

Shorts



Dustin Ferguson

Jury finds Ferguson guilty of murdering Taylor

By PRISCILLA WAGGONER

ALAMOSA — Last week, the jury in the case of Dustin Ferguson, 36, accused of the February 2022 murder of Brian Taylor, 41, found Ferguson guilty of committing second-degree murder, a class 2 felony. In the state of Colorado, second-degree murder carries a minimum sentence of 8 years and a maximum sentence of 24 years in a Colorado State Prison with a mandatory parole of three years.

The prosecution also proved that Ferguson committed a crime of violence, which includes a sentence enhancer that increases the number of years Ferguson could spend in prison.

In Colorado, the sentence enhancer increases the minimum sentence for a class 2 felony to the midpoint of the presumptive sentencing range and allows for the maximum sentence to be twice the presumptive sentencing range. In other words, Ferguson is looking at a sentence ranging from 12 to 48 years. Also, mandatory parole is increased to five years.

District Judge Amanda Hopkins is presiding in the case and, following her review of a background report prepared by the probation department, will hand down Ferguson's sentence at a hearing scheduled for December 8.

During that hearing, Hopkins will presumably also hear statements made on behalf of the victim, Taylor, and on behalf of Ferguson.

According to the arresting documents obtained by the Valley

Center holds suicide prevention awareness race

By MARIE MCCOLM

CENTER — A suicide prevention awareness race took place on Friday, Oct. 6. The race began at the Center Viking Youth Club at 386 S. Broadway in Center. The race wound around the town of Center and ended back at the Center Viking Youth Club.

Center Viking Youth Club Director Carmen Pavlovsky said they did the race in collaboration with the Center School District's STARS Program.

"The STARS Program puts on this race every year for suicide awareness and prevention. We have a suicide coordinator Genesis Escalon. The person in charge of stars is Camille Villa. She is also the cross-country coach, and her

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Photo by Marie Mccolm

Some of the students that participated in the suicide prevention awareness race on Oct. 6 pose for a photo. The event was organized by the Center Viking Youth Club and Center School District's STARS Program.

Center Vikings Homecoming Celebration



Courtesy photos

The theme for the Center High School Homecoming Parade was 'Wonderful World of Disney.' The Junior Class took first place in the float competition with 'Coco.'

Right: Center High School named its Homecoming King and Queen during half-time of Friday's football game. The King was Jesus Valadez-Felix and the Queen was Yulisa Maldonado.

Photo by Marie Mccolm



Center School District staff got into the spirit of Homecoming Week by wearing pink 'Barbie' shirts.



Courtesy photo

Upper Rio Grande School District teacher Christi Dahle, left, receives a donation from Poor Boy Car Club founder Richard Garcia. Dahle was recently diagnosed with breast cancer.

Christi Dahle receives \$2,000 donation from Poor Boy Car Club

By MARIE MCCOLM

CENTER — Upper Rio Grande School District teacher Christi Dahle was recently diagnosed with breast cancer. The Poor Boy Car Club heard about Dahle's diagnosis with cancer and wanted to help her offset the costs of doctor visits and

Please see DONATION on Page 2A

Hooper celebrates new playground at annual festival

By MARIE MCCOLM

HOOPER — The sun was shining, the people were smiling, and a slight breeze, along with the fresh scent of hay, was present in the air at the Hooper Festival on Saturday, Oct. 7.

Hooper Town Park had a cozy, happy atmosphere with approximately 55 people. There were hay bales spread out over the park. People sat on hay bales and talked. Children ran back and forth on the grass. The vendor booths were busy.

Many people looked at and talked about the new playground equipment that was installed on the other side of Hooper Town Park.

Installation of the equipment began on Sept. 4. The playground

equipment was donated by a local school. Over a month, all the playground equipment was put up with help from volunteers in the community. A grant for the equipment installation and revitalization of the park was initiated by town trustee Mimi Dolan. There were three phases to the playground and park's progression, and the installation of the equipment was phase one and Saturday celebrated its completion.

Alamosa County Commissioner Lori Laske also attended the festival.

At 1 p.m., people gathered near the middle corner of the park, where a red ribbon with a bow had been placed, to officially open the newly

Please see FESTIVAL on Page 4A



Photo by Marie Mccolm

Hooper held a ribbon cutting for its new playground equipment on Saturday, Oct. 7.

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Frisch meets with voters in Alamosa, 3rd stop in 2 months

By PRISCILLA WAGGONER

ALAMOSA — Adam Frisch, a Democrat campaigning to run against Rep. Lauren Boebert in the 2024 election, was in Alamosa this week, making it the third visit to the San Luis Valley in two months. While in town, he took the opportunity to have a brief sit-down with the Valley Courier followed by a community conversation at the Purple Pig Pizzeria and Pub.

"I've said it from the beginning," he told the voters who had assembled. "People

are tired of the circus. They're tired of a representative to Congress who spends more time appearing on television than she does working for her constituents and getting things done. That's more true now than ever. Look at the chaos in Congress and she's a part of that."

Frisch was a political newcomer and relative unknown when he declared his candidacy in February of 2021. No one, either in the Democratic Party or in the cadre of pundits predicting outcomes, gave him much attention as the district

was designated as "strong Republican" with redistricting giving the incumbent a 9 point advantage.

But, as is repeated anytime Frisch's name comes up in media – both in the state and across the nation – he lost to Boebert by just 546 votes or .017%.

Nonetheless, Frisch is taking nothing for granted. "This district is still plus-9 and a year can be a long time. That's why we're on the road every week for more than 38,000 miles so far, telling people what we stand for and what we want to do. And they're listening. They're listening to what we have to say."

Although neither candidate has cleared their primaries, both appear – at this point – to be likely opponents in the race.



DONATION

Continued from Page 1A — chemotherapy treatments. Poor Boy Car Club founder Richard Garcia recently presented Dahle with a check for \$2,000.

Dahle's husband, Chris, was extremely grateful to the car club.

"We had heard that the car club was going to make a donation, but we had no idea how much," Chris Dahle said. "We saw the donation and we were like wow. The cost of getting to and from cancer treatments is so hard. This has really made such a huge difference for us. We are shocked and grateful to Richard and the car club for what they have done. This really shows you how truly generous people from the Valley can be. I mean people kind of keep to themselves but when somebody is in trouble, people here band together and help each other out. It's just one of the great things in this community. We are very grateful and truly appreciate it. We hope we can either pay it forward someday or recommend someone else who might need help too."

Christi Dahle spoke about some of her journey.

"I was diagnosed with breast cancer this summer. This was going to be our summer. It was our 25th wedding anniversary. We were going to do some nice things this summer and everything hit," she said.

Chris Dahle added, "We were at the hospital, and she had her mammogram on our anniversary. Then they got her in and did the biopsy on our anniversary, and on her birthday was when we got the positive result back for cancer. It was just hard; the timing was just hard. Everything we had planned to do on celebratory days, turned out to be days of more bad news. It was hard. She is so brave. We are all proud of her here. We have had to drive up for chemotherapy and that's been hard too."

Christi Dahle spoke about her journey.

"We have an amazing support team," she said. "Everybody that I have talked to in the San Luis Valley that has had cancer, has said they

went through this particular center in Colorado Springs, and they are really good. They are so positive there. The drive has been hard. It's been hard to get up at 3:30 every morning and drive. For different reasons we have felt like we can't get up there the night before. They have been so good about scheduling all our appointments on the same day too, but it is a lot."

Christi Dahle said she has done her initial chemotherapy appointments and is now facing surgery with a longer road to go.

Chris Dahle stated that he and his wife have about a year and a half to go before anything will be over, along with medication for many years after. He believes that they will be through the worst of it by the end of the year, but Christi will need chemotherapy after that.

"Despite all of this we are on the upswing though. Christi is very positive," he said.

"We have no other option," Christi said. "We are going to get through this. The support has just been amazing. From our church family, the community, the car club, everyone. We have had people bringing us meals. We appreciate everyone so much."

Chris Dahle said that when Christi went back to teach that everyone was wearing t-shirts one day that stated, "Together we fight in Christi."

Christi Dahle said she did not expect the car club donation at all. With tears in her voice Dahle said, "It totally caught me off guard. I was not expecting any of that. My jaw was on the floor, it was so amazing. The donation was presented to me at a staff meeting at the school. Richard Garcia was there, this happened two weeks ago. I was just completely amazed by the generosity that was shown to us."

Garcia was proud to issue the donation to Christi Dahle and said, "We are so happy to be able to help such a wonderful person in our community. It is our hope that it helps her, and she gets better very soon. We are so happy that we were able to help her."

GUILTY

Continued from Page 1A — Courier from the clerk of the court, at 10:30 p.m. on Feb. 23, 2022, Saguache County Sheriff's Office deputies were dispatched to a residence on County Road LL57 in Villa Grove in response to a reported stabbing.

The person who called the office was a neighbor calling on behalf of David Jackman, the owner and resident of the house who had fled the scene after witnessing the incident. Jackman named Ferguson as the suspect.

When the deputies arrived at the house, they reported seeing blood on the storm door to the residence. The door was locked.

They then looked through a window and saw the body of a man — later identified as Taylor — inside the house. Deputies announced their presence and forced entry into the

house where they found Taylor on the floor, showing no signs of life. The deputies reported that Taylor had apparently been stabbed several times in his back, head and neck.

One of the deputies went in pursuit of Ferguson, who was still in the area, ultimately taking him into custody without incident. In his report, the deputy states he saw several cuts on Ferguson's hand that "were not actively bleeding." Ferguson was then transported to the sheriff's office in the custody of another deputy with SCSO.

The deputies then spoke to Jackman who said that Ferguson was his roommate. Taylor, who had reportedly worked with both Jackman and Ferguson in the past, had come to Jackman's house when his car had "broken down" nearby.

Murder suspect may be in the Alamosa area

STAFF REPORT

DENVER — The Denver Police Department (DPD) issued a statement on Tuesday, Oct. 3, that a murder suspect, Jesus Arvizo, may be in the Alamosa area.

In early April, family members of James Montoya reported him missing. Investigators determined he was last seen leaving a bar in Lakewood at 2:30 a.m., on April 2. Due to information obtained in the case, the Denver Police Department was assigned the case and determined that Montoya was killed in Denver. In July, human remains

were found in Saguache County, which were later determined to be Montoya's remains.

On Tuesday, DPD asked for the public's assistance with locating Jesus Arvizo, 33, who is wanted for the murder of Montoya. Arvizo lives in Denver but is believed to be in the Alamosa area.

Anyone with information regarding the whereabouts of Arvizo is asked to call the Alamosa County Sheriff's Office at 719-589-6608, or the Alamosa Police Department at 719-589-2548, or Metro Denver Crime Stoppers at 720-913-7867.



Jesus Arvizo

RACE

Continued from Page 1A — cross-country kids are running too. We all work together on this," she said.

Pavlovsky explained that the students and children in the race received a t-shirt that many wore in the race. The t-shirts had the phrase "No Story Should End Too Soon" printed on them.

"Our goal is to bring suicide awareness and to help end a taboo, to help kids feel comfortable in talking about it," she said. "We want people to feel comfortable talking about it. We have Genesis for students, who want to talk about this, if they are having thoughts like this. Students do think about this, more than anyone realizes. Our goal is to help students feel comfortable talking about this. We want the word 'suicide' to be normal in conversation for students. We want them to hear it, know what it means, and if they are feeling a certain way they can go to a counselor and tell them I am having these thoughts."

Pavlovsky said that the STARS Program helps with this too.

"So, we have students that are in STARS. We have high school students that are paired with middle school students, and we have mentors and mentees, so that they can look up to them for advice. High school students can lean on each other. Everyone also

has these adults that are there for them to go to. Our goal is for the students to know that they have trusted friends and people that they can go to for help. We have all these people together to help as a community to prevent suicide if anyone is having thoughts about it. Our main goal is to get these messages out there, with this run too."

Pavlovsky said the Center Viking Youth Club meets every day, Monday through Thursday after school, and all day on Fridays.

"We provide time for students here. We provide snacks, and different activities. We provide social emotional learning, we ride bikes and skateboards, we learn about making healthy choices. We have the kids help us make the snacks and make their own lunch. We do science projects and art projects. Also, depending on the time of year, we might add different things. We also celebrate holidays."

The club will be doing something for Dia De Los Muertos Day and trick or treating, for example.

"A lot of the students that we have here,

well their parents might really need this space, because their parents might be working until 5 or 6 o'clock, and they need somewhere for their kids to go," she said. "We try to provide education and food, but our number one goal is building relationships. We try to provide a safe, educational space and there is a tuition fee, but we do not turn the kids away if they don't have the fee. We are also working on trying to provide transportation too. I feel the club and this run go hand in hand, because we are definitely about building positivity and good relationships."

STARS Program Director Camille Villa said they had a good turnout for the race.

"The STARS Program stands for students teaching about relationship success," Villa said. "We get high school mentors to middle schoolers, and then we have staff members that mentor the high school students. It's a chain down. It works out really good and we do a lot of activities. We do this every year, for suicide prevention. We really care a lot about that."

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The three men were reportedly drinking beer when, according to Jackman, Ferguson made it apparent he did not like Taylor. Jackman then witnessed Ferguson stabbing Taylor, at which point Jackman fled from the house and ran to the neighbor's residence where the sheriff's office was called.

FULL-TIME SALES

Valley Publishing has an immediate need in advertising sales (full-time).

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Back to the grindstone

Way back in the day when Ol' Dutch was working three different careers at the same time, I used to take vacations to try and rest up a bit. That isn't how it turned out, though. My kids wanted to have fun and we jammed so many things in a week of break that I had to go back to work to rest.

Since retiring, I have noticed that I am busier than ever and actually feel like I have not had a day off since I quit working proper. A lot of seniors feel the same way as they get involved in so many activities that there is never a break.

This past summer Miss Trixie signed us up for any and every activity that came along and what with working for Mountain Man Rafting too, we were busy as the proverbial beaver. Maybe even busier, too, as we had every tree cut down within 100 miles, so to speak.

September came with a rush and 28 days of non-stop hunting about did Ol' Dutch in but I made it through and walked some 130 miles in pursuit of the mighty wapiti and poor old bear.

That too came to an end, and we soon found ourselves back in Texas on the ranch. But true to form the very next day we had to babysit the Grands and that was just a lot of continuous driving to soccer and horse-riding venues.

Finally, their long-lost parents made it home and we retired to the farm to unpack from the summer. Ol' Dutch was soon immersed in mowing the back 40 to get rid of the weeds and Trixie working on the abode to get it back into livable condition.

I came in from mowing late and lo and behold Miss Trixie had injured her eye. It was blood red and looked terrible. I guess I will have to keep her locked up here for a while as people will think I finally snapped and poked her a good one. Which is so silly as everyone that knows us says she can take me any day of the week and heck that's probably about true.

I think Ol' Dutch is finally going to build a ranch house on the hill, and so it's going to be a winter of



Trout Republic
by Kevin Kirkpatrick

pounding labor to get that up and going. I usually do almost all the work myself but it's going to be harder at 67 years old, I am sure.

We are already looking for materials all over the greater Dallas area as there are deals out there like you cannot believe if you look. Miss Trixie even found free bathtubs from the manufacturer that may have a flaw on the back etc. but otherwise are in perfect condition.

I found some plywood at one-fourth the cost of what it cost at the big box store so that was a godsend, too. 2x4's and other lumber is about the same as there is so much building going on here that leftover lumber is a dime a dozen. Well, maybe not that cheap but it's definitely worth looking for aftermarket sources.

And while I have most of the tools necessary to build such a structure, there is always something a guy needs and so I will get to buy some new toys I am sure which is always a win-win for any man.

So, if you get bored or too cold where you are and need a vacation, I encourage you to come on down and help with the house. That way when you go home you can rest up from your winter break. It's how we are.

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 or on Twitter at TroutRepublic.

Adventures in Fall Foliage

The forecast was favorable, predicting a sunny fall day as is typical of the high mountain valleys this time of year. It started out cold but with each mile we drove, it seemed to get warmer. We made the familiar left turn onto County Road 14 and started the gradual climb toward the beckoning San Juan Mountains. A few miles, up the familiar brown sign announced our turn onto Forest Road 333. I reached down to engage the four-wheel drive on the truck because I have heard the reputation of this road before. There was no hurry and if there was it wouldn't have mattered. The road just does not allow a fast drive. No matter. Nothing we wanted to do would change in the next couple of hours.

Creeping up the road, we first experienced the openness of what I call the "PJ," meaning the area of forest that is dominated by pinyon and juniper trees. Open parks and well-established timber "stringers" characterize the PJ in this area, making it prime habitat for elk and deer. I suspected that this area is well-used by those animals during the winter months. We pushed through a small section of private land, respectfully staying on the road and closing each gate behind us. The rough road encouraged me to pay attention, but all I really wanted to do was look around. I love exploring places I've never been, and I often declare it unfair that I have to concentrate on driving, so I don't hit a tree or bash into an unsuspecting rock. Regardless, we crept up the road because I knew there were sights to see.

I got through "the narrows" without incident but couldn't imagine meeting another vehicle or two in that area. The landscape opened up and provided several tantalizing opportunities to set out on foot to gain higher ground and ever better views. But we remained in the truck, skirting the edge of the forest and forcing resting cows to evacuate their comfy rock and dirt roadbeds, and eventually reached the end of the road at the edge of a massive aspen glade.

We quickly added another layer of clothing to combat the cool breeze, grabbed the backpack and water and headed out up the open hillside, purposely avoiding the Schrader trail. We just wanted to wander. The aspens were early in their fall color splendor but still wonderful to admire from within the stand as well as on the ridge to the west. We looped back toward the truck as I crashed noisily through the aspens; the irony of me silently hoping to see elk was amusing. I didn't see elk and we stopped to snap a couple of photos just before loading back up. It was a short hike, but nonetheless fulfilling. Just being in the fall colors in the middle of nowhere serves as a reset to my soul. I often will just drive up to a favorite location and sit in the truck listening to the leaves rustling in the breeze.

There are many forest roads that do not require four-wheel drive where you can enjoy miles of leaf peeping bliss. Most will offer some opportunities for a short hike that doesn't have to be difficult at all. I like to wander, leaving trails as often as I can. But I encourage



Land Water and People
By Gregg Goodland

you to only do that if you are fully aware of your surroundings and have a plan in case you turn up somewhere you weren't expecting.

We bounced back down the rough, rocky road and made it home with a quiet contentedness about us that day. That's what I always get when I spend time in the woods, especially without a specific purpose. If you haven't done that, I encourage you to try it. I posted a couple of the photos my wife took of the aspens in Schrader Creek that day on the Rio Grande National Forest's Facebook page.

Gregg Goodland is the Public Affairs Officer for the Rio Grande National Forest. An avid outdoor enthusiast, he promotes the responsible and safe use of our public lands.

Lo que sucede dentro del hogar — What happens within the home

By SAN LUIS VALLEY IMMIGRANT RESOURCES CENTER

Survivors of domestic violence have a similar story to share, but what sets the experiences of immigrant survivors aside from others? In particular, the experiences of Latino immigrant survivors living in the San Luis Valley.

Lo que sucede dentro del hogar, se queda dentro del hogar. What happens within the home stays within the home. Unfortunately, this phrase resonates with most immigrant survivors of domestic violence as it is an innate way of living for them. Specifically, any domestic issue that occurs within the home must remain a private affair and domestic violence is no exception. The notion even goes further to include that despite domestic violence causing suffering and chaos within the home, the survivor is expected to live with it for the sake of keeping their family together. The formal term for this concept is familismo.

Aside from familismo, immigrant survivors face many other challenges as to why they remain in abusive relationships. The main challenge they face involves language barriers as the majority (of whom live in the Valley)

primarily speak Spanish or Q'anjob'al, a Mayan language from Guatemala.

The lack of language justice found within organizations throughout the Valley causes negative implications as immigrant survivors are afraid to call certain service providers and/or organizations to seek assistance despite meeting their qualifications. Some are even afraid to call law enforcement not only because of the language barrier, but because they believe calling the police will automatically put them at risk of losing their legal status in the U.S. or getting deported. In fact, abusers will intimidate or threaten their victims by saying they will call ICE on them if they leave the relationship, take the children elsewhere, disclose the abuse to anyone, or simply for remaining in contact with friends and/or family. Another challenge that is common amongst immigrant survivors living in the Valley involves feeling overwhelmed and/or untrusting of the Judicial System simply because victim rights are nonexistent in their home country and the U.S. judicial system is a foreign arena to them. Lastly, adequate, and affordable housing is a huge barrier that immigrant survivors face. The majority of immigrant survivors are undocumented, stay-at-

home-mothers, non-English speakers, and single parents. All these factors affect them in obtaining housing because they lack legal status, a social security number, employment, and credit history, etc.- which are usual requirements by most landlords/rental agencies. Needless to mention, the SLV has a huge housing crisis as rental units are very scarce, and rent is very high.

How can San Luis Valley immigrant survivors of domestic violence be better supported? They can be better supported by receiving services in their native language, receiving information about their victim rights, and SLV organizations collaborating with one another, especially with the SLV Immigrant Resource Center (SLVIRC).

The SLVIRC can offer assistance to survivors through its Crime Victim Housing (CVH) and legal assistance program. Under the CVH program, survivors can receive financial assistance, interpretation services, assistance in navigating the Judicial System and advocacy. As for the legal assistance program, they can receive information and assistance in filing for immigration relief under VAWA or the U-Visa, both free of charge. For any information, please reach out to SLVIRC at 719-587-3225.

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All letters must be signed by the author and include a phone number and address where the author can be reached (these are not for publication). Letters forwarded from other organizations or sent to staff and not for print must be designated as such. Letters over 300 words and without contact information will be returned to

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Photos by Marie McColm

People spent part of their Saturday afternoon at the second annual Hooper Festival on Saturday, Oct. 7.

FESTIVAL

Continued from Page 1A

installed playground equipment to the public.

Hooper Mayor Tommy Dentler said, "The last month the whole entire town has come together to put together this playground for the community. They went from Saturday from 9 in the morning until 5 in the afternoon, weekdays from 5 in the afternoon until 8 at night. We were working in the rain, wind, in the dark, we had headlights on, just to get it done. We are very, very excited. I am grateful and humbled. A lot of us believed that we could not get it done in the specific time frame. I am very grateful and excited that we did. Thank you, guys, very much for that. I really appreciate it. I am going to welcome up Lori Laske. She is going to go ahead and say a couple of words and we will go from there. Thank you."

Commissioner Laske then said, "I am Lori Laske as the mayor mentioned. I am the Alamosa County Commissioner that is for this region. I just want to tell you we are proud of Alamosa County helping with some of the funding for this project. The truly remarkable thing about this project is what this community has done in your leadership. When you have Mayor Dentler, and the board of trustees to lead you in this and to put this project together, specifically we had Mimi Dolan one of your trustees that got a matching grant. This is truly a sense of community. I can tell you I have never seen this much commitment and devotion from the community. I just want to tell you I take a lot of pride in that in Alamosa. I also want to tell the rest of Colorado, bring it on. I can tell



Children, and some adults, played on the new playground equipment on Saturday, Oct. 7, at the Hooper Town Park.

you what the community looks like, it's called Hooper, Colorado! Would you all help me give a big round of applause to the mayor and trustees."

Commissioner Laske then recognized the trustees. Mayor Dentler gave a special thank you to Dolan.

"She is actually the one who started the grant, took care of it, and put it into motion," he said. "The first grant ever in the town of Hooper, in 125 years. We want to thank you and we appreciate it from the bottom of our heart."

Trustee Dolan said, "I have lived here for over 25 years, and in that time, I have never seen so much community at work. It is amazing and heartwarming because I know that this is where I am going to stay. I know this is my home. It is so nice to see it coming together like this."

Mayor Dentler then called everyone together to cut the ribbon.

"Alright guys on the count of 3 the playground is open," he said. Mayor Dentler counted down from three to one and cut the ribbon.

Mayor Dentler also chuckled and said, "This is for the kids, and for the community, and a couple of the guys went down the slide too."

Garcia not guilty in murder trial of Jones

By PRISCILLA WAGGONER

DEL NORTE — Barely 24 hours after going into deliberation, the jury in the case of Jimmy Garcia, on trial for allegedly murdering Jacque Jones, has found Garcia not guilty.

The verdict ends a journey that began in March of 2014 when Jones died of asphyxiation. At question was whether the 24-year-old young woman had committed suicide — a question that was not unanimously resolved even by the medical examiners and the coroner who determined the cause of death to be "cause unknown" and "suicide" respectively.

From the beginning, Jones' family did not believe Jones had ended her own life and repeatedly advocated for the young woman's death to be investigated as a murder.

Due to the efforts and continuing persistence of officers with the



Monte Vista Police Department, an investigation was conducted, and enough evidence gathered to warrant a preliminary hearing which found sufficient cause to bind the case over to trial.

Garcia has repeatedly proclaimed his innocence, stating that when he found Jones, she had already passed away.



After nine days of detailed testimony in the Del Norte courtroom of District Judge Kimberly Cortez, the jury went into deliberation and returned with the not guilty verdict.

The Valley Courier has reached out to attorneys for both the defense and the prosecution for their thoughts and reactions but had not received a response by press time.

Wednesday shooting suspect in custody

Victim treated for non-life-threatening injuries

STAFF REPORT

ALAMOSA — A 27-year-old Alamosa man is in custody on several charges after allegedly shooting another man around 3 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 4, in Century Mobile Home Park, 1700 State Ave.

Lee Medina was taken into custody and transported to the Alamosa County Detention Center where he is being charged with first-

degree assault, felony menacing and possession of a weapon by a previous offender.

The male party who was shot was transported to San Luis Valley Health Regional Medical Center where he was treated for non-life-threatening injuries. The victim's identity has not been released.

Alamosa Police Department officers responded to the scene at about 3:15 p.m. to a disturbance where possible shots were fired. A news release from APD indicated that an altercation took place leading to the

subject being shot.

"This was an isolated incident and detectives are actively investigating," the APD release said. "There is no threat to the community at this time."

The APD thanked other local agencies who assisted, including the Alamosa County Sheriff's Office, Adams State University Police Department and the Colorado State Patrol. This is an active-ongoing investigation, and no further information will be released at this time, APD stated.

San Luis Valley Scoreboard 2022 -2023

Football

6-Man

Mountain Valley 56

..... Sangre de Cristo 7

Manzanola 52 Antonito 26

La Veta 36 Sierra Grande 31

8-Man

Sanford 52 Norwood 14

Sargent 42 Dolores 12

Class 1A

Centauri 42 Del Norte 6

Ignacio 53 Center 18

Monte Vista 64 Trinidad 12

College

CSU-Pueblo 43 Adams State 10

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Cheslocks are appreciative of care at SLVH RMC Emergency Department

By SAN LUIS VALLEY HEALTH

ALAMOSA — “I am not one for drama, but literally, the SLVH Regional Medical Center Emergency Department saved my life,” said Rachel Cheslock. “They continued to follow their protocol when at the time, my husband Lance and I were ready to go back home thinking I had indigestion or issues with my esophagus.”

After the third hour of going through the heart attack protocols in the ED at the RMC, Rachel’s earlier symptoms had all but disappeared. As a healthy 45-year-old non-smoker with no underlying causes, she and Lance dismissed the idea of the heart attack she thought she was having earlier in the day. She took an aspirin at home when the pain moved from her chest to her arm, then rested and felt a little better. As she tried to stand up and had difficulty walking, she asked her husband Lance to take her to the ED in Alamosa.

As they sat waiting for the results from the third blood test, they began planning the rest of their day when they would be released to go home. Then everything changed in a hurry

when her third troponin test resulted in an extremely increased reading. A troponin test measures the levels of troponin T or troponin I proteins in the blood. These proteins are released when the heart muscle has been damaged, such as when it occurs with a heart attack. The more damage there is to the heart, the greater the amount of troponin T will be in the blood.

Dr. Laura Edgerly-Gibb approached the couple and said, “We are going to fly you to Penrose Hospital immediately because something is going on.”

After spending time going through many more tests at Penrose, the team used a heart catheter to get an inside look. They found a very unusual situation of a 2.3 cm tear that was

creating blockage. It was repaired by inserting two stents.

“The amazing thing about this whole situation is that I do not have heart damage. The EKG never showed that my heart was dying. During my time at the SLVH RMC, they gave me blood thinners, and nitrate, and kept on top of their protocols. Even though the EKG and other tests were not showing any issues, and my pain had mostly subsided, they kept me there and kept me safe. I’d like to share some key takeaways with others.

- Don’t ignore your symptoms. Go get checked out. Follow up.
- Even though providers are not always 100% sure, they have protocols to follow. Be patient.

• The care and professionalism at SLV RMC were second to none. I felt important, I was seen and respected. They were not taking chances, they never doubted me, and everyone treated me with the utmost compassion and kindness.

Lance would like to thank the nursing staff who met Rachel at the door with a wheelchair and followed up with transfer details, always with a professional, kind, and caring attitude: Amanda, Sara, Colleen, and Dr. Edgerly-Gibb! As only Lance can say, “We are incredibly grateful to have such good people in our rural area. The staff did not miss a detail, even ensuring the flight nurse had cardiac experience. We are eternally grateful!”



Lance and Rachel Cheslock

Nursing and Therapy Services of Colorado embraces inclusive care for disabilities community in Alamosa

By NURSING AND THERAPY SERVICES OF COLORADO

ALAMOSA — Nursing and Therapy Services of Colorado DBA (NTSOC) is providing an inclusive home health service to the disability community in the town of Alamosa. With a strong dedication to fostering a supportive and empowering environment, NTSOC aims to address the unique needs of individuals with disabilities, promoting their independence and enhancing their overall quality of life.

As a leading home health agency in Colorado, NTSOC recognizes the importance of delivering personalized care that respects the diverse backgrounds and abilities of the community it serves. By

incorporating an inclusive tone throughout its operations, NTSOC seeks to create a safe and welcoming environment where individuals with disabilities can thrive, receiving the highest standard of care.

“At NTSOC, we firmly believe that everyone deserves access to quality healthcare, regardless of their abilities,” said Daunte Davis, the agency’s spokesperson. “[We] committed to ensuring that individuals with disabilities in the city of Alamosa and its surrounding communities receive the compassionate care they deserve, tailored to their unique needs and goals.”

To ensure exceptional care for individuals with disabilities, NTSOC has implemented a range of measures. These include specialized training for their healthcare professionals to

address the specific challenges faced by individuals with disabilities. The agency’s team undergoes ongoing education and development to stay up to date with the latest advancements in disability care and to provide the highest level of support possible.

Furthermore, NTSOC actively collaborates with local organizations and advocacy groups to foster a strong network of support for the disability community in Alamosa. By working closely with these organizations, the agency strives to enhance its understanding of the community’s needs and provide tailored services that promote independence and well-being.

The agency offers a wide range of services, including skilled nursing care, physical therapy, occupational

therapy, speech therapy, Certified Nursing Assistant training and hiring for family caregivers and more. These services support individuals with disabilities in their own homes, allowing them to access the care they need in a familiar environment.

NTSOC welcomes inquiries from individuals with disabilities and their families and caregivers in the San Luis Valley area. [NTSOC] committed to providing personalized care plans that address the unique needs and goals of each individual. By fostering a culture of inclusivity, they aim to empower individuals with disabilities to lead fulfilling lives in their community.

For more information about NTSOC and their inclusive home health services, please visit www.ntsoc.com.

Make A Difference Day is Oct. 28

CONTRIBUTED

MONTE VISTA — Make A Difference Day will be held from 8 a.m. to noon on Saturday, Oct. 28. The day is made possible by the Baer family, community donations and the San Luis Valley Regional Waste Authority.

People can use the San Luis Valley Regional Landfill by making a food donation that will be donated to the Monte Vista Food Bank.

- Pickup or carload of trash or yard waste can be made for 16 food items.
- Single-axle trailer with trash or yard waste can be dumped for 16 food items.
- Loaded pickup and single-axle trailer with trash or yard waste can be dumped for 32 food items.
- Double-axle trailer with trash or yard waste can be dumped for 32 food items.
- Loaded pickup and double-axle trailer with trash or yard waste can be dumped for 48 food items.
- Dump truck with trash or yard waste can be dumped for 64 food items.

There are some items that require a food donation and additional fee.

- Passenger tire off rim \$3; on rim \$4.
 - Semi-truck tire with no rim \$9.
 - Tractor tire with no rim \$18.50.
- Tire count by tire type will be needed at time of check in. Ten or more tires require a waste tire manifest form signed at time of check in.
- Electronics and TV recycling fee schedule available at the slvlandfill.com
 - Mattress or box springs \$8 each.
- No commercial haulers or businesses admitted for the donation prices. All loads must be secure and covered. All landfill regulations will be enforced, visit slvlandfill.com
- For more information, call 719-852-3810.

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K-9 ACSO officer Blitz, 'no better partner'

By PRISCILLA WAGGONER

ALAMOSA — Walking into Patrol Sgt. "Gilley" Gilleland's office at the Alamosa County Sheriff's Department (ACSO) it's hard to believe that Blitz, the handsome, 120-pound bloodhound snoring in the corner, is capable of amazing feats. But just ask Gilleland, Blitz's handler, partner, and best friend, and the list of the bloodhound's accomplishments will make a believer of even the worst skeptic.

"He found his first suspect in Mosca," Gilleland says. Blitz was barely half-a-year-old, and they were tracking a man with new felony charges. "It was a short track, but he picked up the scent from the seat in the suspect's car and led us right to the house where he was."

Blitz has been a member of the sheriff's office since Nov. 3, 2019, when the 10-week-old pup was donated by the Alie Foundation, a non-profit named in honor of a little girl who was kidnapped, assaulted, and killed in the early 1990s. The child was found by a bloodhound who, along with the little girl, is honored as the nonprofit donates bloodhounds to law enforcement agencies across the state.

Sgt. Gilleland was the natural choice to be Blitz's partner. Not only was he the most willing, but the former Marine also has four "hounds" of his own. Gilleland immediately reached out for training with Bloodhound Man-trackers, a company owned and operated by former law enforcement officers and handlers who train bloodhounds across the state and the nation.

When training was completed, Gilley was presented with a medallion bearing the image of St. Hubert, patron saint of hunting. He still wears it today. Since then, Gilley has continued to train Blitz, one-to-one, on his own.

"Blitz is trained to track and trail," he says, meaning he can both track a scent on the ground and in the air. "No canine has better smell. Dogs have 50 million more scent receptors than humans. Bloodhounds have 300 million more scent receptors than any other breed of dogs."

He smiles, and says, "He's basically a nose with a dog's body."

Gilley and Blitz have tracked distances ranging from 50 yards to 13 miles, an extraordinary find that involved a trek through rough mountain terrain on a very dark night in search of two lost hikers. They had to turn back because of the weather, but when conditions cleared, Blitz had led searchers to less than a mile from where the hikers were ultimately found.

"He's tracked off a single footprint in the snow, in the middle of winter in 20 degrees below zero weather. He tracked two suspects off a single footprint in the snow in Alamosa." At one point, Gilley

says, the suspects split up and then came back together, but the move failed to throw Blitz off the scent.

In the three-and-a-half years they've been partners, Gilley and Blitz have found between 50 and 60 suspects.

As the bloodhound also "does cadavers," Gilleland estimates Blitz has found between 20 and 25 bodies and helped every agency in the Valley, each time with Gilley following at the end of a 15-foot lead. "He's also worked on CBI [Colorado Bureau of Investigation] cold cases. In one case, he found a body that was missing for five years."

Together, they have accomplished amazing things, but equally inspiring is the relationship between the bloodhound and man. They come to work together every day and go home together. Blitz is part of the Gilleland family and part of the Gilleland pack. In an extraordinary move by Alamosa County Sheriff Robert Jackson — who has had two K-9 partners in his career — Blitz is Gilley's dog. If Gilleland leaves the force, Blitz leaves with him. "He doesn't think it's right to separate a dog and his handler," Gilleland says.

"But there's no better partner than Blitz. He's always watching my back. If I'm somewhere and maybe a couple of guys who are drunk or whatever walk by, he's on alert, barking and letting me know what's going on."

One experience stands out among the rest.

"We were on the worst case we'd ever been on. It was grisly," Gilleland says. "Even Sheriff Jackson and Undersheriff Woods said they'd never seen anything like it. We were there for probably eight hours and whenever I looked back at

the car, Blitz was standing in his kennel, watching me the whole time.

"When I got in the car to leave, I admit, the murder had gotten to me. Blitz put his head over the seat and buried it in my shoulder and rode like that all the way home. He knew. He knew what I felt. He's helped me out

with a lot of tragic things you see in a job like this."

And now, thanks to a donation from Spike's K9 Friends, Blitz has a new \$3,000 Kevlar vest for his protection.

"It's good that he's got that. You never know what someone will do," Gilleland says.

As if on cue, Blitz gets up, stretches and then sits by his partner's side.

"Yeah, that's a real good thing," Gilleland says.

In addition to Patrol Sgt., Gilleland is a Firearms Instructor, on the SWAT team and teaches firearms training at Trinidad State's Police Academy.

NOTICE OF ELECTION RIO GRANDE COUNTY TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2023

TO THE ELECTORS OF RIO GRANDE COUNTY

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a General Election will be held by Mail Ballot on Tuesday, the 7th of November, 2023 between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. If you are a registered voter, you will receive a ballot at your mailing address beginning October 16th. Mail Ballots may be dropped off at the Rio Grande County Clerk's Office, 965 Sixth Street, Del Norte, Colorado, Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Ballots may also be dropped off on Saturday, November 4th from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Election Day, November 7th. A 24-Hour Drop Box is available on the west side of the building at 965 Sixth Street, Del Norte. Ballots can also be mailed using the envelope enclosed with the ballot. Ballots must be received at the County Clerk's Office by 7:00 P.M. on November 7th. The Postmark does not count as being received.

Your ballot will contain only the Races or Issues on which you are eligible to vote.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal of the office of the County Clerk and Recorder this 2nd day of October 2023.



Cindy Hill
Rio Grande County Clerk and Recorder



Courier photo by Priscilla Waggoner
Alamosa County Sheriff's Department Patrol Sgt. 'Gilley' Gilleland and his amazing K-9 partner and friend, Blitz.

The Beauty of Change

I think one of the greatest lessons God ever taught me is that we can't change ourselves—only He can help us grow and mature. How does He do it? Growth occurs when we spend time with the Lord and pursue a more intimate relationship with Him.

When we take time to read and study His Word, the Bible says we are constantly being transfigured into His very own image in ever increasing splendor and from one degree of glory to another... (2 Corinthians 3:18 AMPC). Throughout our lives, He continues to work with us and help us grow, gradually becoming more like Him.

God causes us to begin noticing things in our behavior that maybe we didn't notice before. Thank heaven, He doesn't show us everything we need to change all at once or we'd be overwhelmed! But God knows exactly how much we can handle, and at the perfect time.

I'll give you an example. Over the years, the Lord has worked with me quite a bit about my mouth. I used to be very harsh, judgmental, and critical. I can remember so many times when my husband, Dave, and I would get into an argument, then afterward the Lord would speak to my heart and say, "I want you to go and apologize to him." But God! I would think. He's guilty, too. Why can't he apologize to me?

It used to make me so mad that Dave could "get away with things" that I couldn't. But the Lord works with each one of us at different times about different things. I'm not responsible for Dave—I'm only responsible for what the Holy Spirit shows me to do.

It's also vitally important to remember that when the Holy Spirit shows us something that needs to change, we can't do it on our own. It is only through God's strength and spending time with Him that we become more like Christ and make

an impact here on earth.

Second Corinthians 5:20 says, We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us... (NIV). In other words, we are here to show Jesus to the world. In fact, each one of us has a distinct sphere of influence. There are people you can reach that nobody else can! That's why Jesus says it's so important for you to "let your light shine before others" (Matthew 5:16 NIV).

I think when it comes down to it, we all just want to be happy. And here's the truth: Growing up spiritually is the only way we'll ever truly be happy.

Before God helped me to grow and change, I was easily controlled by my circumstances; I was only happy when everything was going well. I constantly made decisions based on how I felt "in the moment," and it was a recipe for true misery!

I lived this way for years. I thought, I'll be happy if Dave stops playing so much golf. I'll be happy when my kids start helping me more around the house. I'll be happy when that aggravating person at church finally changes.

But God helped me learn that if we're going to wait for our circumstances to change in order to be happy, then we'll never be happy! God wants to help us rise above the circumstances in our lives. He desires for us to have His joy and peace on the inside...even when things aren't perfect.

For years, I wanted everyone and everything else to change. But God has a better plan! He says to us, "I want you to change."

Growing and changing isn't about trying to be perfect or earning God's love and approval. However, the Lord loves you too much to let you stay where you are. I've learned that when God shows us an area of our life that needs to change, He's doing it because He loves us enough to help us change.



God will often begin working in our hearts in very private ways. Then, just like a caterpillar transforms into a butterfly, He begins to change and transform us into something completely different—more free and beautiful than ever.

It's easy to get frustrated and think we'll never change...but it's not impossible with God. That's why it's so important to never give up! During those times when you feel like you're at your lowest, God is getting ready to put you in your own little cocoon and produce something beautiful and new.

Remember, spiritual growth is a process. None of us "arrives" overnight, but little by little, God changes us and a makes us what we ought to be. He makes us more like Him.

For more on this topic, order Joyce's three-part teaching resource *Developing the Character of God*. You can also contact us to receive our free magazine, *Enjoying Everyday Life*, by calling (800) 727-9673 or visiting 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.

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CDPHE officials advise people to get seasonal vaccines

CONTRIBUTED

DENVER — State health officials urge Coloradans to protect themselves, their loved ones, and our communities this fall and winter by getting seasonal vaccines. Anyone aged 6 months and older can get an annual flu vaccine, as well as an updated 2023-2024 COVID-19 vaccine. The best time to get both vaccines is now, ideally before the end of October. Coloradans can find COVID-19 vaccines and flu vaccines across the state at local public health clinics, primary care offices, and many pharmacies.

Starting Tuesday, Oct. 3, CDPHE will send text and email reminders to the parents-guardians of 274,000 Coloradans aged 6 months through 5 years whose records in the Colorado Immunization Information System show they may be due for their annual flu vaccine.

The text messages will come from 45778 and read:

From CDPHE: State public health records show your child/children may be due for their annual flu vaccine. Vaccination is the most effective tool for preventing illnesses caused by flu. Contact a vaccine provider today! For locations near you: www.vaccines.gov/find-vaccines/

Emails will come from cdphe.vaccine.registry@state.co.us and read:

Dear parent(s) or guardian(s),
Colorado Immunization Information System records indicate that your child/children between the ages of 6 months and 5 years may be due for their annual flu vaccine. Flu vaccination is important for children aged 5 years and younger who are at high risk of having serious complications if they get sick with the flu.

Protect your child/children against the flu by contacting a health care provider, a local public health agency, or a local pharmacy to make a vaccine appointment today. For locations near you, visit <https://fluvaxcolorado.org/> and click "Find a Provider."

If your child/children have already received their flu vaccine, let us know about it. You can update their record in the Colorado Immunization Information System online. You may need to submit multiple request forms for three or more children.

Similar to the seasonal flu vaccine, most people should now get an updated COVID-19 vaccine to protect themselves against the variants of the virus currently responsible for most infections and hospitalizations in the United States. Just like the virus continues to evolve, so must the vaccine. It's safe to get COVID-19 and flu vaccines at the same appointment.

"Getting your annual flu and updated COVID-19 vaccine remains one of the best ways to protect yourself from serious illness and complications from influenza and COVID-19. It can reduce your chance of developing Long COVID as well," said state epidemiologist Dr. Rachel Herlihy. "As we start spending more time indoors and gathering with loved ones over the holidays this fall and winter, it's crucial to make sure our immunity is the best it can be."

If you've never been vaccinated against COVID-19, you can receive an updated 2023-2024 COVID-19 vaccine at any time. If you've been vaccinated against COVID-19 in the past, you can get your updated 2023-2024 COVID-19 vaccine as long as it's been at least two months since your most recent COVID-19 vaccine dose.

Coloradans can get COVID-19 and flu vaccines for low or no cost through their health insurance or a federal vaccine program. Most insurance plans cover both vaccines with no copay or coinsurance. If you have health insurance, ask your regular health care provider or local pharmacy if they have COVID-19 and flu vaccines and if they accept your insurance. If your health insurance plan does not cover these vaccines completely at no cost to you, you are considered underinsured. Underinsured and uninsured Coloradans can go to a

provider enrolled in a federal vaccine access program to get vaccinated at low or no cost.

Vaccines for Children providers have low or no cost vaccines for uninsured, underinsured, Medicaid-eligible or Alaskan Native/American Indian children aged 18 years and younger. Children who are underinsured can get low or no cost vaccines at their local public health agency, federally qualified health center, or rural health center.

Bridge Access Program providers have low and no cost updated COVID-19 vaccines for uninsured and underinsured adults aged 18 years and older. This includes most local public health agencies, federally qualified health centers, rural health centers, and safety net clinics as well as Walgreens and CVS pharmacy locations across the state.

Low-cost flu vaccine providers, as well as additional information on flu vaccines, can be found at fluvaxcolorado.org.

Colorado law prevents providers from denying you a publicly funded vaccine even if you don't have insurance, a government-issued ID, a social security number, or can't pay a fee. Learn more about your right to get a publicly funded vaccine at low or no cost. You must still meet certain requirements to qualify for a publicly funded vaccine.

Recently, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommended three new immunizations to prevent severe illness caused by respiratory syncytial virus (RSV). Recommendations include vaccination of adults ages 60 and older, young infants, and those who are pregnant. Talk with your health care provider about your or your child's risk for severe RSV disease and potential benefits of immunization, as well as if your insurance currently covers it.

- In addition to getting vaccinated, Coloradans can protect their loved ones, the community, and our health care system by:

- Staying home when sick. Avoid visiting or interacting with people who may be at higher risk, including older adults, young children, and infants. What might feel like a mild cold for one person can be very serious for another person.

- Getting tested. Most Coloradans can get tested for COVID-19 through their health care provider or a local pharmacy. Coloradans can also find free or low-cost tests at community testing sites, participating retail pharmacies, or order them online from the federal government.

- Washing hands regularly with soap and water or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Also, avoid touching your face with unclean hands.

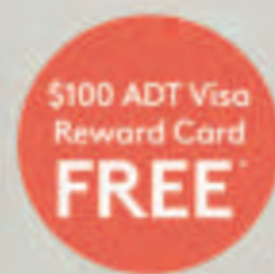
- Talking with a health care provider about whether you might benefit from COVID-19 or flu medicine if you do become ill. If started early, COVID-19 medicine like Paxlovid and remdesivir can prevent you from getting seriously ill. For flu, antiviral medications, like tamiflu, may be recommended in some cases, especially for people who are at higher risk of serious complications.

For more information about COVID-19 testing, vaccines, and treatments, visit cdphe.colorado.gov/covid-19.

The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) monitors respiratory viruses, including COVID-19, flu, and RSV, statewide. Since early August, Colorado has seen an increase in COVID-19, similar to the country overall, as seen in our hospitalizations. Hospitalizations due to COVID-19 remain low. Hospitalizations for flu and RSV typically start to increase in October and can peak anytime between then and February before dropping off in the spring. To stay informed, visit the department's online data dashboard. The department's Colorado Viral Respiratory Diseases Data Dashboard, which tracks flu and RSV numbers in the state, starts Oct. 11 and is updated weekly on Wednesdays by 4 p.m.

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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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6247-0121

Colorado to source up to 10 wolves from Oregon this winter for reintroduction efforts

By CHASE WOODRUFF
Colorado Newsline

Colorado wildlife officials have cleared one of the last and largest hurdles to the state's efforts to begin the reintroduction of gray wolves on the Western Slope by the end of this year.

Colorado Parks and Wildlife said Friday that it had reached a one-year agreement with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to receive up to 10 wolves from that state beginning in December, just ahead of a deadline set by Proposition 114, the wolf reintroduction ballot measure passed by Colorado voters in 2020.

"We are deeply grateful for Oregon's partnership in this endeavor, and we are now one step closer to fulfilling the will of the voters in time," Gov. Jared Polis said in a press release.

CPW officials plan to capture up to roughly 15 wolves this winter and transport them to Colorado for release within a large region centered on Glenwood Canyon. The agreement with Oregon ends the uncertainty over where the first of those wolves will come from, and whether the state would be able to put "paws on the ground" before the statutory Dec. 31 deadline.

Officials in states including Wyoming, Montana and Idaho — where ranching and hunting interests have fueled a conservative backlash to wolf reintroduction programs begun in the 1990s — have pointedly declined to assist Colorado's efforts.

Wildlife officials in Washington, another possible source, expressed openness to assisting Colorado but said it was unlikely they could meet the Dec. 31 deadline.

Under the agreement, Oregon wildlife officials will share information about wolf locations and best practices for capture, with CPW staff and private contractors responsible for the capture operations themselves and all associated costs.

In addition to screening wolves for disease and other health problems, "CPW will make efforts to transplant wolves that have not been involved in repeated depredations," the agency said. While the majority of wolves don't routinely prey on livestock herds, the specter of "problem wolves" that become habituated to the behavior has been cited as a concern by ranchers and state lawmakers who have remained skeptical of reintroduction.

Another key hurdle for the state's efforts was cleared last month, when federal officials approved an exemption that will allow wolves that threaten livestock to be killed in certain circumstances, which the Endangered Species Act would otherwise prohibit. Proposition 114 requires the state to provide compensation to agricultural producers for confirmed wolf depredations of livestock.

Colorado's 11-member Parks and Wildlife Commission finalized the wolf reintroduction plan in a unanimous vote in May. CPW staff plan to capture, transport and release 10 to 15 wolves in



Photo courtesy of CPW

A pair of wolves.

the winter months between December and March, repeating the process for the next two to four years until a stable population is established.

"The wolves will be released at select sites in Colorado as soon

as possible once they arrive in the state to minimize stress on the animals," Eric Odell, CPW's wolf conservation program manager, said in a statement. "CPW will aim to capture and reintroduce an

equal number of males and females. We anticipate that the majority of animals will be in the 1- to 5-year-old range, which is the age that animals would typically disperse from the pack they were born in."

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Now is the time for SLV fall color drives and hikes



Photo by Lyndsie Ferrell

The Silver Thread Scenic Byway includes bursts of fall colors for people to see at Slumgullion Pass.

By LYNDSIE FERRELL

SAN LUIS VALLEY — The fall colors high up along the San Juan Mountains are almost at peak for the 2023 season, making this the perfect time to get out and enjoy the changing of the seasons.

Snow recently fell along the higher elevations. Now, travelers can see the beautiful Aspen trees changing and can experience the first coating of snow in the mountains.

As always while venturing out into the Colorado back country it is always best to be prepared. Pack and dress for inclement weather and unpredictable situations. The following suggested drives and hikes are easy and along maintained road systems throughout the western end of the San Luis Valley.

People seeking a drive through beautiful and breath-taking fall foliage while taking a trip back in time can visit the Summitville Mining District located south of South Fork. Travelers can take Highway 160 west out of South Fork along the beginning of Wolf Creek Pass for seven miles before making a left-hand turn onto Park Creek Road 330.

The road heading to Summitville

is a maintained dirt road that is easily accessible by most vehicles. There are some steep inclines and caution is urged as logging and mining trucks can be met along the drive. Forests of pine and Aspen trees line the road with several areas to pull off and take photos. At the top of Summitville and the site of the old mining district, there are restrooms, interpretive locations and signs, and old mining buildings nestled against autumn backgrounds that can make for the perfect fall day to enjoy with the family.

For people wanting to stay on a more-traveled path, the Silver Thread Scenic Byway can be the way to go. This amazing road leads travelers through some of Colorado's oldest mining districts, including Creede, Slumgullion Pass, and Lake City. Travelers will need to turn right onto Highway 149 out of South Fork and follow the highway through each township. The road is well marked and has several opportunities to pull off and take in the scenery.

Once again traveling up Wolf Creek Pass outside of South Fork, adventurers looking to explore or perhaps wet their fishing

Please see COLORS on Page 2

Del Norte sets the stage for 2023 Scarecrow Bash

By LYNDSIE FERRELL

DEL NORTE — The Del Norte Chamber of Commerce has started its annual Scarecrow Bash, and the town will soon turn into an autumn wonderland filled with fall-themed displays and spooky delights for people to view.

The annual event started several years ago and has brought a fun and interactive community event to the area. Local businesses and residents participate every year and the prize for the winners just gets better and better each year.

According to the Del Norte Chamber of Commerce, the annual event is looked forward to by several local businesses and travelers who come to the area to enjoy the event's fall flair.

"You help brighten up the streets and celebrate a beautiful time of year in Del Norte," chamber officials stated.

To participate, sign up at www.delnortecolorado.com. **Please see BASH on Page 8**



Courtesy photo

The annual Del Norte Scarecrow Bash is underway but there is still time for people to participate and possibly win prizes. Businesses and residents of Del Norte are invited to decorate for the fall and spooky season and enter the contest.

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

October was first proclaimed as National Domestic Violence Awareness Month in 1989. Since then, October has been a time to acknowledge domestic violence survivors and those who have passed, and to be a voice for those who may be experiencing it. Domestic violence is prevalent in every community, and affects all people regardless of age, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, gender, race, religion, or nationality.

Every October, Tu Casa, Inc. joins

with its partners, supporters, and allies across the country to recognize Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM). During 2022, Tu Casa served 239 individuals and answered 414 crisis calls.

Tu Casa, Inc. encourages everyone to get involved and help raise awareness about domestic violence. We have seen the power each and every one of us have in making a difference by bringing awareness to domestic violence. The color purple has been

nationally recognized as the symbolic color to show support for those who have experienced domestic violence and let them know that help is available for themselves and their families. Tu Casa, Inc. hopes to spread awareness this October by asking staff and the community to wear purple every Thursday in the month. We also encourage you to ask co-workers, friends, and family members to join Tu Casa, Inc. in this month's activities. **Please see MONTH on Page 9**



Photo courtesy of Colorado Department of Transportation

Beginning this summer, the Colorado Department of Transportation will enlarge three existing underpasses along Highway 160 in Costilla County to afford safe passage to wildlife.

Highway 160 wildlife corridor in Costilla will hibernate until next year

By JOHN WATERS

COSTILLA COUNTY — The plan to construct three wildlife corridors near Fort Garland in Costilla County by the Colorado Department of Transportation has been postponed until next year. In May, the department had expected construction would begin in July or August.

The wildlife corridors will allow animals to safely cross under the road in new tunnels and thereby avoid the possibility of being hit by motorists.

Each year in Colorado, there are over 4,100 large wildlife fatalities from vehicles hitting them on roads.

To reduce the number of these fatalities, the Colorado Department

of Transportation (CDOT) has built numerous wildlife mitigation corridors throughout the state and will construct the conduits along a seven-mile stretch of Highway 160, just east of Fort Garland.

CDOT wildlife biologist Mark Lawler recently told the Valley Courier, "On my end of the project, we are consistent with what we had discussed before [In May of 2023] we are still planning on installing the three crossing structures and all the accouterments that go with that, such as the escape ramps, and deer guards. We will improve the turn at Trinchera Ranch.

"The latest development is figuring **Please see WILDLIFE on Page 3**



Now is the time to go outside and enjoy the fall colors in the San Luis Valley. There are many places to see the fall foliage as it peaks this weekend — Oct. 7-8. Big Meadows Reservoir is just one of the many place where people can visit in the Valley to view the changing seasons.

COLORS

Continued from Page 1

line while out for a day of fall colors, can head to Big Meadows Reservoir. Travelers will go 12 miles up Highway 160 and turn right onto Forest Service Road 410. This short drive can bring some of the best results as those headed to the area will follow along a creek to the reservoir and then hike along the many marked trails along the lake shores to view fall foliage.

After leaving Big Meadows, people still seeking fall colors can continue on Highway 160 heading west up Wolf Creek Pass. This drive will bring adventurers to several places where they can pull off safely and enjoy some high-country scenery. At the bottom of the pass on the west side, travelers are urged to stop at Treasure Falls which offers a short, intermediate hike up the base of the waterfall and to a beautiful place to take fall photos.

No matter where travelers head out this weekend, the fall colors will be in full swing and will offer plenty of opportunities to see the foliage. For more information or a list of suggested fall drives, visit www.southfork.org.



Summitville offers travelers breath-taking views of the fall foliage.

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WILDLIFE Continued from Page 1 —

out how long a contractor needs to be out there and how we can schedule that to have the fewest traffic impacts.”

Lawler said the actual construction start dates are determined by the engineering side. “Whether it is worthwhile to start now or wait, we had always planned on fall. We need to look at if that is a great use of resources and mobilization and time just to have a few months out there,” Lawler said.

Lisa Ann Schwantes, regional communications manager with CDOT told the Valley Courier in an email, “The Ft. Garland wildlife mitigation project has a new timeline with the project tentatively going out to bid at the end of November and breaking ground next spring. CDOT’s initial construction phasing schedule indicated that the project could take two to three seasons to complete. CDOT’s planning and engineering teams have now developed a method of advertising the project to solicit bids from contractors which will incentivize them to develop construction schedules that reduce the overall duration of the project, thereby reducing traffic-related impacts to motorists. The unique bid solicitation will greatly benefit the state and its travelers on the corridor by potentially shortening the project’s duration, shortening traffic disruptions and ultimately saving money.”

According to Lawler, the project will begin at milepost 258.3 on Highway 160 and will consist of an 8-foot high fence that will funnel wildlife to three yet-to-be-constructed game underpasses that will be beneath the road where the animals will safely pass. They will be 13-foot tall, 26-foot wide, and 70-foot long.

The wildlife corridors will also include escape ramps that will allow animals to jump out of the fenced area if they are unable to find the underpasses. There will be four of these escape routes

per mile along the corridor.

“As a wildlife biologist, I look at ways we can reduce the barrier created by our roads and increase the permeability to wildlife and connect habitats. Ultimately, as part of CDOT, I want to reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions and provide motorists with safer highways,” said Lawler.

Most of the wildlife-vehicle fatalities in the area are mule deer and elk, added Lawler.

Elsewhere in Colorado, these structures have dramatically reduced wildlife mortality by as much as 80-90 percent.

Construction will require the use of flaggers to assist with traffic control, and motorists can expect standard construction delays.

“The scope of the project has stayed consistent. The plans have been developed; in terms of design, we are at about 90% if not 100%. We are pretty wrapped up; we are trying to look at some kind of innovative ways to encourage a contractor to cause the least traffic conflicts out there. There will be some alternating lane closures. We want to minimize the traffic impacts,” said Lawler.

The \$12 million project is funded. The project “is happening, we are largely finished with design, environmental and utility right of way work. This project is coming,” says Lawler.

According to the CDOT, while some collisions may be unavoidable, motorists can reduce the likelihood of an accident by taking the following precautions:

Slow Down! Driving more slowly increases reaction time and reduces the chance of a collision.

Stay Alert while driving at dusk and dawn. This is when many of Colorado’s wildlife are the most active and are likely to be crossing roadways.



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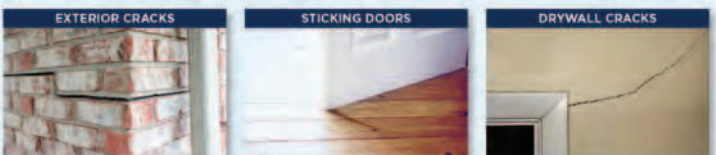
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Valley Publishing Classifieds, P.O. Box 607, Monte Vista, CO 81144

Or drop by at 835 First Avenue

All Classified Advertising must be pre-paid

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Valley Wide

Classifieds

PART-TIME SALES

Valley Publishing has an immediate need in advertising sales (part-time). Any sales experience is appreciated but will train. Email resume to General Manager Brian Williams at bwilliams@valleypublishinginc.com

07 Help Wanted

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)

Substitutes Teachers needed at the Upper Rio Grande School District in Del Norte! Call or email: Sophia at 719-657-4040, x4000 (scrudz@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)

Del Norte Bank is seeking to fill a

full-time position for Teller in the Del Norte Branch. Duties will be to accept deposits, loan payments and process withdrawals while maintaining a balanced cash drawer. Must be personable and pleasant answering the phone and greeting customers. Many other duties will be assigned as needed. The position is permanent, full-time, M - F, 8am - 5pm with a robust benefits package. Application available at TrueLocalBank.com/careers or inquire at 705 Grand Ave, Del Norte or call 719-657-3376 and ask for Dawn. EOE. (10-11)

10 Apartments

Apt. for Lease in Del Norte. Lg. 2 bedroom, 1 bath. Adults only, Non-smoker, No pets. All utilities incl. \$900. mo., \$900. deposit. 1 year Lease. Available Oct. 1st. 719-850-2738 (10-18)

12 Houses for Rent



FREE TRANSIT SERVICES
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of the San Luis Valley

ROUTES ALREADY IN SERVICE:
Creede to Alamosa | KV Estates to Alamosa
Saguache to Alamosa | Saguache to Salida

New route from Antonito to Alamosa launching this fall.



For route and schedule information, visit MountainValleyTransit.com
Drivers needed, call 719-530-8980

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\$1000 TRADE-IN ASSISTANCE

\$39.99 OIL CHANGE




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VALLEY PUBLISHING SEEKS REPORTER IMMEDIATELY

For Center and Saguache areas. Writing and photography experience necessary. Send resume, writing and photography samples to Valley Publishing Inc., P.O. Box 607, Monte Vista, CO 81144 or email bwilliams@valleypublishinginc.com

DISCLAIMER

Please read your ad on the first day of publication. If there are mistakes notify us **IMMEDIATELY**. We will make changes for errors and adjust your credit **but only if we receive notice on the first day the ad is published**. We limit our liability to you in this way and we do not accept liability for any other damages which may result from an error or omission in an ad. All ad copy must be approved by the newspaper which reserves the right to request changes, reject or properly classify an ad. The advertiser and not the newspaper is responsible for the truthful content of the ad. All classified advertising must be pre-paid.

Business Showcase

New order of pottery arriving!

Check it out!

The Holy Moses
Mon.-Sat.
10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

658-2848
121 N. Main
Creede

This Week's Feature



THE HOLY MOSES

An enchanting Collection of Cabin Decor, Colorado Pottery, Quilts, Linens & Specialty Foods!

It's Worth The Drive

Mon.-Sat. 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Nick & Vicki Kulyk
121 N. Main • 658-2848 • Creede

Valley Wide Classifieds

Beautiful stucco home for rent: 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 2 car garage. Available now. Please call 719-850-2027. (11-1)

House for rent in Saguache. Three Bedrooms. Two Baths. One-car garage. \$1,225/month. Water included. No smoking. Text: 303-905-8240.

14 Business Properties For Rent

Freshly painted professional office or residential space located in a quiet four-plex in Del Norte. Approximately 700 sq ft with a spacious living room, separate office or bedroom, kitchen area with newer appliances, and 3/4 bath. \$800/month, inclusive of water and sewer, and a small storage shed. No pets. Please call 719-850-0750. (10/25)

17 Real Estate For Sale

FARM FOR SALE in Waverly Area Sub-district #6, 1 1/2 center pivots in grass and alfalfa, large hay shed, 2 bedroom home, 3 steel grainers,

numerous out buildings on 8 Mile Road. Ready to farm 2023 season. Call Bruce at Steffens & Company Realty, Inc 719-580-0770. (TFN)

35-80+ acres parcels with good grass on County Line Road north of Hwy 160. Fully surveyed and ready to build on. Perfect location between Alamosa and Monte Vista. Call Bruce at Steffens & Company Realty, Inc. 719-580-0770. (TFN)

35-80+ acre parcels on San Francisco Creek south of Del Norte. Very private, views, 3 miles from town, electric and phone. Call Bruce at Steffens & Company Realty, Inc. 719-580-0770. (TFN)

40 Acres 5 miles west of Monte Vista on Lariat Road with power, phone and year around access on county road. \$60,000. Call Bruce Steffens 719-580-0770 at Steffens & Company Realty Inc. (TFN)

FOR SALE: Beautiful 3,280 sq. ft., 3 bath, 3 bedroom, large kitchen and 2 living room with mountain setting, separate 2-3 car garage with nice apartment upstairs, large horse barn, chicken house and

OWNER FINANCED!! Price to sell \$895,000.00. Call Bruce at Steffens & Company Realty, Inc 719-580-0770. (TFN)

FOR SALE: 35 shares of Santa Maria Reservoir Water. Call Bruce at Steffens & Company Realty, Inc 719-580-0770. (TFN)

23 Lawn and Garden

Kenmore Snowblower, Model 247.881900, Serial 1I186B10071, pull or electric start. \$400 obo. call George: 719-657-0756 (11-1)

Sprinkler repair. Done at reasonable rates. Quick Service. Call anytime, weekdays, weekends, evenings. 719-580-0033 or 719-376-2593. TFN

27 Appliances

Kenmore Freezer, 10 cu ft with lock, Model 253.8291080, Serial S910297892, Mfg 10/89. \$200 obo. call George: 719-657-0756 (11-1)

32 Fuel & Heating

NEED FIREWOOD? Call Elam at Cozy Glo LLC. 719-480-5047. \$190 per cord. Delivery available. TFN



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Full or Part Time starting \$15 hr. plus tips!

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~ Laurie H., Google Reviews


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Open DAILY — 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Easy Online To-Go Orders:
MountainPizzaTapRoom.com

San Luis Valley Area Real Estate

12 Commercial acres in South Fork Shoshone Trail
Flat, rectangular parcel with easy, paved access off Hwy 160. This parcel is zoned commercial/light industrial and is located 4 miles East of South Fork near Holiday RV and Brooke Stone.
MLS#774884
\$550,000



Dee Plucinski • Steffens & CO. Realty
(719) 873-5605 • dee@steffenscorealty.com

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.
\$56,000



Dee Plucinski • Steffens & CO. Realty
(719) 873-5605 • dee@steffenscorealty.com

654 Vail Pass Road South Fork
UNDER CONTRACT
THE BEST VALUE IN SOUTH FORK! This 3 bedroom 1 bath home sits on 1 acre and has a well and septic. It's a stick-built home, not a modular or mobile home. Scan the QR code - this one has an interior 3D scan, video tour and drone video too!
MLS# 804011
\$199,900



Dee Plucinski • Steffens & CO. Realty
(719) 873-5605 • dee@steffenscorealty.com

3023 Bear Creek Circle
Mountain cabin on 20 acres bordering National Forest in gated Bear Creek. Fully furnished - paved driveway. 4 bedrooms 2.5 bathrooms. MLS#803394



Dee Plucinski • Steffens & CO. Realty
(719) 873-5605 • dee@steffenscorealty.com

Steffens & Company Realty
719-873-5605
30635 US HWY 160 South Fork
dee@steffenscorealty.com
Dee - formerly known as Diane Chapman - Local Luxury Home Broker. Licensed in 2011, Dee knows the area and knows local real estate.




All Dee's properties are detailed in her blog.



3D Virtual Tours • Prompt, Easy Communication
Video Walkthroughs
Residential Photographer
Licensed and Insured Drone Pilot

5042 E. County Road 1 S. Monte Vista
This gorgeous brick home sits on 5 acres just East of Monte Vista. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms PLUS a large office and an INCREDIBLE shop. Scan the QR code below Dee's Picture and check out this listing in her blog for 3D interior scans of the home and shop plus a video and drone tour. This home features a domestic well and a fenced acre with a lean-to for horses.
MLS#806831 \$550,000



UNDER CONTRACT

Dee Plucinski • Steffens & CO. Realty
(719) 873-5605 • dee@steffenscorealty.com

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**




Dee Plucinski • Steffens & CO. Realty
(719) 873-5605 • dee@steffenscorealty.com

Rito Hondo Estates - 18 Rural Mountain Lots Available
West of Antonito in the Conejos Canyon **OWNER FINANCING AVAILABLE**
\$950,000 home on 35 acres located on lot #2
\$85,000 (6 acre lots)
\$200,000 (17.5 acre lots)
\$400,000 (35 acre lots)
\$950,000 (35 acres with home)




Dee Plucinski • Steffens & CO. Realty
(719) 873-5605 • dee@steffenscorealty.com

682 Bear Creek Circle South Fork
This luxurious mountain home has 4 bedrooms, 3.5 bathrooms and sits on 15.6 acres in the gated community of Bear Creek in South Fork. Perfect for horses!
MLS#806411
\$1,425,000



Dee Plucinski • Steffens & CO. Realty
(719) 873-5605 • dee@steffenscorealty.com

4100 Wilderness Canyon Road - Mountain Luxury at the end of the road, secluded and private, this gorgeous, bright, energy-efficient home sits on 42 acres bordering the National Forest with views of the Natural Arch. Ghost Mine Ranch, near Del Norte. Ride or hike out for hundreds of miles, right from your backyard. Gated community with minimal covenants. **\$899,000**



Dee Plucinski • Steffens & CO. Realty
(719) 873-5605 • dee@steffenscorealty.com

5299 County Road 12 S. Alamosa
160 acres currently planted in alfalfa with a center pivot, 3 shares of the Commonwealth Ditch, and use of the Carmel Drain. MLS#804160
\$400,000



WATER RIGHTS

Dee Plucinski • Steffens & CO. Realty
(719) 873-5605 • dee@steffenscorealty.com

Valley Wide Classifieds

Lump Coal and Anthracite Hard Coal available. Supplement your wood heating with "lump coal". Burns more consistently & lasts longer so you can do more of what you want & less time carrying wood. 719-849-8261 (3-1)

36 Miscellaneous

For Sale: New 9,000 lb car-lift, matching fridge and stove, and a new baseboard trim. 719-850-2027 (11-1)

Cash for quality non-fiction books and LP records. Jeff 720-315-9145 (TFN)

Propane Refrigerators Sold Here. Call For Options and Prices. We

Also Stock Solar Powered Refrigerators and Freezers. Bontrager's Variety Store, 9726 S. County Road 3E, Monte Vista. (719) 852-0500

STEEL STORAGE CONTAINERS - Sales, Rentals & Modifications! Containers are water & rodent proof. 8' wide, 8'-53' in length. Call for more information and pricing. **Healdworks, Inc. - Your Total Storage Solution!** 719-850-0346

SOLAR PANELS! 400 Watt and Smaller, We Stock Inverters, Charge Controllers, and Batteries in Brand Names of Outback, Magnum, Aims, Rolls, and More. Custom Cables and PV Wire. Bontrager's Variety Store. 9726 S. CR 3E

Monte Vista. 719-852-0500. TFN

39 Sporting Goods

Free 11-foot trampoline frame bed and netting. Too old to use. First to haul it off gets it. 719-852-2242. (11-1)

48 Pets and Supplies

Welsh Corgi/Lab mix puppies. Very cute! Won't get very big. UTD on vaccinations. \$100. 719-588-3687. (10-11)

65 Professional Services

RELIABLE CARPENTRY 40-plus years-experience in carpentry, painting, stucco, tile, drywall, roof-

ing, etc. Drug/Alcohol free. Free Estimates 719-496-7630. (TFN)

Squeegee Luigi's Washing Services: Window washing and pressure washing services - Free estimates 719-588-2820 (TFN)

LICENSED PLUMBER does all types of plumbing repairs and plumbing remodels at reasonable rates. Quick service. Call anytime, available weekends and evenings. 719-580-0033 or 719-376-2593. TFN

Need beautiful window blinds at the best prices? Call THE BLIND GUY at 970-799-0388 for a free estimate. (TFN)

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Call Today! 719-852-3531

San Luis Valley Area Real Estate

IMPROVED PRICE
Look Reduced Price!! \$875,000 Owner Willing to Owner Finance for Qualified Buyer! Must See Custom-Built 5,350 sq. ft. Commercial Property in Fabulous South Fork, CO, Great Highway 160 exposure! This building is extremely well built. The building was built for retail with many amenities. The environment is warm and welcoming. The 3,000 sq. ft. main floor consist of large receiving office, full kitchen and bath and several large open spaces and two additional design show rooms and large 1,000 sq. ft. heated warehouse with plenty of shelving for storage and 12-foot overhead door. Lovely concrete outdoor patio with new vinyl fencing wired for low voltage lights this property sits on two lots with wiring running outside for lighting off outside signage. 1,350 sq. ft. Spacious upstairs with large open space, several large storage closets two additional offices, New 3/4 custom tile bathroom and large storage over warehouse. This well-built property has radiant floor heating downstairs and upstairs baseboard hot water heat. Property is wired for Cat 5 telephone jack in all offices, design rooms, kitchen bar, receiving office - etc. Cable tv jack, upstairs big room. There are 3 gas fireplaces, 2 wall thermostats with remote control. Wired for speakers though out the building for music. Swamp cooler and wired for electric dryer, set up for washer and has a Propane fired boiler and propane hot water heater. This property is a blank canvas with so much POTENTIAL for the right builder or person. Because there is no existing business at the present time, this makes this building available for a variety of Business opportunities: Professional Work Environment for Professionals, Restaurant, Brew Pub, Events Center, Lodge or Cottage hotel, Retail etc. Come Paint your Canvas and start Your Business Adventure. Call and schedule your personal showing today! MLS#802191 Improved Price \$925,000! \$875,000 MLS #802191

173 W Frontage • South Fork
Bernadette Gingrass • Steffens & CO. Realty
(719)850-1993 • bernadette@steffenscorealty.com

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
Bernadette Gingrass • Steffens & CO. Realty
(719)850-1993 • bernadette@steffenscorealty.com

Thinking of Selling Your Home? If so, I can help!
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Call Bernadette today!

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719-850-1993
Bernadette Gingrass, Broker Associate
30635 US Hwy 160 • South Fork
bernadette@steffenscorealty.com

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 trees and backs up to the National Forest. The main floor has a beautiful designer backsplash and large eat in counter space overlooking 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 Rinraj 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! Breathe 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! \$1,995,000
37 Million Court • South Fork
Bernadette Gingrass • Steffens & CO. Realty
(719)850-1993 • bernadette@steffenscorealty.com

SOLD

PRICE REDUCED

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
Bernadette Gingrass • Steffens & CO. Realty
(719)850-1993 • bernadette@steffenscorealty.com

PRICE REDUCED

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
Bernadette Gingrass • Steffens & CO. Realty
(719)850-1993 • bernadette@steffenscorealty.com

PRICE REDUCED

Check out this small diverse farm. The home is a 2bed/2bath, 1703.2 sq foot, historic adobe that has been fully and beautifully restored. Enjoy Colorado from the large (768 sq ft) open porch. This home sits on 126.06 deeded acres of land situated in the bottoms of the old Culebra River Drainage. The soil is sandy and loamy and has been used for vegetable crop production in the past w/o the use of pesticides or herbicides. It is watered by the San Acacia acequia with an early decree for 1.62 CFS. There is a domestic house well permit number 284703. The property also has a holding pond for irrigation water. The owner is installing a new side roll sprinkler, which will irrigate up to 80+ acres M/L. The new side roll irrigation system will be installed before closing and will increase production. There are several outbuildings useful for storage and/or animals. The farm is located in Costilla County, Colorado just north of the New Mexico state line. It is about one hour to Taos. The Rio Grande River is about 12 miles away. Red River Ski area and Rio Grande del Norte National Monument are near Questa, New Mexico about 40 minutes away. The Sand Dunes National Park is about 45 minutes north. \$550,000 MLS #797313
12272 County Road R5 • San Luis
Bernadette Gingrass • Steffens & CO. Realty
(719)850-1993 • bernadette@steffenscorealty.com

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
Bernadette Gingrass • Steffens & CO. Realty
(719)850-1993 • bernadette@steffenscorealty.com

Valley Publishing CALL TODAY! 719-852-3531
Sandra Marquez — smarquez@valleypublishinginc.com
Brian Williams — bwilliams@valleypublishinginc.com

NEW

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
63 Doe Circle • South Fork
Bernadette Gingrass • Steffens & CO. Realty
(719)850-1993 • bernadette@steffenscorealty.com



Courtesy photo

BASH

Continued from Page 1

delnortechamber.org and then decorate. Pretty much anything goes as long as it is unique and fun for the community. After the decorating is complete, contestants enter a picture of their displays and send them in to be shared on social media. Those wanting to vote for their favorite business or residential display can grab a map of the locations from the chamber and head out for a drive around town to see all the wonderful and creative displays and then head over to the website to vote. There will be winners in both the residential and business categories, and they will be comprised of local donations from several businesses and organizations, in addition to the bragging rights the winners get. For more information, contact the Del Norte Chamber of Commerce at www.delnortechamber.org or call 719-657-9081

Find us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/ValleyPublishing>

Conour *Managed by Upper Rio Grande Animal Society*
www.urgaseconouranimalshelter.org
 If you are interested in adopting, call 852-3366
 Open Tues.-Fri. 11 a.m. -4 p.m. & Sat. & Sun. • 1:30 - 5 p.m.
 Monday & non-business hours by appointment only
 2825 Sherman Ave. • Monte Vista

We would like to express our deepest gratitude and appreciation to all those who have contributed to the success of the Upper Rio Grande Animal Society by contributions, donations, volunteering and general support at Conour Animal Shelter.

Visit Our Facebook Page

LOST & FOUND



Found on 10/4 in Blanca on County Road JJ 2nd St

WE 21 PUPPIES!

17 of them will be ready to meet people in person on the 13th, until then please check out our website and see if there's a cute fluff you'd like to put a meet and greet hold on!

We need puppy food and treats! We appreciate anything you can help us with! With so many puppies we're flying through everything! Thank you all in advance, and thank you to those who have helped us!

Please note adoptions go in order of contact made.
 All breeds & ages of animals are a "best guess" and are not guaranteed to be accurate. Adoption fee includes: neuter/spay, vaccinations, de-worming and micro-chipping.
 This ad space donated by Valley Publishing Inc.

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The Journey Air Elite features the latest carbon fiber technology for the ultimate in portability and performance

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 6247-0121

MONTH Continued from Page 1

in order to start conversations about domestic violence.

Tu Casa, Inc. invites everyone to join us at the following events:

The Purple Light Campaign: The Purple Light Campaign was created to promote domestic violence awareness and reminds survivors there are supports all around them. Tu Casa will be tabling at Spare Keg on October 6th, from 5-6:30pm, where we will hand out purple lightbulbs to community members to light their porches for the month of October and help ensure survivors in our valley know they are not alone.

Lunch and Learn: On October 18th, from 12-1pm, in the San Luis Valley Behavioral Health Group large conference room, Tu Casa will be presenting on the history of Domestic Violence Awareness Month and request attendees help us let survivors in our valley know that Tu Casa is here to help, by painting rocks with supportive phrases/words for survivors, designs, and Tu Casa's hotline number. These rocks will be placed throughout the valley for survivors to find and utilize if they need.

"Light up the Night": Our 3rd Annual "Light up the Night" event will be held on October 27th, 2023, at 6:30pm under the West pavilion in Cole Park, Alamosa, CO. This event is free to attendees and works to honor victims, survivors, those who have passed, and anyone who has been affected by domestic violence.

Refreshments will be served while you are provided with an opportunity to mingle and learn about resources within our community and at Tu Casa, Inc. We will start the ceremony at 6:30pm with a warm welcoming introduction and guest speakers from

our community and partners. We will take time to drop flowers in the river with a moment of silence and a performance by the General Shumei International Institute in honor of the survivors in the San Luis Valley. The night's event will culminate with a candlelight vigil to light up the night and an opportunity for anyone who wants to share their stories or experience. Attendees are encouraged to take photos and participate in the activities.

Throughout October you can stay updated on events and activities by following our Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/TuCasaInc> & Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/slvtucasa/> pages. We also request that you share photos of how you are raising awareness about this topic and tag us!

Domestic Violence can no longer be ignored; we must work together to raise awareness and to end violence. If you or someone you know is in need of assistance, call the Tu Casa, Inc. 24-hour hotline at (719) 589-2465. If you would like to make a donation in honor of those who have been impacted by abuse, visit our website at www.slvtucasa.net, and click on the link to donate. If you are interested in volunteering with our agency or would like more information about events, contact us at (719) 589-2465.

Tu Casa, Inc., which houses the Tu Casa Program, The Tu Casa, Inc. SANE Program, and the Children's Advocacy Center of the San Luis Valley Program (SLV CAC), is a 501(c)3 non-profit agency that works to empower children and adults to live healthy, violence-free lives throughout the San Luis Valley. All services are free, confidential, and available in English and Spanish.

Invitation to participate in the future of tourism in Saguache County

By SAGAUCHE COUNTY TOURISM

SAGUACHE — The Saguache County Tourism Council (SCTC), in partnership with the Colorado Tourism Office, invites the community to a Tourism Open House. The event will take place from 4 to 6:30 p.m. on Oct. 25, at Saguache Road & Bridge.

The open house will showcase SCTC's recent accomplishments and its ambitious future goals. The Colorado Tourism Office will also deliver a presentation highlighting tourism's pivotal role across the state and its contribution to the quality of life in Saguache County.

"We will be discussing how to offer enriched tourism experiences for our county. Your feedback will inform future decisions about the local tourism industry and help SCTC foster a more resilient and inclusive economy," officials stated.

Everyone with an interest in tourism is welcome to help celebrate the



Courtesy photo

community and discuss responsible options to promote Saguache County. Complimentary refreshments will be provided.

For inquiries and to RSVP, contact Mimi Mather at mimi.mather@colorado.com.

This community event is supported by the Colorado Tourism Office through the Destination Blueprint Program. SCTC receives a destination assessment, a community event and workshop, and 100 hours of free consulting to advance priority tourism

projects. "We look forward to seeing you there as we pave the way for a vibrant and sustainable future for tourism in Saguache County," officials stated.

The SCTC is dedicated to promoting and enhancing tourism experiences in Saguache County, creating a thriving, sustainable, and resilient local economy.

The Colorado Tourism Office is committed to advancing tourism initiatives across the state, enriching communities, and bolstering quality of life through vibrant tourism experiences.

Sangre de Cristo School selling past yearbooks

MOSCA — The Sangre de Cristo School is cleaning out extra copies of past yearbooks. However, before they do, they would like to make these copies available to the public.

There are copies for most years dating back to 1988. The price is \$10 per copy. Anyone interested should contact the yearbook staff via email at yearbook@sangreschools.com.

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CLUES ACROSS

1. Half-conscious states
8. Unnatural
13. Deep regret
14. Rogue
15. Took without permission
19. An alternative
20. After B
21. Partner to "flowed"
22. The best day of the week (abbr.)
23. Helps you hear
24. Egyptian river
25. Lake __, one of the Great
26. Make free from bacteria
30. Indigenous peoples of central Canada
31. Sanctuaries in Greek temples
32. Most unclothed
33. NJ senator Booker
34. Tibetan lake
35. Desecrate something sacred
38. John __, English educator 1467-1519
39. Obtains in return for labor
40. Views
44. Rugged cliff
45. Not quiet
46. Body part
47. Newt
48. German city
49. A way to save money
50. NBC's Roker
51. Dire Straits frontman

1	2	3	4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11	12
13								14				
15							16	17	18			19
20							21				22	
23							24			25		
26			27	28	29				30			
			31					32				
			33					34				
35	36	37					38					
39						40				41	42	43
44					45					46		
47				48						49		
50			51						52	53	54	
55		56							57			
58									59			

55. Actress Lathan
57. Most meager
58. Poems
59. Companions

CLUES DOWN

1. Draws over
2. Recur
3. Current unit
4. Neither
5. Certified Radio Operator (abbr.)
6. Power of perception
7. Peace
8. Supplemented with difficulty
9. The last section or part of anything
10. Dorm worker
11. Bones
12. Most unnatural
16. Spanish island
17. The skill to do something
18. Where golf games begin
22. Untethered

25. Print errors
27. The sport of engaging in contests of speed
28. Ones to look up to
29. Stringed instrument
30. Gives whippings
32. Type of tie
34. Make more concentrated
35. Die
36. Part of a winter hat
37. Young men's club
38. Bathrooms need it
40. U.S. president
41. American novelist
42. Take into custody
43. Hurts
45. Type of gibbon
48. American actor Lukas
51. Partner to cheese
52. Some are covert
53. Political action committee
54. To and __
56. Atomic #28

Solution to last week's puzzle

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

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Building hope in the Valley

By PRISCILLA WAGGONER

ALAMOSA — Last weekend, Paul and Kim Reed, co-founders of Hope in the Valley, a proposed drug and alcohol addiction treatment facility, sponsored an event in Alamosa where, along with about a dozen staff and volunteers, they were available for conversations with community members.

It's been less than a year since the Lees bought a vacant facility owned by Alamosa County and announced their plans to build a residential treatment center to serve people dealing with addiction and substance abuse and support those in recovery.

Since then, the co-founders have stayed largely out of the public eye as they zeroed in on their vision for the facility and brought on those with experience in such ventures for consultation.

In the years preceding their decision to open a treatment center, the Lees started an organization called "Roofers in Recovery," devoted to those individuals in the construction industry who struggle with substance abuse. All funds donated to Roofers in Recovery have been spent in support of more than 60 individuals in various stages of treatment, from paying for 30 days in a rehabilitation center to funding help needed in their recovery efforts.

Hope in the Valley is their first endeavor renovating a brick-and-mortar facility to help a population they both have a significant, personal investment in supporting. That has been a real challenge as the Reeds who live in Colorado Springs, also manage five other businesses.

"It's been a real learning experience," says Kim Reed. "We've never done something like this before. We've put more than 25 people through rehab treatment but, with this, we didn't know what we didn't know."

"We realized that we were trying to recreate the wheel," says Paul Reed. "Other people have done this. They know what to do. We're learning from them."

Kim Reed said they have partnered with Mike Bayer, an individual who owns a large rehab facility in California and has a successful approach in Intensive Outpatient Programs, which they are using as their model.

"We're getting it," says Kim Reed. "Every day, we're understanding more of what's involved — like applying for licenses — and how to get this done."

The "this" was visible when the Lees took Alamosa County Commissioner Lori Laske and the Valley Courier for an inside tour of the facility and described what, once completed, the facility will look like.

Upon walking through the front door, there will be a reception area with several smaller offices for "intake." Through the main door and to the right is the detox area where those, in the throes of full substance use, will be admitted. A door from the back also allows for people, if necessary, to enter detox without having exposure or access to others in various stages of recovery. Rooms accommodating up to 10 people open up on a day room that can be observed by nurses and other staff in an adjacent office with windows.

A locked door then leads to the other part of the facility that will house a total of 17-20 people in "Intensive Outpatient" and a second area of the facility that will house people who will stay for longer periods of time.

"I want this door to be symbolic," Paul Reed says, walking through the doorway. "I might even paint it an entirely different color. I want this door to communicate to people 'you're entering a whole new stage of your life.'"

While there are still questions to be answered — "I'm not sure this room is

big enough for two people, are you?" Kim asks Paul — the Lees are more determined than ever to be open by January of 2024.

In recent months, the two have largely stayed under the radar as Kim Reed — "I handle construction" — worked with Alcon Construction Company in getting floors torn up, walls repaired, sinks and toilets installed, and other infrastructure work completed.

One "huge" project was completely reinstalling the fire suppression system, a significant factor in the building being readied for occupation.

"We're almost to the place where we can install flooring," she says, opening the top carton of a tall stack of flooring to admire its appearance. "Then we'll paint. I've been learning that the color blue has a calming effect on people."

There's also the matter of buying furniture for the bedrooms, including "suicide proof," mattresses, furniture for the day rooms, office furniture and getting phones installed.

There is the other task of lining up the right people to do what they have planned. They have reached an agreement with Dr. Ely Walker, a physician known in the San Luis Valley for having the greatest expertise in substance



Photo by Priscilla Waggoner

An exterior photo of the future site of Hope in The Valley. Alamosa County Commissioner Lori Laske and Kim and Paul Reed speaking outside.

use disorder, to work with the facility, a decision that Laske openly applauds.

They have also interviewed more than 10 professionals who, for one reason or another, have chosen to stop working with providers already in the region, but are interested in working for Hope in the Valley.

And, as perhaps the greatest indication of their commitment, they have

hired someone to head up "community engagement" to establish networking in the community and a professional who is facilitating a sobriety support group that already has close to 20 people attending a meeting in Alamosa every Monday, Wednesday and Friday night.

"We're focused on being sustainable," says Paul, a native of the Valley who's

committed to helping others here as he was helped in his recovery. "This isn't about us making money. We didn't get in it for that. And we don't want to come in here, open a great facility, raise everyone's hopes, and then not be here in a year. We're here to help people. That's why we're here. We want to build something that will last. We want this to be our legacy to helping others."

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New members needed on the Greater Rocky Mountain Resource Advisory Committee

CONTRIBUTED

LAKEWOOD — The USDA Forest Service Rocky Mountain Region is seeking new members with diverse backgrounds and interests to serve on the Greater Rocky Mountain Resource Advisory Committee. Committee members recommend special projects that should be implemented on Forest Service lands with Title II Secure Rural Schools funds. The committee functions under a formal charter in accordance with the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act and is subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act.

The Greater Rocky Mountain Resource Advisory Committee is the largest of its kind, representing the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, Gunnison, Routt, Pike, Roosevelt, San Isabel, Rio Grande, San Juan, and White River National Forests in Colorado and the Medicine Bow, Bighorn, and Shoshone National Forests in Wyoming. The committee consists of 15 people who work in collaboration with natural resource managers and community members to help make project decisions that benefit federal lands and local communities. Serving on the committee provides a great opportunity for citizens to have a voice in future management actions across the region. Members volunteer to serve a 4-year term without pay but may be reimbursed for travel expenses.

Projects are funded primarily by Title 2, and must improve forest health, fish, wildlife, soils, watersheds, or other resources; maintain, de-commission or obliterate roads; improve trails and other infrastructure; or control noxious weeds. Previous projects have included meadow restoration in wetland areas, wildlife habitat improvements, and the installation of Aquatic Organism Passages to replace undersized culverts. The projects must be located on or provide a direct benefit to National Forest lands. The committee is also responsible for monitoring projects and making recommendations for improvements.

Those who are interested in serving on the committee are invited to submit nominations. Final selections will be vetted and approved by the Secretary of Agriculture. Nominees must:

- Be a resident of Colorado or Wyoming; committee members will vote on projects in both states, regardless of their state of residency;
- Provide a cover letter stating why they want to serve on the Greater Rocky Mountain Resource Advisory Committee and what they can contribute;

Provide a resume that shows experience working successfully in a collaborative setting and/or in work related to forest management activities;

Complete Form AD-755, Advisory Committee or Research and Promotion Background Information. The AD-755 can be obtained at: www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fseprd674657.pdf

- Identify the interest group they would like to represent and their qualifications to represent that group. Interest groups include:

- Category One: Five members who represent energy and mineral

development; the commercial timber industry; organized labor or non-timber forest product harvester groups; developed outdoor recreation; off-highway vehicle users, or commercial recreation; or federal grazing or other land permits or represent nonindustrial private forest landowners.

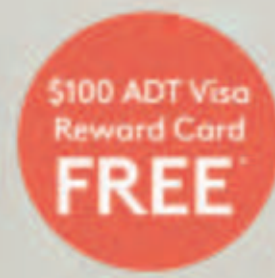
- Category Two: Five members who represent nationally recognized environmental organizations; regionally or locally recognized environmental organizations; dispersed recreational activities; archaeological and historical interests; or nationally or regionally recognized wild horse and burro interest groups, wildlife or hunting organizations, or watershed associations.

- Category Three: Five members who are elected state officials; are county or local elected officials; represent Indian tribes within or adjacent to the area for which the Council is organized; are school officials or teachers with knowledge in natural resource management or the natural sciences; or represent the affected public-at-large and/or are employed by a state agency responsible for the management of natural resources, land or water.

Nominations must be received by Dec. 1, 2023. Please email nomination packages to Karley O'Connor at Karley.O'Connor@usda.gov; or mail them to Karley O'Connor at Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forests, 2250 South Main Street, Delta, CO 81416.

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RGC Museum to open Cabinets of Curiosity Exhibit on Oct. 7

By LYNDIE FERRELL

DEL NORTE — The Rio Grande County Museum recently announced the opening of its newest exhibit, Cabinets of Curiosity, will be on Saturday, Oct. 7. The event is set from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and will include local and visiting storytellers speaking about the oddities and curiosities of Rio Grande County and the San Luis Valley.

Throughout the recorded history of the Valley, stories abound that tell the tales of strange lights, astronomical phenomenon, tales of indigenous lore and more. The storytellers will be sharing the tales of mystery throughout the entire day and the public is invited to attend.

Among the many stories that will be told, one has gained a fan base throughout the years and continues to baffle researchers to this day. Snippy the Horse became famous when he was found by his owner in the 1960s and his skeleton can be viewed at the UFO Watch Tower located north of Alamosa.

The story of Snippy began when a local rancher found the mutilated remains of his horse in a field outside of Alamosa on Sept. 8, 1967. Snippy was a 3-year-old filly that made headlines and created a following that still seeks answers. The horse was found in a meadow and was stripped from the shoulder to the tip of her nose. All that was left of the horse were bones and hide, though the rancher swore he had seen the horse alive and well



Courtesy photo

The Rio Grande County Museum's opening of its Cabinets of Curiosity exhibit is on Oct. 7. The event includes local and visiting storytellers who will be talking about the oddities and mysteries of Rio Grande County and the San Luis Valley, including the history of Snippy the Horse.

the day before.

The horse's organs were missing and when researchers were called to the scene, it was discovered that her bones were also radioactive. There was no sign of struggle, no imprints in the area around the horse and no sign of blood. Snippy is a Valley legend and her skeleton has found its forever home at the UFO Watchtower.

Another Valley tale includes some local Hispanic lore. The Hispanic roots of the Valley are deep and widely celebrated. The museum is pleased to have local teacher and storyteller Ed Atencio speak on Oct. 7 about La Llorona and other mysteries.

The stories may not be appropriate for all ages. The museum advises people with small children who plan to attend to use discretion. For more information, call the museum at 719-657-2847.



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