INDEX

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## 05 Notices

**Invitation To Bid: Baseball Field Spectator Fencing Upper Rio Grande School District.** Bids are being sought for a fencing project at the Baseball Field located on the Upper Rio Grande School District property in Del Norte, Colorado. The fence will be 261 linear feet, 8 ft. tall with black vinyl slats, schedule 40 piping, 9 gage wire, with two six foot gates. Please contact Adelmo Trujillo at (719) 657 - 4040 for more information and specifications of the project. Bids will be accepted through October 12, 2023. (10/25)

**We buy antler:** Use code "ELK17" and you will get \$17/lb for Elk Grade A and \$12/lb for Deer Grade A. 5 miles west of Del Norte on Hwy 160. 719-657-0942 (TFN)

**For information on meetings for ALANON NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS AND ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS** Please visit slvaa.org or call 719-937-5083.

## 07 Help Wanted

**Needed Part Time Personal Care Provider in Antonito.** A must dependable, trustworthy, and loving individual for a female who can execute transfers and other duties. Interested call 719-376-2348 or 719-588-9430 (11-8)

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or Creede (your option). Call 719-658-3060, 719-221-3811 or email info@mdswasteandrecycle.com. (12-6)

**Saguache County Land Use Department is accepting applications** for a full time third Code Enforcement Officer position. Salary to be determined on experience starting at \$35,000/year. Applicants must have a valid Colorado Drivers License, must pass a criminal background check as well as a pre-employment drug test. The County Employee benefit package includes vision, dental and health insurance coverage, paid time off, and a gener-

ous 401k retirement plan. The employment application and job description can be found on www.saguachecounty.colorado.gov, picked up at the Saguache County Administration Office, 505 3rd Street, Saguache, CO or can be emailed to you, please contact April Quintana at 719-655-2231. Completed applications can be hand delivered to the Saguache County Land Use Department, Attention Amber Wilson, 505 3rd Street, mailed to PO Box 326, Saguache, CO 81149 or emailed to atorrez@saguachecounty-co.gov. Applications will be accepted until filled. (11/2)

**Interventionist needed at Del Norte Elementary School.** We are seeking a hardworking and enthusiastic teaching professional to join our dynamic, vibrant and fun-loving team. Applicants must have a Colorado Teaching License. Please submit your application, resume and cover letter to: Amy Duda, Principal at aduda@urtigers.co or contact Amy at 719-657-4050.

Applications can be picked up at the District Office or online at: urtigers.co. (10/25)

**Instructional Coach needed at Del Norte Jr/Sr High School.** Candidate should be proficient in all areas of teaching and learning with an emphasis on professional practice and the teaching and learning cycle. The coach will be responsible for consulting with and supporting the instructional teaching staff in using resources that impact student learning. The coach will provide support and professional learning to instructional staff as needed. Applicants must have a bachelor's degree or higher and possess or be able to obtain a Colorado Teaching License. Please submit your application, resume, and cover letter to Annie Hardy, Principal at ahardy@urtigers.co. (10/25)

**The Upper Rio Grande School District has received a grant for a full time Jr./Sr. High School Counselor** - for the next 3 years, starting in the 2023-2024 school

year. Applicants must have a Master's Degree or higher and possess or be able to obtain an appropriate Colorado school counselor license. Please submit your application, resume, and cover letter to: Annie Hardy, Del Norte Jr./Sr. High Principal at ahardy@urtigers.co or contact Mrs. Hardy at 719-657-4020. Applications for certified staff positions can be picked up at the District Office or online at www.urtigers.co. (10/25)

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 ~ Thomas D., Google reviews

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# Valley Wide Classifieds

**Substitutes Teachers needed at the Upper Rio Grande School District in Del Norte!** Call or email: Sophia at 719-657-4040, x4000 (scruez@urtigers.co) for more information, go on-line: urtigers.co, or stop by the district office at: 950 French Street, Del Norte, CO to pick up an application. You do not have to hold a college degree or be a certified teacher to substitute; however, you must be a high school graduate and have a substitute license from CDE (Colorado Department of Education). (10/25)

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## 17 Real Estate For Sale

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**340 Lake Drive - ON THE CREEK** in Willow Park Ranch - this four-bedroom, three-bath home borders the National Forest and has incredible views of the San Juan mountains. Newly renovated, this home is a must-see for those looking for privacy, a live, year-round creek with trout, and hike-out access to public lands from a secure, gated community. MLS #807635. **\$968,500**  
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**654 Vail Pass Road South Fork**  
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**12 Commercial acres in South Fork Shoshone Trail**  
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**23 Fairway Drive - OWNER FINANCING AVAILABLE**  
- this beautiful lot is a 1-minute walk from the Clubhouse on the Rio Grande Club and Resort in South Fork. Flat and easy to build, this lot has water, sewer, electricity, landline phone and high-speed internet at the lot line. MLS#794077.  
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**Kenmore Snowblower, Model 247.881900, Serial 1I186B10071,** pull or electric start. \$400 obo. call George: 719-657-0756 (11-1)

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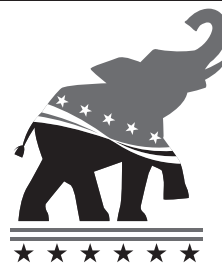
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# San Luis Valley Area Real Estate

**SOLD**

This South Fork Beauty checks all the boxes, both his and hers - and is a fun place for family and friends. Custom built Log home tucked in the trees and backs up to the National Forest. The main floor consists of an open area with beautiful carved mantel stone fireplace, dining area, kitchen with designer backsplash and large eat in counter space looking over the living area with custom soft close cabinets and plenty of storage and room for all your entertaining. Kitchen has wonderful large butler pantry with pantry sink and beautiful custom stained-glass door. The Detailed Check Boxes include radiant floor heating with four zones and two Rinnai on-demand water tanks. Light Touch lighting system and electrical in the floor. Master bedroom is on the main floor with sitting area with luscious mountain views. Master bath with beautiful large tiled walk-in shower. Guest bedroom and bath on main floor with elegant soaking antique tub. Upstairs spacious loft with two electronic skylights with rain sensors that will close automatically with additional sleeping areas including office space and additional large size bedroom with barn door and bath. Enjoy your 3-car garage with large workshop and more than enough room for all your mountain toys. Your family and friends will love the upstairs bungalow above the garage with kitchenette, living area, built-in beds additional bedroom and bath. Bring your family and friends to gather to enjoy the great outdoors! Boarders National Forest, with streams, creeks, lakes rolling topography, open fields, pine, fir, aspen trees, mountain views and abundant wildlife! Beautifully designed home tucked peacefully into the woods and easily accessible to town, Wolf Creek Ski Area and the Rio Grande Golf Course Resort. Once in a lifetime Opportunity! This property perfectly captures the best of both worlds between outdoor recreation and exceptional entertainment. Start your dream and Call/Text me to schedule your personal showing today! \$1,395,000 MLS #796960

37 Million Court • South Fork

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**SOLD**

Majestic Custom-Built Log Home! Fabulous 7 bed, 5 bath 4,619 Sq. Ft. Home with attached garage on 9.04 acres in Beautiful gated Bear Creek. This Home has several outdoor entertainment areas with wrap around decks too enjoy the 360 views of the San Juan Mountains. The main level has an open floor plan with great room and grand fireplace with vaulted ceiling opening into the dining and kitchen area. Entertain in this beautiful large kitchen with large island, custom cabinetry, granite countertops and state of the art stainless steel appliances. The Master bedroom suite is located on main floor with walk out patio, your perfect place to enjoy that hot cup of morning coffee. From here you can access your private boardwalk leading to your entertainment area with fire ring and Jacuzzi. Upstairs beautiful reading sitting loft with additional guest bedrooms, bath and great bunk room for additional family and guest. Lower level of this home includes a large family room with fireplace and pool table. Great for all your entertainment needs, additional bedrooms, and office. Beautiful furniture, furnishings and accessories are all included with this home. Bear Creek also offers a wonderful river adventure for rafting, gold medal fly fishing with a 20-acre area on the Rio Grande River exclusive to Bear Creek property owners. Minutes away from everything outdoors - gold medal fly fishing, hunting, four wheeling and thousands of acres of public land. Start your Adventure! Don't wait, Call, and schedule your showing today! \$1,650,000 MLS #792162

2951 Bear Creek Circle • South Fork

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**SOLD**

Stately 2,818 Sq Ft. Mountain Home with Stunning Natural Light on 3.19 acres. This beautiful 3 bed 4 bath home is your perfect retreat. Open Split floor plan with beautiful cathedral ceiling and fireplace, large windows taking in the breath-taking outdoor sunlight and mountain views. Complete with beautiful furnishing, accessories and decor. The kitchen with eat in counter, gorgeous custom cabinetry, granite countertops and butler pantry is your dream kitchen for entertaining your family and friends. Separate office space off the dining area with patio door leads out to the great outdoors. There are two guest rooms one with private bath could be considered a separate master bedroom. Large master bedroom with large walk-in closet, fireplace gorgeous walk-in shower and access to deck with hot tub. Take in the stunning views from the main floor outdoor balcony. Your perfect place for that hot morning cup of coffee or relaxing evening glass of wine. This is a luxurious home located with private access to the national forest in The Timbers subdivision of South Fork Ranches. All this, just moments from Rio Grande Golf Club, Rio Grande River gold medal fishing and world class skiing at Wolf Creek Ski area. Don't wait call and schedule your private showing today! \$1,150,000 MLS #798101

497 Timberline Drive • South Fork

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**UNDER CONTRACT**

Darling authentic 1,232 Sq. Ft. 2-bedroom 2 bath log cabin with upgrades galore! Located in Log Haven. Tucked along the mountain side backing up to national forest with beautiful views of the surrounding cliffs. Open living room, dining, kitchen area with new propane Vermont Casting stove to keep you cozy and warm all winter long. Kitchen is quaint and bright with custom granite countertops. This cabin has a covered front porch and wonderful back deck. The perfect place to enjoy the wildlife, peace and quiet and that first hot cup of morning coffee. Nice fence back yard with gate opening to the national forest. Hike for miles out your own back door. Downstairs has a master bedroom and a full bath. Upstairs additional bedroom, bathroom and nice size sitting nook, great space to enjoy that best-selling book or use for your office den. This cabin comes complete with one car garage, storage shed, central well and town sewer. Cabin can be used as a full-time residence, or home-away-from-home winter or summer get-a-way! Rentals are not allowed in this subdivision. Don't wait! Start your adventure today! Only a short 17-mile drive from Wolf Creek Ski area. The mighty South Fork and Rio Grande River, Beaver Mountain reservoir & Million reservoir are just moments away. Bring your fishing pole and enjoy hours of world class fishing. Ski Wolf Creek, go 4 wheeling, hike, camp, hunt. Enjoying everything outdoors! Let's get started call /text and schedule your showing today! \$325,000 MLS #800364

31517 Us Highway 160 • South Fork

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**SOLD**

You Found It! Home Sweet Home, Finely Crafted, Ranch Style 2,109 square foot 3 bed 2 bath split floor plan home with detached 4 car garage for all your outdoor tools and toys! Large master bedroom bath with jacuzzi tub. Beautiful open kitchen, dining area with eat in counter, living area with cathedral wood beam ceiling, custom cabinets and wood burning stove. This home has large windows that brings in lots of natural light. Patio doors leading out to your back and front deck with 360 views of the beautiful Colorado mountains. Perfect place to enjoy your morning hot cup of coffee. You have year-round access in Highland Meadows, South Fork, CO, with paved roads, your own well and South Fork water and sanitation. This home is situated on a beautiful 1.1-acre lot with room for your RV, gardens and so much more. Additional heating sources on demand water heater and radiant floor heat to keep you nice and warm all winter long and indoor laundry area. This could be your permanent residence, your home away from home or your perfect vacation home. Moments from skiing at Wolf Creek, A stone throw away from public access to gold medal fishing on the Mighty Rio Grande River. Enjoy nearby hiking, golfing, hunting and 4-wheeling. Start Your Adventure - Won't last long, Call and Schedule your personal showing today!

\$489,900 MLS #801796

74 Highland Court • South Fork

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Amazing Riverfront property located in beautiful well established Deer Park subdivision in South Fork, Colorado. This property is complete with paved streets, with sewer and water tap available. Flat building site overlooking the Mighty Rio Grande River with mature evergreen trees. Bring your fishing pole this property extends to the middle of the river. Located only a stone throw away from National Forest and public river access. Start your adventure call and schedule your showing today! \$175,000 MLS #804121

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# SAN LUIS VALLEY SERVICE DIRECTORY

## Indio-Hispano cultural stewards highlighted in 'Hilos Culturales' book

### CONTRIBUTED

Hilos Culturales Inc. and History Colorado of Denver partnered to produce "Hilos Culturales: Cultural Threads of the San Luis Valley," a 22-year profile on 46 awardees of the Premio Hilos Culturales Lifetime Achievement Award.

The award is presented to folk musicians and folk dancers who maintain centuries-old Indio-Hispano cultural traditions of popular ritual music, traditional folk ballads, and social dances. These musical and social dance traditions have been kept vibrant throughout the Upper Río Grande region of southern Colorado and northern New Mexico and beyond, into the 21st century.

The book, "Hilos Culturales: Cultural Threads of the San Luis Valley," includes an extensive introduction by Enrique R. Lamadrid, University of New Mexico Press; and a prologue by Adams State University Charles Nicholas Saenz, Ph.D., professor of history and chair of the history, anthropology, philosophy and political science department. The book is authored by Adams State alumni Herman, '69, and Patsy, '70 & '90, Martínez, recipients of 2016 Adams State University Educators Hall of Fame.

"Working with Herman and Patsy on this project has been an inspiration," Saenz said. "Their continued dedication to celebrating the Hispano arts and culture of this region is reflected in the quality of this book. I was honored to write a prologue."

San Luis Valley Premio Hilos Culturales award recipients include: Elva Valdez, Amos and Juanita Bernal, Salomón López, Rose Vialpando, Ann Marie and Aurora Vialpando, Luis Madrid, Glenda Maes, Lucía "Lucy" Jaramillo, Andy Manzanera, Val and Evangelina Sena, Padre José Alfonso Muñiz and Rubén Domínguez.

Book release events this fall will also include the Hilos Culturales photo/biography "Desde Ayer Exhibit" at History Colorado Museums in Fort Garland, Trinidad, Pueblo, Montrose, and Denver.

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# Rio Grande Wellness Center on track

**By RIO GRANDE HOSPITAL DEL NORTE** — Currently under construction, the Wellness Center project at Rio Grande Hospital is a venture in moving from illness to wellness.

Arlene Harms, CEO of Rio Grande Hospital and Clinics, compares the new Rio Grande Wellness Center to common denominators of the world's five "Blue Zones." Blue Zones are areas in the world where people have been able to reduce disease and live longer.

As an investment in prevention and well-being for the citizens of the Valley, the Wellness Center promotes four principles: nutrition, moving naturally, connecting, and mindfulness.

Nutrition means eating for wellness, eating real food, eating in moderation, and incorporating more plants into your diet.

The Blue Zones prove eating wisely helps us feel better and may help us live a longer life. The Wellness Center's Teaching Kitchen will coach people with dietary needs on how to select and prepare meals utilizing nutrient-dense foods, which are available locally. Learn what ingredients are best and how to create a lifestyle of healthy eating.

Encouraging teams of people with common needs to provide support to one another can help with people's success in attaining health goals.

With a focus on good ingredients, the Teaching Kitchen will use fresh herbs grown from the Living Herb Wall in the Center's Garden Meeting Room or food grown in the geodesic dome greenhouse.

Nutrition classes will be offered, and participants can learn how a plant-slant diet leads to a healthier life. Benefits include boosting immunity, strengthening bones, and helping the digestive system function.

People living in the Blue Zones stay

active; they daily partake in low-intensity activities like gardening, cooking, housework, yard work, kneading their own bread, walking, dancing, and socializing.

Moving matters. The concept of keeping active and moving naturally throughout each day is crucial to longevity. Exercise reduces stress, boosts your energy and mood, enhances memory and ability to focus, improves sleep quality, and helps with weight loss and maintenance.

The Wellness Center's Fitness Center and Studio will facilitate physical activity. Take a new movement therapy class or release endorphins by testing out a variety of equipment.

The center will offer classes such as Tai Chi or get your hands in the dirt and work in the greenhouse gardens to be located in the Geodesic Dome nearby.

Exiting the Fitness Center door, you can connect to eight miles of natural single-track walking trails in Del Norte's Lookout Mountain Park. Research has shown there is a correlation between happiness and time outdoors spent in nature and around nature.

Another Blue Zone concept is mindfulness. Simple practices such as focusing on moment or gaining more self-awareness and self-regard are all part of developing a healthy outlook.

The Wellness Center provides Quiet Rooms for folks to downshift, focus on their breathing, relax, reflect, and perhaps meditate.

The Center will provide information on community events and opportune ways people can gain satisfaction and pride by giving back to their community, improving the quality of life of others in the Valley may additionally improve your well-being.

Connecting with others is another Blue Zone concept. According to spe-



Courtesy photos

**Construction of the Rio Grande Hospital Wellness Center is beginning to reveal shape and scale with design elements that are noninstitutional.**

cialists, if you have strong family and social connections, you are more likely to have stronger immune systems and live longer. The Wellness Center's Community Lounge will be a great location to meet with friends. Face-to-face time with other people helps with a sense of belonging. Surrounding yourself with a circle of friends who share your commitment to a healthy lifestyle plays a role in happiness and managing stress in your daily life.

Other benefits include lowering the risk of depression, anxiety, and heart disease.

Among the goals of the Wellness Center are social and economic health through programs, activities and classes. It encourages engaging with others

in your own social circle while making new inter-generational connections.

If we want to feel better, sometimes we must rethink our lifestyles. At the Rio Grande Wellness Center, the public

can learn behaviors that are critical to our future wellness, take them home and practice them every day.

*This is the third in a six-part series of articles about the Rio Grande Wellness Center.*

**RIO GRANDE HOSPITAL'S ANNUAL**  
*trunk or treat*  
**OCTOBER 31**  
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2023-2024

# Monte Vista

# Business Directory



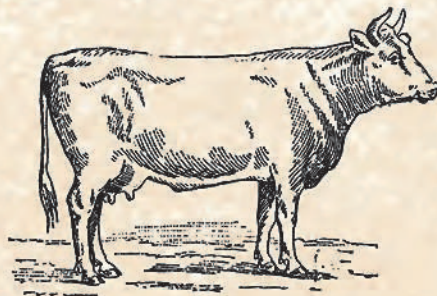


# MONTE VISTA COOP

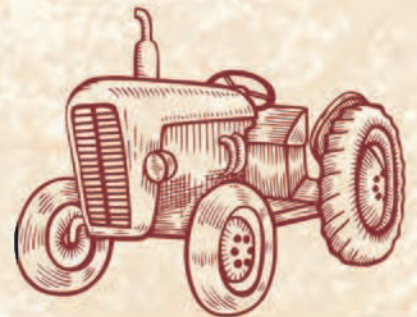
COMMUNITY COMMITTED, AGRICULTURALLY DRIVEN



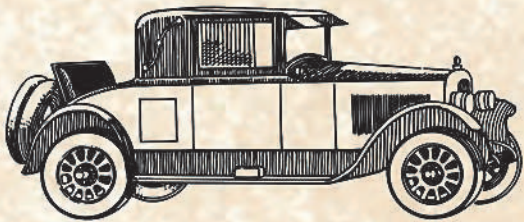
Farm Store



Feed



Equipment



Car Care Center



Fertilizer



Energy

**WWW.MVCOOP.COM**  
**719-852-5181**

## MONTE VISTA COOP LOCATIONS

- Main Office/ Farm Store....1901 E Hwy 160 Monte Vista, Colorado 719-852-5181
- Equipment....2607 N. Hwy 285 Monte Vista, Colorado 719-852-5565
- MV Fertilizer....195 CR 38 Monte Vista, Colorado 719-852-4046
- Center Fertilizer....0044 CR 49 Center, Colorado 719-754-2218
- La Jara Fertilizer....20270 Hwy 285 La Jara, Colorado 719-274-5864
- Alamosa Store....1311 West Ave Alamosa, Colorado 719-589-3621



# Demographics

According to CensusReporter.org and CityData.com the estimated population for Monte Vista in 2020 was 4,252.

Monte Vista is almost evenly split between male and female residents with females accounting for 54% of the population and males making up 46% of the population. Hispanics make up 64% of the population and whites account for 35% of the population and 1% other. Median age in Monte Vista is 39.2 years.

The estimated median household income in 2020 was \$37,810 while the median household income for the state of Colorado was estimated to be \$75,231 in 2020.

Median gross rent in the Monte Vista area in 2019 was \$665 (40% of the housing units are renter-occupied). The median home price in Monte Vista in 2020 for all housing units was \$119,600.

In March 2019 the cost-of-living index in Monte Vista was 81.6 which is considered low – the US average is 100.

The percentage of Monte Vista residents living in poverty in 2020 was 22.2% percent.

## Employment

The Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, Division of Employment and Training, provides two full-service Workforce Centers in Monte Vista and Alamosa to serve the six rural counties of the San Luis Valley.

In March 2020, the Valley had a total annual average labor force of 23,657 workers, 22,109 employed and 1,548 unemployed. The large industry of employment in the Valley is agribusiness which employs 4,760 people, followed by education and health services with 2,529 and government with 1,891.

Services available through the Workforce Center include pre-screening and interview scheduling for employers wishing to avoid the time and expense associated with handling a great number of phone calls and conducting numerous applicant interviews. Labor market information in the form of area wage surveys, employment and unemployment statistics, and occupational characteristics of the region's labor market may also be obtained through the office.

For further information, contact South Central Workforce Center at 2079 Sherman Ave., Monte Vista, 719-852-5171.

# Utilities

## Clear, pure water

The city of Monte Vista provides water to the city and adjacent areas. Pumped from deep wells, the water is of excellent quality, with a temperature of 50 degrees and is mildly chlorinated.

## Sewer

The sewer system is of the primary type and is treated in a series of lagoons. The city waste treatment facility includes an anaerobic and aerobic lagoon.

## Landfill

The regional landfill is located six miles west of Monte Vista. Hours are Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. year-round and Saturday, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Loads are measured by cubic yard at \$4.35 each cubic yard. Call 852-3810 or go to [www.slvlandfill.com](http://www.slvlandfill.com) for information.

## Power

Monte Vista and the rural areas immediately surrounding it have electric service provided by Xcel Energy. For rates and service information, contact them at (800) 895-4999 or visit [www.XcelEnergy.com](http://www.XcelEnergy.com). The San Luis Valley Rural Electric Co-

operative provides electric service to the majority of the rural areas throughout the San Luis Valley.

Information on rates and service can be obtained by calling 852-3538. Further information can be found on the SLVREC website: [www.slvrec.com](http://www.slvrec.com).

## Natural gas and propane

Xcel Energy is a distributor of natural gas to Monte Vista and the surrounding area.

Propane service is provided through businesses in Monte Vista, as well as others throughout the Valley.

## Telephone

CenturyLink and Spectrum provide telephone service to the area. Centurylink rate and service information can be obtained by calling (800) 244-1111 and Spectrum can be reached at (855) 757-7328.

Local wireless providers include AT&T, Verizon and Vieraero.

## Waste removal

Monte Vista waste removal services are provided by Waste Management Services (852-5895) and MDS Waste and Recycle (658-3060).

Pareidolia: The ability to see an image in a random or ambiguous visual pattern. (Pair-ah-dole-ee-ah)

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# Government

Monte Vista is governed by a council/city manager form of government, with a five-member elected council and mayor, who appoint the city manager.

The city provides a full line of services including police, municipal court, emergency services, public works, parks and recreation, street maintenance, water and sewer services. Fire services are provided through the Monte Vista Fire District.

## City Council:

**Mayor Dale Becker**  
dbecker@ci.monte-vista.co.us

## Councilors:

**Victor Sigala, Loren Howard, Martha Lock and Jason Lorenz**

## City Manager:

Ginette Dennis-Lounsbury  
CityMgr@ci.monte-vista.co.us

## Chief of Police:

George Dingfelder

## City Contact Info:

Phone: (719) 852-2692 Fax: (719) 852-6167  
[www.cityofmontevista.com](http://www.cityofmontevista.com)  
Address: 4 Chico Camino St.

## City Hours:

Monday-Thursday, 8 a.m. – 5:00p.m.;

## City of Monte Vista Boards Meeting Schedules:

(Held at City Hall, 4 Chico Camino, unless noted)

**City Council:** 1st and 3rd Thursday of every month, 6 p.m

**Worksessions:** 3rd Tuesday of every month, 6p.m.



## Planning and Zoning Commission:

4th Thursday of every month, 6 p.m.

## Urban Renewal Authority:

1st Tuesday of every month, 7 p.m.

## M.V. Municipal Airport Advisory Board

Intermittent, see City Manager for details.

## Tree Board:

2nd Wednesday of every month, 4:30p.m.

## Vali 3 Advisory Board:

139 Adams, 4th Monday of every month, 6p.m.

## City of Monte Vista's mission:

*"The City of Monte Vista is the largest City in the Rio Grande County and has a strong history of benefiting not only the residents, but the surrounding agricultural community. The City achieves these benefits by providing a base of Faith, Teamwork, Innovation, Transparency, Service, and sustainability for the community."*

## City of Monte Vista's Vision:

*"To create opportunity, growth, and a fertile and safe haven for education, recreation, business, and families to thrive."*

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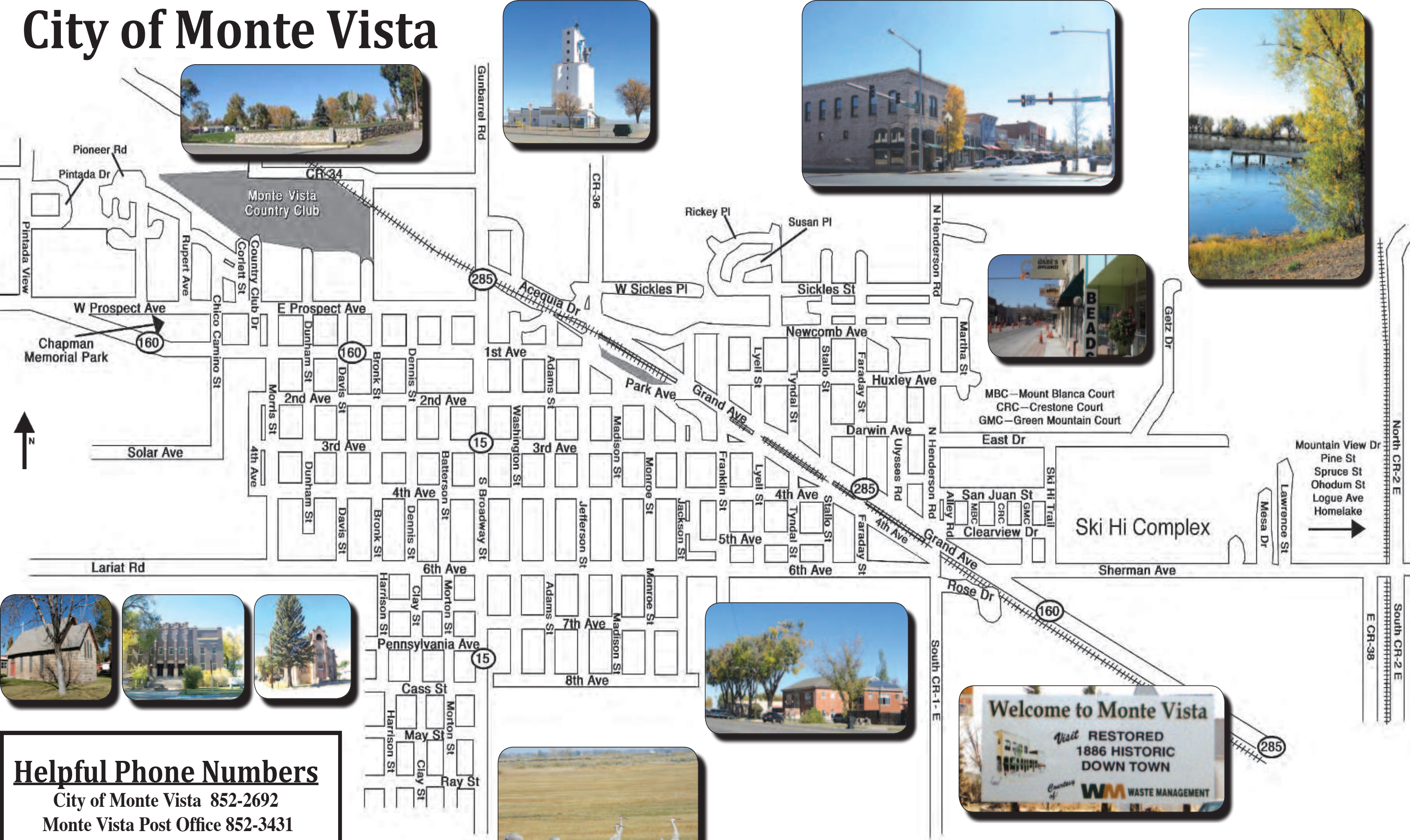
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\*SOME RESTRICTIONS MAY APPLY

# City of Monte Vista



## Helpful Phone Numbers

- City of Monte Vista 852-2692
- Monte Vista Post Office 852-3431
- National Weather Service 589-3232
- Rio Grande County Assessor 657-3326
- Rio Grande County Clerk 657-3334
- Police and fire 852-5111, 911

**JOURNAL**

*Valley Publishing*  
 (719) 852-3531  
 835 First Ave.  
 Monte Vista





# Education

The Monte Vista School District boasts more than 1,150 students and about 80 full-time classroom teachers. The teachers are exceptionally creative in meeting the needs of the district's talented students.

The district has two elementary schools, one middle school, two high schools, and an online academy.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), (the last academic year data available was 2020-2021) 51 percent of the students are of Hispanic descent and 48 percent white. The student teacher ratio is 14.41. The median household income in the district is \$38,175.65. 2 percent of the households have broadband internet. 17.1 percent of the families in the district earn an income below the poverty line. In 81.7% of the homes, English is the only language spoken at home.

The district is large enough to offer a wide variety of educational and extracurricular programs and small enough to provide personal attention to each student. The schools operate on a four-day week, with Fridays off.

Monte Vista School District opened an Early Learning Center for Pre-K in October of 2022.

**Marsh School, "The Sunshine School", "where purposeful play propels bright futures,"** serves students in preschool and kindergarten.

The learning environment is marked by nurturing teachers and excitement for learning.

Behavior expectations at Marsh are defined as the "3 C's" — CAPABLE: Showing "I can" by being persistent in mastering new skills and taking responsibility for my actions. COOPERATIVE: Working together so everyone can be safe and everyone can learn. CARING: Thinking of others and being a good friend.

Staff teaches, practices and reinforce these expectations in every area of the school.

The building was enlarged recently and the playground is a virtual tour of the San Luis Valley's natural attractions.

The Mission of Marsh School is "to provide children a "just right" place filled with purposeful play."

NCES data showed a student-teacher ratio of 12.89. For more information on Marsh School visit: <http://marsh.monte.k12.co.us/>

**Bill Metz Elementary** serves grades 2-5 and emphasizes child development, as well as dynamic instruction. Parents may choose from multi-age, looping or single-age options.

Featuring technology instruction, vocal and instrumental music, art, physical education, swimming, gifted and talented programming and many tutorial programs, the staff offers every student the opportunity to excel. Reading, composition and mathematics are stressed and the school's computerized library offers a rich learning resource.

The mission of Bill Metz Elementary is "to inspire the pursuit of excellence, one student at a time."

Bill Metz Elementary's vision is "to achieve educational excellence by preparing students, parents, staff and community members for the future."

The NCES dashboard shows a student-teacher ratio of 12.39 at Bill Metz.

The school is named after their former principal and district Superintendent, Dr. Bill Metz, who served at the Elementary from 1979 to 1984 before becoming Superintendent until 1993. "Dr. Metz was admired for his diligent work to improve academics and facilities for Monte Vista Students during his time as Superintendent." Dr. Metz passed away Oct. 1, 2020, at the age of 74.

For more information this school visit: <http://bme.monte.k12.co.us/>

**Monte Vista Middle School** serves grades 6-8 and bridges the gap between elementary and high school.

Its energetic teachers make a great match for young adolescent students. A full complement of intramural (6th grade) and extracurricular (7th and 8th grade) sports are offered and everyone gets a chance to play.

The music program includes a marching band, choir and other activities to hone each child's natural abilities. Their Mission is to "Build a safe, student focused; achievement oriented learning community for Everyone."

MVMS welcomed a new principal for the 2019-2020 Academic Year. Andrew Hawkins has lived in the SLV since 2002.

According to the NCES, MVMS has a student-teacher ratio of 12.5.

MVMS's website is: <http://mvms.monte.k12.co.us/>

**Monte Vista High School** serves grades 9-12.

Science students annually win regional, state and international honors, and the marching band has won state championships more times than any other high school band in Colorado, including last year most recently. Other programs have also boasted national competitors, including FBLA and SkillsUSA.

The technology program is also superb and the library is computerized. The school has an agreement with Adams State University wherein students can earn college credit while taking upper-level high school coursework — paid entirely by the district!

A new, modernized expanded building was completed in 2013 and includes new athletic facilities, parking and other amenities.

According to the NCES, MVHS has a student-teacher ratio of 14.44.

MVHS students are often seen volunteering at local organizations like Conour Animal Shelter and the Vali Theater and every Pirate Pride Day they volunteer to clean up various sites in the City of Monte Vista, including the

Monte Vista Cemetery and the Skate Park.

MVHS operates under the mantra of behavior that exhibits Pirate P.R.I.D.E. (Positive, Respectful, Inspiring, Devoted, Enthusiastic).

For more information visit: <http://mvhs.monte.k12.co.us/>

**The Byron Syring DELTA Center** offers a full range of core courses and elective courses. Students can earn a high school diploma from the Colorado accredited high school program or pursue their GED. The DELTA Center's primary function is to serve the needs of students and to help them gain the skills and knowledge necessary for success in life beyond school. The DELTA Center offers an individualized, self-paced, flexible learning environment that emphasizes personal commitment and progress.

According to their website, "The DELTA Center's primary function is existential (not just academic), and it is to serve the needs of high-risk students and to help them gain the skills and knowledge necessary for success beyond secondary school."

The NCES has a student-teacher ratio of 34.64 listed for the DELTA Center.

DELTA Center students are also often seen volunteering in the community and recently completed artwork for the Annual Swoop of the Cranes city-wide art project, which was displayed during the spring/summer in front of the Monte Villa Inn.

For more information visit: <http://bsdc.monte.k12.co.us/>

**The Monte Vista Online Academy** is "Colorado's First (since 1997) and more experienced online school in Colorado." It is "a free, accredited, public online school offering students anywhere in Colorado a rigorous curriculum taught by highly qualified, experienced teachers. We understand that not all students fit the traditional school mold, and we are pleased to offer a positive choice to those unique students still searching for an effective way to meet their educational needs." They ensure all the education for grades 4-12 meets Colorado Academic Standards and they also have dozens of elective offerings as well.

For more information about the Online Academy, visit: <http://www.mvola.org/>

**Monte Vista Headstart** is a non-profit institution for children ages 3-5 focusing on social, emotional, cognitive and physical development. Their Core Values are: "Quality: Provide best services available. Safety: Safe environment for staff, children, and families. Dedication: Staff and families are committed. Integrity: Honesty and professionalism, good morals/values, cohesiveness -- sticking together. Effectiveness: Meeting learning outcomes." Their Educational Services are:

Creative curriculum and research-based teaching strategies Gold

Assessment for each child to track long-term outcomes.

School and kindergarten readiness

Colorado state standard

Free nutritious meals

For more information visit: <http://mvheadstart.org>

**The Sargent School District** is located seven miles north of the City of Monte Vista. According to the NCES, they have over 300 students and an overall student-teacher ratio of 11.07. All of their schools, including a Pre-School, Elementary School, Junior High and High School are located on the same campus. Many of the Sargent Farmers' families represent their mascot accurately and are part of the farming and ranching community, essential to the SLV economy. 71 percent of Sargent students are white, 20 percent Hispanic or Latino, 7 percent American Indian/Alaskan Native and three percent identify as two or more races. The median income for parents in the Sargent District is \$73,438. 75.9 percent of parents are high school graduates themselves and 46.5 percent have at least some college education.

According to the NCES, the student-teacher ratio for the Elementary level is 11.96, the Junior High has a ratio of 9.49 and the High School has a ratio of 10.47.

Sargent School takes pride in having small schools with big results and "High numbers of science fair, Pan American Day, Art, Vocational Ag, FBLA and other award winners." Their Mission is to "Inspire students to care more, learn more, and experience more in a safe and engaging learning environment." Their Vision is "Dig deeper by placing students first while creating experiences that lead to lifelong learning and success."

For more information on the School District visit: <https://sargent.k12.co.us/>

**The Sargent Early Learning Center** accepts students from toddlers in their ones and twos to full-day preschool children. "The Sargent Early Learning Center is a Cooperative Learning Center with a developmentally appropriate program for preschool children. The program has been developed to be a positive experience to enhance self-esteem, social skills, developed motor skills and cognitive learning. These skills are developed through play, music and movement, readiness activities and learning centers. The children are under the guidance of a caring professional staff. The school provides a model preschool for children ages 1 through 5 and follows the Sargent School district calendar. The center is a licensed facility with a maximum of 60 children."

For more information on this program visit: <https://sargentearlylearning.wixsite.com/selc>

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---	---	---

The Rainbow's End thrift stores are locally-started, community-operated businesses that earn revenue through the resale of second-hand goods. 100% of the profits from Rainbow's End support La Puente's services. The thrift stores also provide affordable goods to those in need, employment, employment training opportunities, and outreach assistance to people experiencing homelessness and crisis situations. Annually over 16,000 individuals and family members receive at least one of La Puente's services, including emergency shelter, nutritious food from one of our 15 pantries, housing with supportive services, after-school youth-stabilization services, educational gardens, homeless prevention resources, soup kitchen meals, home outreach visits, and more.



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# ***Best of the Best in the San Luis Valley***

**Valley Courier**  
719-589-2553  
2205 State Ave. • Alamosa

**Published Wednesday, Oct. 25, 2023**

*Photo by Patrick Myers, National Park Service*

*Valley  
Publishing*  
719-852-3531  
835 First Ave. • Monte Vista



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# Winners announced in third annual 'Best of the SLV'

VALLEY- Nearly 17,000 votes were cast in the 2023 "Best of the San Luis Valley" online voting, an almost 60 percent increase over 2022. The annual contest is sponsored by the *Valley Courier* and Valley Publishing's six weekly papers.

A record number on nominations by category were also received in that portion of the contest, numbering over 1,100 and nearly doubling the number of nominations made last year.

The winners by category will be shared online today as well as in the printed columns to follow, declaring the "Best of the Best" in the San Luis Valley.

Several SLV businesses dominated voting by winning in more than one category, including Friar's Fork Restaurant, specializing in Italian cuisine, which also was nominated earlier

this year as one of the best new restaurants in the country. They were voted tops for Italian restaurant, romantic restaurant, best place to take an out of town guest, and best bartender.

Seven local businesses won in three categories: Sauvecito Grill, Garcia Auto, Lindo Jalisco, SLV Federal Bank, Kristi Mountain Sports, Rio Grande Hospital and Scrumpy Moo's.

Winning in two categories were: Big John's Furniture, Cottonwood Dental, Spare Keg Brewwerks, City Market, The Bridge retirement home, Colorado Realty, Chief Liquor, and Lucky Bamboo Asian Restaurant.

Many of the winners have consistently been voted the best since the contest started 10 years ago as the "Best of Alamosa."

Here are the results:



## Agriculture

### Best Equipment and Service

Sorum Tractor Co.,Inc

### Best Farm Sprinkler Service

Agro Engineering Inc

### Best Fertilizer & Pesticide

MV Co-op

### Best Meat Processor

Valley Meat Market Wholesale

### Best Potato Warehouse

Skyline Potato

## Best Seed Comapany Rio Grande Seed & Grain

## Arts & Entertainment

### Best Art Gallery

Pareidolia

### Best Attraction

Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve

### Best Family Entertainment

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### Best Festival

Stampede



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**Best Movie Theater/ Drive-in**

Ski-Hi 6 Theater

**Best Museum**

Fort Garland Museum & Cultural Center

**Best Musical Venue**

Society Hall

**Best Outdoor Event**

Ski Hi Stampede

**Best Place to Take Out of Town Guest**

The Friar's Fork & Sanctuary

**Best Places for Kid's Birthday Party**

The Playhouse

**Best Staycation Location**

Mellow Moon Lodge

**Best Theatre**

Creede Repertory Theatre

**Eating & Dining****Best Asian Restaurant**

Lucky Bamboo

**Best Bakery**

Worth the Drive Bakery

**Best Barbecue Restaurant**

Woody's Q Shack

**Best Bartender (name & place)**

The Friar's Fork & Sanctuary

**Best Beer Selection**

Spare Keg Brewerks

**Best Breakfast**

Campus Cafe

**Best Breakfast Burrito**

Sauvecito Grill

**Best Brunch**

Scrumpy Moo's of Monte Vista

**Best Catering**

Lindo Jalisco

**Best Chinese Restaurant**

Lucky Bamboo

**Best Coffee House**

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**Best Family Friendly Restaurant**

Scrumpy Moo's of Monte Vista

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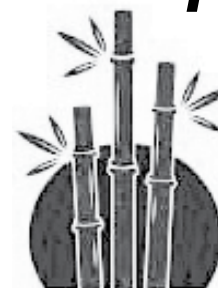
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# 'Roots' by Blessed Brews tops coffee houses



Selected top coffee house for six of the last 10 years, Roots by Blessed Brews was voted tops in 2023. Shown are, from left, Avery Palmgren, Bianca Romero, Lacey Cooley (owner), Jonna Murr, Sariaha Lopez, Lacy McKinley.

**Best Food Truck**  
Suavecito grill

**Best Friendliest Staff**  
Scrumpty Moo's of Monte Vista

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**Best Tacos**

Suavecito Grill

**Best Thai/Vietnamese Restaurant**

Lucky Bamboo

**Health & Fitness**

**Best Assisted Living Facility**

The Bridge at Alamosa

**Best Chiropractor**

SLV Health Stuart Ave Clinic

**Best Health & Fitness Clinic**

Defiance Health

**Best Dentist Office**

Cottonwood Dental Dr Darrell Jackson

**Best Eye Clinic**

Rocky Mountain Eye Center

**Best Hospital**

Rio Grande Hospital

**Best In-Home Care Providers**

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**Best Massage Therapist**

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Cottonwood Dental Dr. Darrell Jackson

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**Best Pulmonary Rehab**

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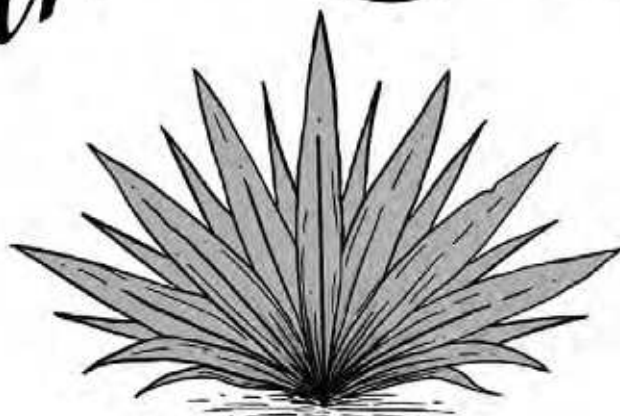
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Troy Plane - State Farm Insurance Agent

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**Friar's Fork captures four categories**

Friar's Fork Restaurant, specializing in Italian cuisine, which was also nominated earlier this year as one of the best new restaurants in the country, were voted tops for Italian restaurant, romantic restaurant, best place to take an out of town guest, and best bartender.



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North River Green House

**Best Lawn and Sprinkler Repair**

Holman Landscape &amp; Irrigation

**Best Local Non-Profit**

Tu Casa Inc.

**Best Mortgage/Home Loan Provider**

San Luis Valley Federal Bank

**Best Nail Salon**

Diamond Nails by Ceri

**Best Oil Change**

Garcia Auto Sales

**Best Pet Boarding/Grooming**

All-4-Paws, LLC

**Best Photographer**Kim Marquez  
Photography**Best Plumber**

Marty's Maintenance LLC

**Best Property Management Company**

KB property Terri Hussman

**Best Real Estate Agency**

Colorado Realty and Land Co.

**Best Tanning Salon/Spa**

Seaside Tan

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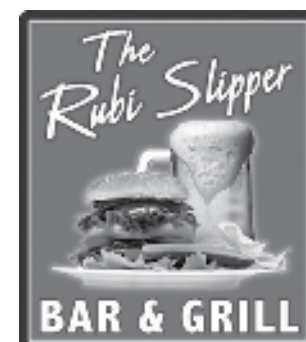
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**Best Dispensary/ Smoke Shop**

Elevated Recreations  
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**Best Flooring/ Carpet Store**

Del Mar Carpet One Floor & Home

# SLV Federal is a perennial winner



SLV Federal Bank topped the "Best of SLV" in three financial categories and just announced the edition of two new bank board members, Joe Martinez, left, and Greg Goodwin.

*Best Photographer & Videographer*

*Kim*  
**MARQUEZ**  
PHOTOGRAPHY

Mike & Kim thank you  
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# Three wins for Sauvecito



Sauvecito Grill (Monte Vista) owners Adrian and Amy Raya were joined by the Adams State mascot for their grand opening earlier this year. The restaurant picked up three first place honors in the dining category.

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# New restaurant wins three categories



Scruppy Moo's owners Wendy and Tim Davidson cut the ribbon during the grand opening for their restaurant on Saturday, Aug. 26 in downtown Monte Vista.



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