



Sargent assured of at least a tie for SPL championship

— Page 6



South Fork Chili Cookoff heats up bowls of success

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Valley Courier

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LOCAL NEWS... LOCAL VIEWS

October 20, 2023

\$1

SLV Today

Rio Grande Farm Park Halloween event Saturday

ALAMOSA — Rio Grande Farm Park Halloween Trick or Treat and more events this Saturday from 1 to 5 p.m. The farm park is located at 6935 CO-17 in Alamosa.

County Clerks mailing ballots for Nov. 7 election

DENVER—Colorado County Clerks are mailing ballots to active registered voters for the Nov. 7 Coordinated Election.

“Colorado voters should be on the lookout for their 2023 Coordinated Election Ballot,” said Colorado Secretary of State Jena Griswold. “I encourage every eligible Coloradan who has not yet registered to vote do so. There is still time!”

County Clerks must mail ballots by Friday, Oct. 20, to active registered voters for the Coordinated Election.

Eligible Coloradans can still register to vote and update their voter registration at GoVoteColorado.gov through Oct. 30 in order to receive a ballot in the mail. After Oct. 30, Coloradans can still register to vote, receive a ballot, and vote in-person at a voting center until 7 p.m. on Election Day.

CDOT starting shoulder work on CO 114 on Oct. 23

SAGUACHE AND GUNNISON COUNTIES —

Beginning Monday, Oct. 23, the Colorado Department of Transportation will perform erosion control work along the shoulder of Colorado Highway 114, 10-miles west of Saguache.

Operations will take place Monday through Friday between Mile Points 46 and 51. Motorists should plan for 15-20 minute delays, flaggers and one-lane alternating traffic between 9 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. each day.

An additional paving operation is taking place farther north on CO 114 near the US Highway 50 junction through the end of October. Motorists can expect up to 15-minute delays and alternating traffic.

SLV WEATHER

Sunny 72/29

Sat: Sunny 71/29

Sun: Sunny 70/30

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Local businessman signs agreement with city to build downtown hotel

To be built where Walsh Hotel once stood

By PRISCILLA WAGGONER
Courier Reporter

ALAMOSA — By unanimous vote, the city council of Alamosa has authorized Heather Sanchez, city manager, to sign a development agreement with Alamosa businessman Manish Patel for the construction of a 90-room downtown hotel

to be located on the former site of the Walsh Hotel.

The agreement is the culmination of negotiations that began between the city and Patel in 2019 when he indicated his strong interest in building a hotel downtown. The onset of the pandemic brought those negotiations to a halt but, as the economy returned to normal, Patel indicated an interest in resuming negotiations.

“A downtown hotel is mentioned several times in the Downtown Plan,” Sanchez told the Valley Courier. ■ See HOTEL page 3



Staybridge Suites graphics provided by the City of Alamosa



Courier photo by John Waters

From left to right, Tony Martinez, Mary Martinez, and Virginia Martinez. Mary Martinez will be celebrating her 100th birthday on Oct. 24.

100 years of Mary Martinez

By JOHN WATERS
Courier News Editor
MONTE VISTA— On Oct. 24, Mary Martinez of Monte Vista will celebrate her 100th birthday surrounded by friends and family.

Martinez was born in Antonito in 1923 and later moved to Monte Vista, where for over 30 years she worked at the Veterans Community Living Center at Homelake.

To put Mary's long life into perspective, in 1923 Vice President Calvin Coolidge became the 30th president of the United States, upon the death of President Warren Harding. In 1923, for the first

time, more people in the U.S. lived in cities than on farms or small villages. The Warner Brothers established their movie studio, as did Walt Disney, and Clarence Birds-eye invented frozen food.

During an interview with the Valley Courier, Martinez reflected on her long life. When asked what her thoughts are about turning 100, without hesitation she said, “I don't feel like I am, I've never felt like I'm getting older. I feel like I'm just me. I don't have a pain here or a pain there. I do feel the marks on my face, that is about all. I feel good.”

When asked how old

she feels she is, Martinez said, “I feel like I'm 14, maybe 15. I feel young, I don't feel old.”

Daughter-in-law Virginia Martinez said that Martinez does not take any pain medications and her doctors say they wished all their patients were in as great shape and great spirits.

A devout Roman Catholic, Martinez prays the Rosary daily and attends Mass every Sunday at St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Monte Vista. Martinez said the rosary she wears daily is her favorite, “I sit here in quiet and say my prayers,” said Martinez. ■ See MARY page 3

City passes 2024 budget

By PRISCILLA WAGGONER
Courier Reporter

ALAMOSA — After five opportunities for discussion of the budget, including three where the public could weigh in and two where the public could listen in on city council's work sessions, council approved the budget for 2024 during Wednesday night's meeting.

In the big picture, as explained by Alamosa City Manager Heather Sanchez to council in one final recap, the budget has five focus areas: housing, public safety (police and fire departments), infrastructure (think streets, water, sewer, public works), economic development and outdoor recreation.

The budget is built upon a projected total revenue of \$40,001,355, which includes grant funding. The budget also allows for total expenditures of \$42,785,831. In reviewing that figure, Sanchez stated that the \$2.7 million difference was anticipated in previous years related to capital improvement projects slated for 2024.

One of the most notable figures, and greatest success in terms of city priorities, relates to Capital Improvement projects which, in 2024, will total \$11.7 million in expenditures. Part of that funding is the result of the city applying for and be-

ing awarded grants.

Another noteworthy figure is \$17.3 million, which reflects the amount of grants received. That \$17.3 million is comprised of \$6,638,914 for housing (38%), \$5,422,432 (or 31%) for parks and recreation and the library, \$2,644,000 (15%) for downtown projects, \$1,230,299 (7%) for public safety, \$1,295,704.93 (7%) for infrastructure, \$1,295,704.93 (7%) for homeless, and \$11,500 (less than 1%) for miscellaneous areas such as IT and historic preservation, etc.

The 2024 budget also includes some “successes”, that is, funding found for specific allocations that had emerged as priorities in 2023. Most notably, funding for the co-responder program will be available in the budget in the year that grant funding will no longer support those three vital positions that are part of the Alamosa Police Department.

Also, after numerous complaints and discussions during council meetings about vandalism in the rest rooms in various parks around the city, funding was found to create a seasonal, part-time position to assist with locking and unlocking the bathrooms, a mitigation strategy that has helped in significantly reducing the amount of vandalism that

■ See BUDGET page 3

Saguache United Methodist to celebrate 150 years

By BILL HAZZARD

SAGUACHE — The Saguache United Methodist Church marks a major milestone this year. The church is celebrating 150 years of sharing faith and ministering to the community of Saguache and nearby areas. The actual date of the incorporation was Nov. 3, 1873, but the Saguache church will celebrate a couple of weeks early. ■ See 150 page 3



Photos courtesy of Bill Hazzard

The Saguache United Methodist Church marks a major milestone this year. The church is celebrating 150 years of sharing faith and ministering to the community of Saguache and nearby areas.



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Record

APD responds to a call at Carroll Park

Alamosa High School briefly placed on secure status

STAFF REPORT
ALAMOSA — Alamosa Police Department patrol units were sent to Carroll Park Wednesday afternoon, at approximately 12:46 p.m., near Alamosa High School in reference to a large fight in progress involving approximately 10-plus individuals. There was also the report of a suspected firearm involved.

While en route, dispatch informed officers that all suspects had fled the scene and were headed toward Park Avenue, on foot. Officers arrived on scene, located numerous parties, and began a foot chase in

pursuit of four remaining individuals.

The chase went through residential back yards and a parking lot of a local church. By 12:52, all parties were apprehended with the four individuals, all juveniles, taken into custody by Alamosa Police Department with assistance from Alamosa County Sheriff's Office, Colorado State Patrol and Adams State University Police Department.

According to APD Police Chief Ken Anderson, there were numerous witnesses to the incident, including two victims who are believed to have sustained

minor injuries.

Due to its proximity to the scene, Alamosa High School was placed on "secure status" during the incident. Secure status requires that all exterior doors to the school are locked with entrance to or exit from the building prohibited.

Once APD apprehended the suspects, the scene was considered safe and the secure status at Alamosa High School was released. At this point, there is no danger to the community, and this is an active investigation with charges pending. No further details will be released at this time.

Martinez-Aponte wins Boots on the Ground Award

CONTRIBUTED
THE VALLEY— The San Luis Valley Joint Interagency Oversight Group (SLV Joint IOG) recently honored partner agency staff members with the "Boots on the Ground" award in recognition of employees who exemplify the spirit of cross-systems collaboration.

The award recipient for October is Tiffany Martinez-Aponte of Tu Casa and Children's Advocacy Center.

"Tiffany went above and beyond in community collaboration. She sat as a community member in a restorative process at Center for Restorative Program (CRP) called a community group conference. The gathering is an opportunity for individuals who have caused harm to take responsibility for their actions, the impacted parties to share how they were affected, and then for the group to create agreements together to make things as right as possible moving forward. Ma-Tiffany shared her expertise throughout the circle, helping the young people understand how their actions not only impacted the parties directly involved, but also the broader community. She was a huge help in coming up with the agreements and is continuing to work with two participants from that conference on an ongoing project. She is busy with her work at Tu Casa as it is, and so it meant a lot to us that she was willing to take time (several hours into the evening) to join CRP in holding young people accountable and helping them move forward! Her ongoing project with these young people also shows her commitment



Courtesy photo

From left to right are: Matthew L. Tulley (SLV IOG Director), Tiffany Martinez-Aponte (Outreach/Education Coordinator), and Roxy Gehring (Restorative Justice Diversion Program Coordinator). Martinez-Aponte received the Boots on the Ground award for October.

to community-based and strength-based solutions when conflict arises," according to the oversight group.

Established in 2008 and funded through Colorado House Bill 1451, the SLV Joint IOG currently includes Alamosa and Saguache counties. Over 20 agencies participate including the 12th Judicial District, Probation Department, the Colorado Youth Detention Continuum program, Alamosa County Department of Human Services, Alamosa County Public Health Department, Alamosa School District, Center for Restorative Programs, Colorado Division of Youth Services, Colorado Health Partnerships, Crossroads' Turning Points, San Luis Valley Early Childhood Council, San Luis Valley Behavioral Health Group, San Luis Valley BOCES, Signal Behav-

ioral Health Network, Health Colorado Inc., Boys and Girls Club of the San Luis Valley, Saguache County Department of Social Services, Saguache County Public Health Department, Center School District, Moffat Consolidated School District, Mountain Valley School District, Valley-Wide Health Systems Inc., La Puente Inc., Tu Casa, and Teri Sisneros, Family Representative for the SLV Joint IOG.

The goal of the oversight group is to develop collaborative approaches for the provision of individualized, strength-based, family-centered, and culturally sensitive services to children, youth, and families. The SLV Joint IOG works to increase the quality and appropriateness of services while encouraging cost-sharing and reducing service duplication and fragmentation.

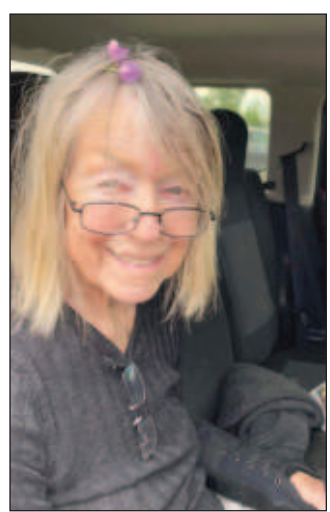
OBITUARIES

Sandra Gillman

ALAMOSA — Sandra Gillman, 77, of Alamosa, formerly of Daybreak, Utah, passed away Thursday, Oct. 12, 2023, at her home with her family by her side.

Sandra was born in Provo, Utah, June 2, 1946, the daughter of Dean and Nona (Marchbanks) Gillman. Sandra was united in marriage to David Alfred Hales, and Richard Jolley.

Sandra is survived by children, Corbin (Jessica) Hales, Angila Cutler; Sisters, Laurie (Steve) Adams, and Tami; Grandchildren, Kaiden (Jasmine) Hales, Landon Hales, Ella Clark, Emma-Lea Clark, Kole Cutler, Kaylee Cutler, Dylan Cutler; and many nieces and nephews.



Sandra was preceded in death by her parents, brother Roger Weight, sister Nan McKenzie, and grandson Austin Cutler.

Sandra loved fashion and received her Master's Degree in fashion at Utah Valley University. Sandra loved the beach

and water. Sandra loved to play tennis and won several trophies over her years of playing tennis. Sandra loved her Grandchildren dearly. Sandra also owned and operated several Quizno's Restaurants over the years which she operated with her family. Sandra loved watching basketball and was a loyal Utah Jazz fan. She watched every single game on TV. She loved her dog, Bitsy, as that was her best friend and roommate for many years.

Rogers Family Mortuary has been entrusted to the care and arrangements. To leave online condolences, remarks, tributes, and words of comfort for Sandra's family, please visit RogersFunerals.com.

Anthony E. Martinez



Our darling Anthony E. Martinez tragically left us

on Oct. 11, 2023. He left behind a loving mother, Lisa, brother, Moses, and two sisters, Felecia and Marissa.

Along with his loving grandparents, Ernie, and Sandra, who will miss him so much. Anthony loved his family, his job, his coworkers, and the gym. His attitude was always bright, and he brought a

smile to everyone's face.

A rosary will be held Thursday, Oct. 26, 2023, at 7 p.m. at the Catholic Church in Monte Vista, Colo. A memorial service will be held Friday, Oct. 27, 2023, at 10 a.m. at St. Francis of Assisi Church on the 7-mile plaza.

Arrangements in care of Strohmayr's Funeral Home.

Russell Maxwell

Russell Glen Maxwell was born January 7, 1961 in Lawton, Oklahoma. Russ passed suddenly on Oct. 13, 2023, in Highlands Ranch, Colo., after a brief illness.

He graduated from high school in Arnett, Okla., in 1979. Russ had a passion for cars and loved watching racing of all types which he shared with his kids and grandkids. Russ spent 42 years working in car dealerships in the San Luis Valley and Northern Colorado. He worked as a technician, service advisor and service manager.

Russ married Penny Robinson from Hooper, Colo., on April 25, 1981, in Shattuck, Okla. They had two children, Dennis (Tesa) Hooper, Colo., and Tasha Lugg (Billy) of Frederick, Colo. He was Grandpa aka Hampa to KayleeAnn,

Johnathon, Anagrace, Zachery, and Elizabeth who are all the greatest joy and loves of his life.

Russ is survived by his siblings Carson (Loretta) Bivins, Carol Gatlin (Gary), Michelle Maxwell and Craig Nix. Also, survived by six nieces, five nephews, nine great-nieces, four great-nephews, two great-great-nieces and one great-great-nephew, aunts Dean Baggs, Edith Kitchen and Marla Stapp, mother-in-law Jolene Robinson and sister-in-law CJ Robinson.

He was preceded in death by his mother Ruth Nix, stepfather Bob Nix, brother Dennis Bivins, uncles Leroy, Claude, and Willie Stapp, aunt Linda "Sissy" Stapp, grandparents Buford and Dora Stapp, and Pop and Leola Watson, father-in-law Clarence Robinson and brother-in-law



Matt Robinson.

He enjoyed watching sports especially the Denver Broncos, Colorado Rockies, and OU Football. In his spare time, he enjoyed time with his family, hunting, fishing, and camping.

Cremation has been chosen. A Celebration of Life will be announced at a later date.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS MEETINGS

VALLEY — The San Luis Valley offers many Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous groups.

A.A. and N.A. members primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics/addicts to achieve sobriety.

There are AA and NA 12-

Step Meetings throughout the valley. The 6th Tradition states that we are not affiliated with any outside organizations, but in the spirit of cooperation, we list these meeting schedules for friends and family. For information, call 719-937-5083 or see our website:slvaa.org

COURIER OBITUARY POLICY

The Courier charges \$75 for each obituary per day. Pending arrangements or death notices are free. This charge affects funeral homes, family or other representatives that place obituaries. All paid obituaries are published on www.alamosanews.com for no additional fee.

Please email obituaries if possible to squintana@alamosanews.com If the newspaper errors in publishing an obit, corrections will be made and the obit rerun. If the errors are on the part of the submitting party, an additional fee will be assessed.

School Menu
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Valley News

Budget

Continued from Page 1

is happening. And, finally, through the elimination of several seasonal positions, the city was able to create a position that, while performing regular duties as part of the job, will be trained to take over when the golf course superintendent retires, which is projected to happen in the next few years.

One final area relates to employee compensation, which will be significantly increased this year with city employees receiving anywhere from an 11% to 15% pay raise. Of that, 4% is due to a rise in the Cost of Living, 7% is described as necessary for retention and recruitment and the remaining 4% is a merit increase for those employees performing at a high standard on the job.

It is projected that the new pay raise will be equal to an expenditure of \$1.1 million.

According to Jolene Webb, director of Human Resources with the city, there are 221 employees working for Alamosa, 110 of whom are full-time with the remaining 111 being part-time.

City Manager Heather Sanchez has informed city

council that the 7% pay adjustment is needed for recruitment and retention, following a survey that found that 7% as being a figure where 50% of other, similar municipalities paying more than that amount and 50% of like communities paying less.

Currently, Webb reports that the city has a 13% annual turnover rate among full-time and permanent part-time employees, with some departments accounting for more turnover than others. While high, given the cost of recruiting and training only for a fully trained employee to leave for a different position, that 13% is lower than the national average of 20%, as quoted to a consultant hired by the city in relation to employment with a local government.

The hardest positions to hire and retain are generally those requiring specialized skills, such as having a CDL or being a diesel mechanic. In a class all its own, police departments are also struggling with hiring and retaining officers, a challenge that is currently true across the nation.

“There are many vacancies that we have to advertise multiple times because we do not get qualified applicants,” Sanchez told the Valley Courier. “This



Courier file photo

The Alamosa City Council approved the 2024 budget at its meeting on Wednesday.

has included maintenance personnel, seasonal positions, recreation positions, streets positions, etc. It's at all levels and across all departments. Our specialized fields have also had turnover and multiple postings without getting applicants.”

Webb reported that the city currently has three vacancies, including one with the Alamosa Police Department, a street technician, and a position in wastewater treatment.

“All three of those positions have had a significant change in market value,” Webb said.

Sanchez also cited a December 2022 in-depth conversation during city council meeting when she was describing significant challenges in not just retaining but also hiring qualified applicants as the department had not been fully staffed for more than two years.

She also cited a more current situation. “Mechanics with the city had other job

opportunities for more money,” she said. “They shared with us that they were looking but hated to leave the city since they like working here. They asked if we were going to take seriously looking at the market. We said we were, and they have stayed.”

Sanchez further added that “some department heads had been offered jobs that pay \$50,000 more a year.”

“Filling vacancies has become increasingly difficult for the city with many advertisements having to be run repeatedly. The number of qualified applicants has continued to drop for positions in every department due to a constricting labor market and the increases that have occurred in the private sector market.”

The hope is that a substantial increase ranging from 11% to 15% in 2024 will help to make the city more competitive and reduce employee turnover.

Mary

Continued from Page 1

The rosary was made locally by parishioners at St. Joseph's.

Virginia Martinez offered, “She is pushing her prayer into that [Rosary] she is always praying, everyone who comes by she says she is praying for them. Everybody

in town or church knows her, by mom or grandma. At church, the little kids come up and just give her hugs like she was their grandma. She is very kind, very loving, and generous. As a mother-in-law, I could have never been better blessed than with her.”

Martinez was married for 63 years to Ben R. Martinez until his death and has one son Tony who was

present for the interview.

Regarding her work at Homelake, Martinez offered, “You work with the members, you treat them the best you can. You talk and joke with them and treat them the best you can. It was nice, I liked it, I really liked that.”

As an avid Denver Broncos football fan, she watches their games regularly. When asked how the Bron-

cos might do this season she offered, “Up and down I think.”

Martinez and her family will have a birthday celebration on Oct. 24 and a larger party with about 100 friends and family members planned later in the week. Martinez has one son, two grandchildren, three great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild.

Hotel

Continued from Page 1

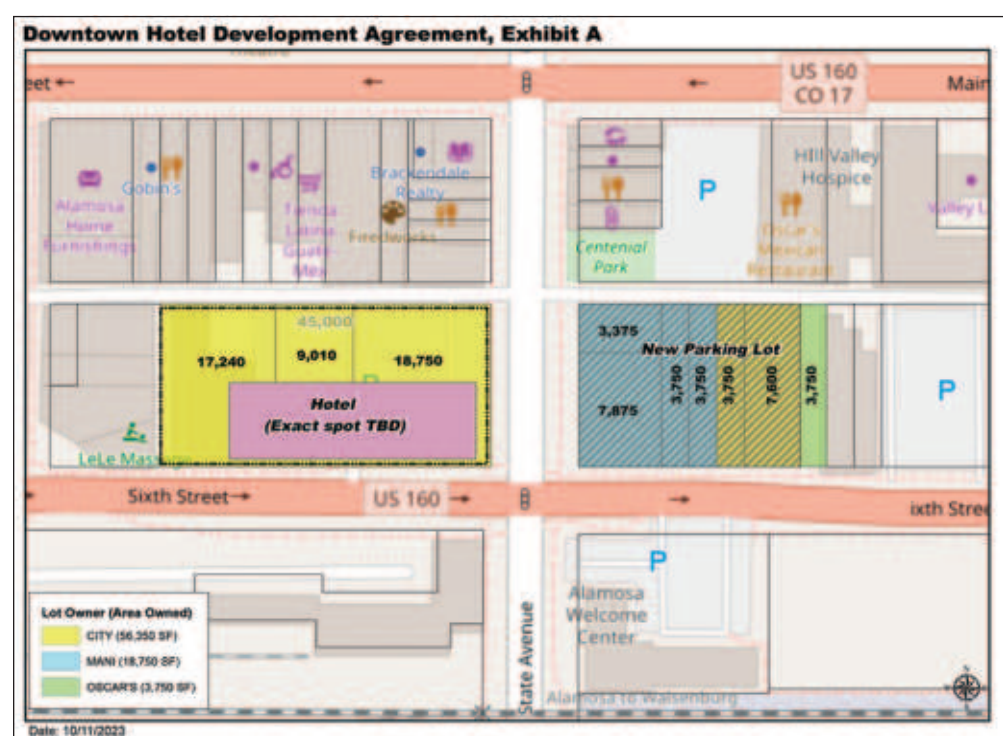
er, “generally as an anchor and way to draw visitors downtown.” She then referred to the page in the plan where a downtown hotel in that location was specifically indicated as a preference by members of the public, which did not include city staff or members of the city council.

It is too early in the process for specifics of the hotel to be known, but Sanchez shared with council that Patel is shooting for a hotel with a 90-room capacity and is currently considering plans from the Hyatt Studios brand and Staybridge Suites. The plan also sets a 50-foot maximum for any new building built downtown.

The development agreement involves three pieces of property already owned by the negotiating parties — specifically, the city-owned 45,000 square-foot lot where the Walsh Hotel (currently in demolition) once stood and the 18,750 square-foot lot (known locally as the Pink Elephant site) Patel owns that is directly east of the Walsh on the other side of State Avenue. Further to the east, the Pink Elephant site is bordered by another lot, owned by the city of Alamosa and measuring 11,500 square feet. Combined, the Pink Elephant site and the lot to the east total 30,100 square feet, all unpaved and currently used for parking.

According to the development agreement, the city will deed over the 45,000 square foot lot to Patel. In exchange, Patel will deed over the Pink Elephant 18,750 square foot lot, giving the city ownership of that entire 30,100 square foot area.

Patel further agrees to construct a parking lot on the 30,100 square foot land with the agreement that some of the parking spaces will be dedicated, as needed, to hotel use from 3:00 p.m. to 9:00 a.m. the next day.



Map designates land to be deeded to Patel and the City of Alamosa.

In return, the city agrees to reimburse Patel for construction of the parking lot from the new sales tax funds paid by the hotel. In that way, Sanchez emphasized, the city is not using any funds from the existing budget to repay Patel but, instead, reimbursing him for the construction from a portion of the sales tax funds generated by the hotel he built.

Depending upon the number of parking spaces required by code, how many of those parking spaces will be located on the hotel property and how many will be needed on the parking lot across the street, a cap will be set for the amount Patel will be reimbursed for the cost of construction.

In speaking to council, Sanchez acknowledged that the agreement may seem, at first glance, to be inequitable — deeding 45,000 square feet of land to Patel and being deeded 18,750 square feet of land in return.

But, she said, that cost will be offset by the influx of new revenue the downtown hotel will create. Using an algorithm accepted as an industry standard in calculating the economic impact of a hotel on the surrounding economy, it's anticipated that hotel con-



Hyatt Studio graphics provided by the City of Alamosa

struction and operation — for example creation of new jobs — will have a direct positive impact of \$21.9 million on the city. Once multipliers are applied as those dollars are circulated in the local economy, that projected impact increases to \$39.2 million.

In the following years, the direct impact to the local economy is estimated to be \$11.9 million with a total estimated impact, each year, of \$20.2 million.

Once Sanchez had completed her review of the development agreement,

150

Continued from Page 1

Five original trustees made the Article of Incorporation for the Methodist Episcopal Church at Milton, an early settlement of Saguache County which sat a little over a mile southeast of Saguache. About all that remains of that town today is an old barn, but in its day, Milton was a thriving village competing for importance with Saguache.

The church body had its beginning at Milton and within just a few months, the church itself was constructed. Milton, however, had lost a very contentious county seat election to Saguache and over time, many of the citizens moved from Milton into Saguache.

The church building, after some neglect, was eventually lifted intact and slowly rolled into Saguache in late 1884 and dedicated the following July. Therefore, the history of the Saguache United Methodist Church began with that church in Milton.

There were a few Methodist ministers who came through the area well before 1873. The Rev. Joseph Williams, according to his diary, passed over Cochetopa Pass and through the Saguache area in 1842. After Colorado became a territory, several Methodist circuit riders came through and preached in homes here and there on an irregular basis.

The first of these traveling ministers was the Rev. John L. “Father” Dyer in 1867, followed by the Rev. Jesse Smith and the Rev. George Murray and possibly others.

It was the Rev. John L. Rickards and the Rev. B.A. Washburn, though, who were both assigned to this area from 1873-1874. They organized the church body at Milton, along with local men

Samuel Ashley, P.H. Wilcox and Preston Hotchkiss. These five men made and signed the Article of Incorporation.

The church has experienced many highs and lows in its 150 years. There have been many periods when it was difficult to find and keep a pastor. There were other years when the church enjoyed huge growth in membership and pastors who remained for several years.

In more recent years, the church yoked with the Center United Methodist Church, a yoke which lasted 60 years. Through the entire history of the church, it has been the members, and often the women of the church, who have sustained it during the lean and difficult times.

Raising money for church needs, continuing Sunday School and prayer meetings held the church together even during the worst periods. This up-and-down history illustrates quite clearly that a church is not the building, it is not the pastors, it is not the conference, but it is the body of people of the community. Seventy-seven ministers later, after Rickards and Washburn, the Saguache church is still sharing the faith in the community.

The Saguache UMC, therefore, is holding a 150th Year Celebration on Saturday, Oct. 21, 2023, and it will begin with a worship service at 11 a.m. This will be followed by an open house and reception in the Fellowship Hall from about 12:30 to 3:30 p.m.

There will be a community Bible display and a historical photo display of pastors, the church over the years and weddings and other special events.

The Saguache congregation is preparing for a remarkable day. The Saguache UMC is located at Christy Avenue and 6th Street in Saguache.

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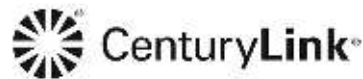
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CenturyLink also participates in the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP), which provides eligible households with a discount on broadband service. The ACP provides a discount of up to \$30 per month toward broadband service for eligible households and up to \$75 per month for households on qualifying Tribal lands.

For both programs, a household is defined as any individual or group of individuals who live together at the same address and share income and expenses. Services are not transferable, and only eligible consumers may enroll in these programs. Consumers who willfully make false statements to obtain these discounts can be punished by fine or imprisonment and can be barred from these programs.

If you live in a CenturyLink service area, visit <https://www.centurylink.com/aboutus/community/community-development/lifeline.html> for additional information about applying for these programs or call 1-800-201-4099 with questions.



Opinion

The root of all evil

For those of you who follow Ol' Dutch and Miss Trixie on their weekly adventures, you know there is never a dull moment. And just like the character Roseanne Roseannadanna, who was played by the great Gilda Radner, used to say, "it's always something."

And this past week did not disappoint although the stress did get to Ol' Dutch more than usual as it involved money. And most importantly His money.

I don't think there is anything that stresses me out more than dealing with money whether it be an abundance or lack thereof and this past week dealing with a Credit Union sent me off into orbit. I was so high I probably could have seen John Glenn circling the earth had I stopped long enough to look out the window.

It all started so innocently enough when Ol' Dutch found himself with a little bit of extra mammon to invest. And interest rates being what they are, I had perused the Internet until the keys on the computer wore out but finally found a 6.1% interest rate at a local credit union. Now it's been a long, long time since I had been in one of these financial institutions as I normally use a bank for all transactions but I thought how hard can it be to just get a CD.

So off I went and soon I was embroiled in a process and I found out it can be about four-hours-hard which should have been my first clue that something was about to go awry. Finally dotting the i's and crossing the t's I escaped from there albeit without

Trout Republic



by Kevin Kirkpatrick



a free toaster for opening a new account. But nonetheless I felt pretty good about getting a high rate of return. That is until I got home and Miss Trixie checked the account for me. And it's a good thing she did as I soon was made aware that by the time I drove home the Credit Union had reduced the interest from 6.1 to 4.79%.

I soon found out that there was no way to actually call the branch which raised my blood pressure a notch or two. But what they did not know is that there is one thing that you never do to Ol' Dutch and that is come between him and his money. I do love it and I know that is a sin but I pray a lot and ask forgiveness so all is good on the eternal life part of me anyway.

But any who, the next morning found me back at the credit union and sans a mandatory appointment, I walked into the offices of the fearless leader there unannounced. Miss Trixie had tagged along with me so that I didn't blow a proverbial

gasket at the poor little Dominican Republic girl who had found herself in over her head.

Finally she got a manager and he tried to explain that the extra interest was still under approval and was now going to be 5.98%. It appears to me that these folks who deal only with money and only with numbers could not even run a calculator.

There is a story about the Kirkpatrick clan that says they were riding with Robert Bruce the future King of Scotland and he had stabbed a man in a saloon. The Kirkpatricks went back and "made sure" the man was dead. Hence the "I Make Sure" on our family crest. So when they asked what I wanted to do I motioned with historical accuracy and finality by drawing my finger across my throat. I was done with that place.

This caused a mad mass confusion as they had to figure out how to cancel a year long CD and get my money back but two

To submit news, email:
news@alamosanews.com

To submit sports, email:
khamrick@alamosanews.com

Letters policy

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

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

hours later I left, check in hand and found a real bank with working calculators and a matching rate.

Now I know that all credit unions are probably not like this branch as some of them are sure to have calculators this late in civilized history and a few may actually have bank officers with more than a month's experience but if this had been the Lottery, Ol' Dutch hit all those numbers on his first try out of the bank box.

Thinking this was a portent of good luck to come, I did buy the big Lottery ticket but alas, didn't win the billions. Looks like therefore I will be writing this column again next week as I cannot afford to bug out.

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.

GOP candidate: The 2024 race is 'stuck'

By BYRON YORK

An extraordinary document emerged from the 2024 Republican presidential race this week, and it isn't getting enough attention. It's a memo from the super PAC supporting Tim Scott, the GOP senator who was once seen as a promising contender but has recently slipped in polls both nationally and in early primary states. Scott is now in seventh place in the RealClearPolitics average of national polls. He is tied for fourth in Iowa, sixth in New Hampshire and fourth in his native South Carolina.

Written by Rob Collins, co-chief of Trust in the Mission PAC, or TIMPAC, the well-funded organization supporting Scott's campaign, the memo announced that the PAC was canceling millions of dollars in planned spending on TV ads this fall. "The Fall Republican primary is stuck," Collins writes. "Donald Trump leads a cluster of statistically tied contenders by a wide margin. Vote share of non-Trump candidates trades up and down, but no campaign has achieved break away velocity. The fundamentals of the race remain unchanged: President Donald Trump occupies a lane by himself."

The Scott campaign had planned to spend millions on ads this fall. But, so far, only Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis and then former South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley, have emerged as challengers to Trump,

and they have only "traded vote share," according to the memo. Trump remains far, far ahead. After extensive research, Collins and the Scott effort have decided that "the electorate is locked up and money spent on mass media isn't going to change minds until we get a lot closer to voting." Therefore, the memo continues, "we aren't going to waste our money when the electorate isn't focused or ready for a Trump alternative."

A move like TIMPAC's is often seen as the first tolling of the candidate death knell. In this case, it might be. So far, Scott has campaigned hard and has spent about \$20 million on TV ads, both from his campaign and the super PAC. He is well-liked everywhere, but there is a difference between being well-liked and being a presidential contender. Since a well-received beginning, Scott has endured a long, slow decline. His worst moment came at the first Republican debate, on Aug. 23, when Scott was often passive, failing to step out and make the impression his backers hoped he would.

That has led to the place no candidate wants to be, when reporters start asking when he will quit. "Scott in the past week has dismissed questions about whether he intends to drop out soon," reports Politico. The new TIMPAC memo will only increase the questioning.

On the other hand, the Collins memo

makes some trenchant observations about the state of the Republican campaign now, observations that reach far beyond Tim Scott. The main fact is this: Donald Trump has a huge lead, and all the other candidates can do is wait to see if something happens. What is "something"? It could be Trump's upcoming criminal trials, or it could be something else. But the bottom line is that, at this moment, Trump's lead appears insurmountable, and some event -- details TBA -- will have to happen to change that.

"Some will challenge our theory of the election, but we would ask these critics to produce any evidence that shows any candidate, at this time, at any spending level, breaking through," Scott writes. He points out that Win It Back, an anti-Trump super PAC created by the conservative Club for Growth, recently admitted that the \$6 million it has spent on ads opposing Trump have made no progress.

"Every traditional postproduction ad attacking President Trump either backfired or produced no impact on his ballot support and favorability," super PAC head David McIntosh wrote. Now, the Scott Super PAC has experienced its own version of ad failure. So they are getting out of the television ad business until things improve -- if things improve. "Once the voters truly engage and are ready for a new conservative direction -- we will be

ready to engage in broadcast media to help Tim earn our party's nomination," the TIMPAC memo says.

The TIMPAC memo makes it clear that Scott will stay in the race until that time comes. Maybe he will, and maybe he won't; it is easier said than done. But that is exactly what every other candidate is trying to do. It presupposes two things: One is that something will change, and two is that the candidate can last until it does. Neither is assured.

But that is the state of the Republican race now. And one last thing: Therein lies opportunity. Yes, it is possible, even likely, that Trump's lead will go on and on and he'll win the nomination and everybody else will lose. But there has never been a race with this level of uncertainty before. Next year promises to be highly eventful, and there is no guarantee Trump, facing trials and voters, will maintain his current level of support. And if he does not, the Republican candidate who is best prepared, who has put himself or herself in the best position, will take advantage of Trump's problems. We don't know who that might be, or if it will happen at all. But that's what Tim Scott and all the other GOP candidates not named Trump are doing right now.

Byron York is chief political correspondent for The Washington Examiner.

Op-Ed: National Newspaper Association calls proposed new postal rates 'punitive'

By NATIONAL NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION

The proposed Jan. 21, 2024, postage increase for community newspapers is nearly four times the rate increase proposed for other users of the mail. In an announcement last Oct. 6, the United States Postal Service announced it expected a 7.3% increase for the local Within County mailing rate for newspapers.

The average proposed increase for First-Class mail is 1.9%, even though the First-Class stamp rate would rise by 2 cents to 68 cents. The proposed increase for advertising mail is also 1.9%, though the increase

within that mail class used by local newspapers to distribute shoppers and other advertising mail increases ranging from 2.1 to 3.9%, depending upon mail density. The rate for Periodicals mail destined for outside the publisher's county would settle at a more modest 1.59%. That rate is also used by national magazines and other national publications.

USPS is permitted to increase rates without direct approval by the Postal Regulatory Commission, although the PRC is required to review the proposed rates for illegalities and calculation errors. The increase is intended as the first half of a

semi-annual increase and to go into effect Jan. 21, 2024.

National Newspaper Association Chair John Galer, publisher of The Journal-News in Hillsboro, Ill., said the dramatic rate increase for local newspapers was a shock.

"It certainly seems as if the Postal Service wants to discourage newspapers from using the mail. At a time when local journalism is already in peril and more newspapers are using the mail to reach subscribers, this increase is simply punitive," Galer said. "We expect both our subscribers and other stakeholders in our com-

munity to push back at the subscription increases that will be made necessary by the Postal Service's action."

Ironically, the Postal Service's principal justification for the steep increase is that the PRC now requires USPS to share more of the savings created when publishers do some of the work that postal workers would otherwise have to do, such as pre-sorting the mail and transporting it to destination post offices. Traditionally, USPS has shared far less than 100% of the savings when it passes along mail discounts. But because PRC is pushing the postal system to be more generous in sharing the savings, USPS is simply raising the basic rate so it can show a more acceptable discount.

"Raising our prices so it can claim it is creating a fair discount is the sort of math we associate with shady deals," Galer said. "Our industry has been doing a lot of mail preparation work for years to help keep postal costs down. For us to now be punished for that work simply adds outrage to our disappointment."

The Postal Service is now guided by the Delivering For America plan introduced by Postmaster General Louis DeJoy to help the Postal Service compete for the package and parcel business. Twice-a-year postage increases have been part of the DFA plan, which allows USPS to raise rates to the fullest extent allowed above inflation.

The details of the postal rate announcement are available on the PRC's website at PortalPrc (arkcase.com).

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Lifestyles

Wildlife and Transportation Summit highlights the successes of recent policies and projects

By COLORADO PARKS AND WILDLIFE

CASTLE ROCK — As snowstorms begin to develop in the high country, big game herds will move to lower elevations seeking vegetation and water sources. These movements across Colorado's terrain mean wildlife will be crossing roads and highways more frequently as they push toward their winter ranges. Motorists need to be more diligent when driving, especially between dusk and dawn, when wildlife-vehicle collisions are more likely to occur.

While motorists can make a difference by being more conscientious when driving, the Colorado Wildlife and Transportation Alliance is also working to resolve conflict between animals and vehicles. This week, the Alliance brought together like-minded partners from several agencies, municipalities, tribes and organizations at the 2023 Wildlife & Transportation Summit held in Douglas County.

"It was exciting to see the diverse partners come together and hear about their interests, passions and commitments to help the state of Colorado address the drastically high rates of wildlife-vehicle collisions," said Dan Gibbs, executive director for the Colorado Department of Natural Resources. "Let's harness the energy in this room to continue to identify opportunities for projects and hone in on the highway sites that will best benefit from mitigation features like overpasses, underpasses and high wildlife fencing."

A highlight of this year's summit was a field trip to two of several wildlife underpasses recently built along the Interstate 25 corridor between Colo-

rado Springs and Castle Rock.

"Prior to these wildlife features being built and included in the I-25 Gap project a few years ago, this was one of the last areas remaining on the front range where we could connect large animal movements from the plains, across this corridor, to the Rocky Mountains," explained Chuck Attardo, CDOT I-25 South Corridor Environmental Manager. "So this I-25 corridor is the link right here, it was an important missing piece. This is where we absolutely had to enhance the highway system for the benefit of big game and small mammals to maintain their movements from prairies to mountains, while at the same time reducing animal hits."

Aside from the site visit, the summit also included educational and informational presentations which reinforced the benefits of federal and state initiatives aimed at improving safety for wildlife and motorists and improving habitat connectivity. In the six years since the first Wildlife & Transportation Summit in 2017, the Alliance is proud of the progress those initiatives have made in reducing wildlife-vehicle collisions. Policies and initiatives include the 2018 U.S. Department of Interior's Secretarial Order to improve the quality of big-game winter range and migration corridor habitat, a 2019 Executive Order by Colorado Governor Polis to conserve Colorado's big game winter range and migration corridors, a Memorandum of Understanding between CDOT and CPW aimed at increasing collaboration and coordination between the two agencies

and the 2022 CO Senate Bill 151 which created the state's first wildlife mitigation fund for wildlife crossing projects.

"It's critical to demonstrate to our federal and state leaders the incredibly beneficial impact these initiatives have on safe passage for people and wildlife," said Michelle Cowardin, Wildlife Movement Coordinator for CPW. "Our goal is to capitalize on the momentum of these recent measures and to continue to identify the needs, gaps, and opportunities for long-term and proactive approaches to maintain healthy wildlife populations in Colorado and at the same time build successful partnerships at local, state, and federal levels."

The two-day Summit wrapped up with a discussion on what's next for wildlife and transportation in Colorado. In addition to seeking additional funding for the Wildlife Mitigation Fund created by Senate Bill 151, the Alliance was encouraged to continue to support implementation of on-the-ground projects. Participants highlighted the need to build on work with partners, specifically with county decision-makers who can help the Alliance achieve its goals at the local level.

Wildlife stakeholders in attendance at the summit were individuals from several local municipalities and counties, state and federal agencies including CDOT, CPW, Federal Highways Administration, Southern Ute Indian Tribe, U.S. Fish & Wildlife, National Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management. As well, representatives from the fields of academia, nonprofits, and engineering also participated in the summit.

New backyard avian influenza case confirmed in Colorado

By COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE BROOMFIELD

The US Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) confirmed a new case of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in a backyard flock in Weld County, the Colorado Department of Agriculture reported.

The flock experienced a high mortality event, losing 20 of 24 chickens in the flock, after exposure to sick and dying wild geese on the premises. The remaining birds in the flock were euthanized.

"We had a much-needed reprieve of HPAI detections in the country from this spring to summer. Unfortunately, as we see the fall movement of migratory birds through the United States, including Colorado, we are beginning to see HPAI cases increase again," said Colorado State Veterinarian Dr. Maggie Baldwin.

"We will continue to work with commercial poultry and egg producers as well as backyard flock owners to ensure they adhere to strict biosecurity practices that can help keep

birds safe and decrease the spread of the virus."

Since April 2022, Colorado has experienced the largest foreign animal disease outbreak in state's history with the loss of more than 6.2 million domestic poultry due to HPAI. CDA continues to update the HPAI Response page with current information, online at ag.colorado.gov/HPAIRresponse.

The USDA's Defend the Flock program has resources for bird owners, including sample biosecurity plans, videos, and tips on how to keep a healthy flock.

Additionally, the Colorado Department of Agriculture has tips on biosecurity, informational webinars, a form to report any sick birds, and more information about HPAI on the Avian Influenza page at ag.colorado.gov/hpai.

What bird owners can do:

- **INCREASE BIOS-ECURITY:** Poultry owners must immediately increase biosecurity measures to protect their birds from HPAI. The USDA Defend the Flock website has helpful resources for keeping poul-

try healthy in any operation. Commercial poultry producers can use this toolkit to assess their biosecurity practices and preparedness.

- **MONITOR:** Monitor your flock for clinical signs of HPAI, including monitoring production parameters (feed and water consumption, egg production) and increased illness and death. Any changes in production parameters that could indicate HPAI should be reported.

- **REPORT:** Veterinarians and producers must report any suspicious disease events in poultry flocks to the State Veterinarian's office at 303-869-9130. If it is after hours, the voicemail message will indicate which veterinarian is on call.

If you have sick birds or birds that have died from unknown causes, help is available at the Colorado Avian Health Call Line at CSU, 970-297-4008.

Wild birds: If you find three or more dead wild birds in a specific area within a two-week period or if you see live birds showing clinical signs of disease, contact your local Colorado Parks and Wildlife office.



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Sports



Courier photos by Ken Hamrick

Sargent High School's Reese Anderson (10) sets up a kill attempt for Kandace Pargin (5) in Thursday's match at Monte Vista. The Lady Farmers defeated the Lady Pirates in four sets.

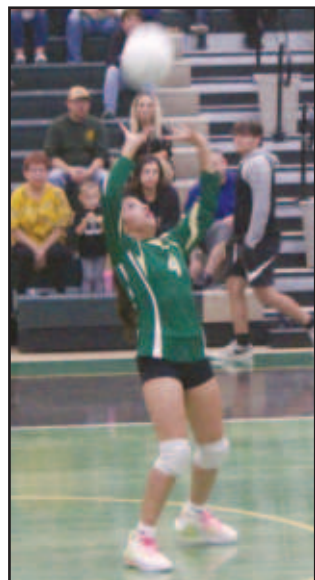
Sargent assured of at least a share SPL championship

By KEN HAMRICK
Courier sports editor
 MONTE VISTA – The Sargent High School volleyball team defeated Monte Vista in four sets Thursday at the Monte Vista gym.

The win assured the Lady Farmers of at least a tie for first place in the Southern Peaks League.

“We don’t to tie,” said Sargent coach Sami Cotton. “We’re ready to take it to Trinidad on Saturday.”

The Lady Farmers got off to a fast start as they won the first two sets by scores of 25-13 and 25-17. The Lady Pirates, however, took a big lead



Monte Vista High School's Pacheco (4) sets up a Lady Pirate kill attempt in Thursday's match against Sargent.

in the third set and fought off a Sargent rally to win 26-24.

The Lady Farmers sealed the victory in the fourth set as they won 25-18.

“Monte Vista is a tough team,” Cotton said. “Our league is kind of interesting. We’re all beating each other, so it’s pretty competitive. We’re happy about the tough game and we’re excited to beat them.”

Sargent (15-5, 5-1) will host Trinidad on Saturday. The match begins at 1 p.m.

“They started the season ranked pretty high,” Cotton said. “They’ve taken some lumps and so

have we. So it will be a good test for us.”

Monte Vista (4-13, 1-6) has concluded SPL play. The Lady Pirates will next travel to Fairplay to take on South Park. The match begins at 3 p.m.

RMAC standings as of Tuesday

FOOTBALL		
Team	Conf. W-L	Overall W-L
Colorado School of Mines	5-0	7-0
Western Colorado	5-0	7-0
Black Hills State (S.D.)	3-2	4-3
Colorado State Pueblo	3-2	4-3
Adams State	2-3	3-4
Chadron State (Neb.)	2-3	3-4
Colorado Mesa	2-3	3-4
South Dakota Mines	2-3	3-4
New Mexico Highlands	1-4	2-5
Fort Lewis	0-5	0-7

Last week's scores
Saturday
Chadron State (Neb.) 53, Adams State 14
 Colorado Mesa 62, Fort Lewis 14
 Colorado School of Mines 45, South Dakota Mines 22
 Colorado State Pueblo 56, New Mexico Highlands 7
 Western Colorado 35, Black Hills State (S.D.) 20
This week's schedule
Saturday
 Colorado State Pueblo at Chadron State (Neb.), noon
 Fort Lewis at South Dakota Mines, noon
Adams State at Colorado Mesa, 1 p.m.
 Colorado School of Mines at Black Hills State (S.D.), 1 p.m.
 New Mexico Highlands at Western Colorado, 1 p.m.

MEN'S SOCCER		
Team	Conf. W-L-T	Overall W-L-T
Colorado State Pueblo	5-1-0	11-2-1
Colorado Mesa	4-0-2	9-2-3
Fort Lewis	4-1-1	8-3-2
Westminster (Utah)	3-1-2	6-4-4
Colorado School of Mines	3-2-1	4-4-5
Metropolitan State-Denver	3-3-0	5-7-2
Colorado-Colorado Springs	2-2-2	5-4-4
Colorado Christian	1-2-3	3-4-6
Regis	1-4-1	3-9-2
South Dakota Mines	1-5-0	3-11-0
Adams State	0-6-0	0-12-0

WOMEN'S SOCCER		
Team	Conf. W-L-T	Overall W-L-T
Colorado Mesa	6-0-1	11-0-1
Colorado-Colorado Springs	6-0-1	8-2-3
Regis	6-1-1	10-3-1
Colorado School of Mines	5-1-2	9-2-3
Metropolitan State-Denver	4-3-1	5-5-4
Westminster (Utah)	3-3-1	5-5-2
Fort Lewis	2-2-3	6-2-5
Colorado State Pueblo	2-2-3	4-3-5
Adams State	1-3-3	2-5-5
Black Hills State (S.D.)	1-5-2	3-8-2
Western Colorado	1-6-0	1-10-2
Colorado Christian	0-5-3	2-7-4
New Mexico Highlands	0-6-1	0-9-2

WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL		
Team	Conf. W-L	Overall W-L
Metropolitan State-Denver	7-0	14-3
Colorado Mesa	8-1	18-1
Regis	6-1	13-4
Colorado State Pueblo	6-2	8-10
Chadron State (Neb.)	5-3	11-7
South Dakota Mines	5-3	11-7
Fort Lewis	4-4	9-9
Westminster (Utah)	4-5	7-12
Colorado School of Mines	3-4	9-8
Colorado-Colorado Springs	3-4	5-12
Colorado Christian	3-5	7-11
Adams State	3-5	5-13
Western Colorado	2-6	4-14
Black Hills State (S.D.)	0-8	5-13
New Mexico Highlands	0-8	1-18

Sports Bulletin

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

SCOREBOARD THURSDAY
Prep girls volleyball
 Sargent def. Monte Vista 25-13, 25-17, 24-26, 25-18

SCHEDULE FRIDAY
Prep football
 Mountain Valley at Primero, 1 p.m.
 Monte Vista at Center, 6 p.m.
 Manzanola at Sangre de Cristo, 6 p.m.
 Sanford at Mancos, 6 p.m.
 Alamosa at Florence, 7 p.m.
 Centauri at Ignacio, 7 p.m.
Prep cross country
 Antonito, Centauri, Centennial, Center, Del Norte, Monte Vista, Sargent at Class 2A Region 3 Meet (at Buena Vista), 11 a.m.
 Alamosa at Class 3A Region 2 Meet (at Monument Valley Park, Colorado Springs), 2 p.m.

Prep boys soccer
 Lake County at Alamosa, 4 p.m.
Prep girls softball
 Alamosa vs. Strasburg (Class 3A State Tournament at Aurora), 12:15 p.m.
Prep girls volleyball
 Mountain Valley at Primero, 1:30 p.m.
 Sanford at Mancos, 2 p.m.
 Del Norte at Swink, 3 p.m.
 Monte Vista at South Park, 3 p.m.
 Antonito at Center, 4 p.m.
 Sierra Grande at Cotopaxi, 4 p.m.
College men's soccer
 Metropolitan State Denver at Adams State, 3 p.m.
College women's soccer
 Adams State at Metropolitan State Denver, 6 p.m.
College women's volleyball
 Metropolitan State Denver at Adams State, 6 p.m.

SATURDAY
Prep football
 Del Norte at Trinidad, 1 p.m.
 Sargent at Hayden, 1 p.m.
 Prep girls gymnastics
 Alamosa, Pueblo

Central at Canon City, 9 a.m.
Prep girls softball
 Alamosa at Class 3A State Tournament (at Aurora), TBA
Prep girls volleyball
 Alamosa at Sterling (Sterling Invitational), 9 a.m.
 Alamosa vs. Lamar (Sterling Invitational), 10 a.m.
 Crested Butte at Mountain Valley, 11 a.m.
 Manzanola at Sangre de Cristo, 11 a.m.
 Alamosa vs. Merino (Sterling Invitational), 11:30 a.m.
 Alamosa vs. Wiggins (Sterling Invitational), 12:30 p.m.
 Sierra Grande at Las Animas, 1 p.m.
 Trinidad at Sargent, 1 p.m.
 Center at Creede, 5 p.m.
College football
 Adams State at Colorado Mesa, 1 p.m.
College cross country
 Adams State at RMAC Championship (at Denver), TBA
College women's volleyball
 Colorado School of Mines at Adams State, 4 p.m.

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colorado housing and finance authority

Lifestyle

It is time to assess outdoor spaces and remove potential tangle hazards for antlered wildlife

By COLORADO PARKS AND WILDLIFE

DURANGO — Halloween decorations can create a real scare when antlered wildlife get tangled up in them, and that's only a small fraction of the human-created hazards deer, elk and moose can encounter in yards each fall. All of these hazards can be prevented by the public doing its part.

Colorado Parks and Wildlife asks Coloradans to assess their outdoor spaces and remove potential tangle hazards for antlered wildlife that are in migration from summer habitat to winter range while they seek mating opportunities.

CPW officers respond every year to incidents where antlered animals have become dangerously entangled. Common hazards include hammocks, holiday decorations, garden items such as tomato cages as well as soccer goals and netting from sports such as tennis and volleyball.

People can do their part to be a good neighbor to wildlife by putting away summer recreational and landscaping equipment that is not in use and to make sure holiday lights and decorations are secured tightly wherever they are hung.

"Right now, is a good opportunity to clean up your yard and to remove items a curious animal might stick its nose in or get wrapped up in," said CPW Assistant Area Wildlife Manager Steve McClung out of the Durango office. "And when you're putting up decorations, keep wildlife in mind. We see animals get wrapped up all the time, and all of these impairments can affect their mobility, vision and ability to eat and drink."

Bucks can be especially prone to these situations this time of year. During the rut — or breeding season — bucks will rub their antlers on objects to mark territory and signal their presence to other bucks. The rut has started for deer and will hit its peak in mid-November through December.

When animals such as deer and elk become entangled, the stress involved and the physical exhaustion caused by trying to break free can lead to death.

Wildlife officers can often get deer untangled if they are nearby and notified in a timely manner. In some cases, they will cut off the animal's antlers to free it. In other instances, they can remove the object. Some cases do not require human assistance if the entanglement is not preventing the animal from eating or drinking or if there is low risk that the ani-

mal could get caught up in other items that would prevent it from being mobile. In those instances, the animal will be free of the burden when it sheds its antlers.

"We need to know about these situations quickly," McClung said. "It's best if we can get to these animals before they've undergone too much stress and have exhausted themselves. Darting them also creates stress and can lead to mortality if the animal has already been stressed too much."

"If the animal is not tethered to what it is tangled in, it can be difficult to chase them through a neighborhood and get into a position to dart them, or sometimes they disappear and we never catch up to help them. The sooner we get information, the more likely we will be able to assist that animal."

CPW recommends holiday lights and decorations be placed higher than six feet or attached tightly to trees and buildings. Lights or webs that hang low or are draped insecurely over vegetation easily get tangled in antlers.

Because Halloween decorations have grown in popularity, CPW has responded to increased incidents of wildlife getting tangled in everything from fake spider webs and plastic skeletons to plastic pumpkins typically used for trick-or-treating.

"Deer are curious and want to check out something that's hanging along their path or a bucket to see if it's food," McClung said. "They may stick their nose in and get those objects stuck around their face or get the handle caught on an antler."

It has also become increasingly popular for people to bring holiday decorations onto public lands for social media photo opportunities. CPW reminds the public to pack out whatever they pack in and to never leave decorations out where they can present a danger to wildlife.

If you see wildlife that does become entangled, report it directly to CPW by calling the office local to you or through Colorado State Patrol if it is outside of normal business hours. When calling CSP, they will relay your information to the on-call wildlife officer in your area.

Be prepared when calling with information regarding the animal's location and time observed, its behavior, whether it is tied to an object or still mobile and if the hazard is preventing the animal from eating, drinking or breathing.

Never try to free an animal from an entanglement yourself. A stressed animal may act



John Livingston/CPW photo
A mule deer buck in Durango is pictured with holiday lights tangled in its antlers in 2022.

more aggressively and their hooves and antlers can cause serious injury.

During the fall breeding season, it is important to give antlered wildlife more space and to use increased caution in their presence. During the rut, these animals have a one-track mind looking for a mate. They can become agitated if any other animal, object or person appears to be posing a challenge. Dogs are often targets and can be badly injured by a buck's antlers.

Deer can become aggressive toward humans, too, so stay well away from them. Attacks get reported around the state each fall, and there has already been one attack this year in Aspen.

Deer regularly seen in neighborhoods may appear docile and not pay much attention to the presence of humans much of the year but may behave aggressively this time of year.

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Classifieds

221 - HELP WANTED

ANTONITO HOUSING AUTHORITY IS accepting applications for **OFFICE ASSISTANT**. Applications can be picked up at 526 River St., ANTONITO. (10/28/23)

FULL-TIME CUSTODIAN/MAINTENANCE POSITION open at the UPPER RIO GRANDE SCHOOL DISTRICT. This is a 4-10 hour day (Monday-Thursday) with some weekends as needed. Applicant must pass a background check, be able to work independently, and be a forward-thinking individual with an overall team approach to all tasks at hand. Applicant must also be able to work in all weather conditions (snow removal/general landscaping). If interested, please contact Demo Trujillo, 719-657-4040 x4007, dtrujillo@urtigers.co. Applications can be retrieved online at: www.urtigers.co. (11/10/23)

COSTILLA COUNTY IS SEEKING a **CASEWORKER** for the DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES. Annual Salary DOQ. Duties include: Intake and/or ongoing social casework services to families/adults, performing assessments, counseling, and crisis intervention. Investigate abuse, neglect and other forms of maltreatment of children and adults. Bachelor's Degree required. Applications can be picked up at the Costilla County Department of Social Services and returned at Costilla DSS, Attention Jackie Vigil, 233 Main Street, San Luis Colorado, 81152. Inquires call (719) 672-3481. EOE. (10/25/23)

221 - HELP WANTED

ALAMOSA SCHOOL DISTRICT is now accepting applications for the following position: **ASSISTANT COOK** (District Wide). Applications are available online at <https://www.alamosa.k12.co.us/> For more information, contact Tracy Vigil at 719-587-1600. Application deadline is until filled. EOE. (10/20/23)

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SOUTHERN COLORADO FARMS (CENTER, CO) is hiring an **OFFICE MANAGER/ACCOUNTING LIAISON**. Full-time. Applicants must have accounting degree/experience or equivalent. Major responsibilities include preparation of financial reports for analysis, data management of crop costs, inventory management, and administrative duties. Annual salary is \$45k-\$50k DOE. Send resume to emartinez@southerncoloradofarms.com. (10/25/23)

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Comics

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

NEA Crossword Puzzle

- ACROSS**
- 1 Cup edge
 - 4 Reduce to pulp
 - 8 ISU's home
 - 12 Web address
 - 13 Region
 - 14 MLB league
 - 15 Fish eggs
 - 16 Earns as profit
 - 17 Killer whale
 - 18 Dishonest
 - 20 Place of interest
 - 21 "—, Pray, Love"
 - 22 "— Lisa"
 - 23 Mont — in the Alps
 - 26 Childish outburst
 - 29 Pigeon coop
 - 30 Hoop
 - 31 "— Got Rhythm"
 - 32 Toy workshop helper
 - 33 Ersatz
 - 34 Place for a patch
- DOWN**
- 1 Lie in wait
 - 2 Metallic element
 - 3 Supplication
 - 4 Madman
 - 5 "Give it —!"
 - 6 Rogen or Meyers

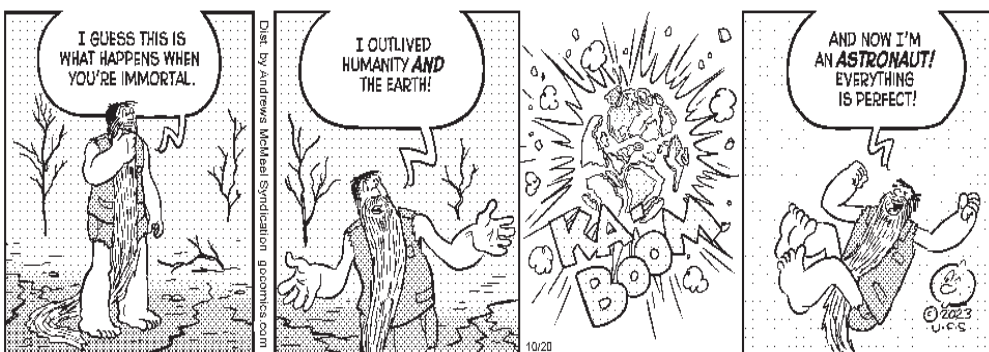
Answer to Previous Puzzle

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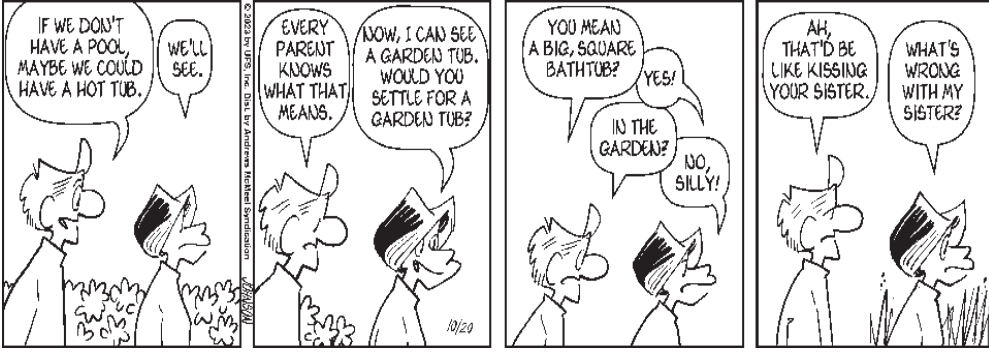
- 7 Holds
- 8 Consecrate with oil
- 9 Butter substitute
- 10 Engrave
- 11 Louver
- 19 Give voice to
- 20 Musical number
- 22 Horse's hair
- 23 Blasted
- 24 "Damn Yankees" vamp
- 25 Sworn statement
- 26 Polynesian carving
- 27 Eye part
- 28 Encounter
- 30 Garden shed item
- 33 Unyielding
- 34 Singer — Kristoferson
- 36 "The — Kid"
- 37 Gentle
- 39 Funeral song
- 40 Open a little
- 41 Tra- —
- 42 Oral tradition
- 43 Old flames
- 44 Gaelic Ireland
- 45 Gossip
- 47 Young animal

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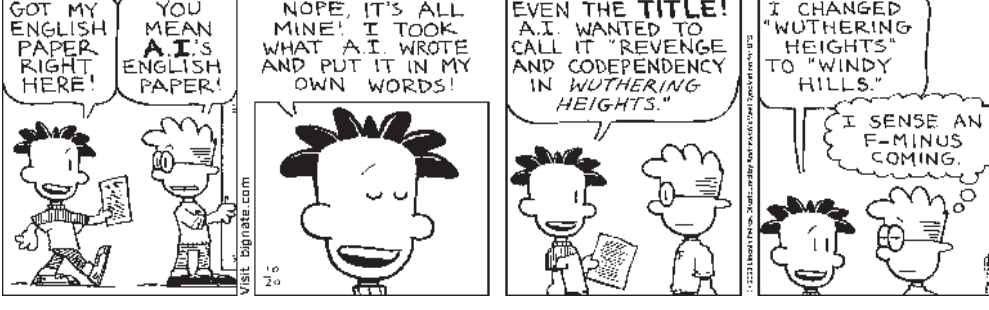
ALLEY OOP



ARLO & JANIS



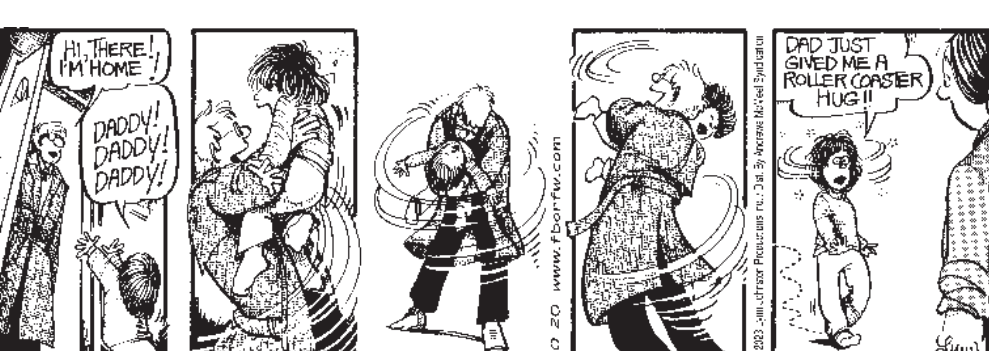
BIG NATE



THE BORN LOSER



FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE



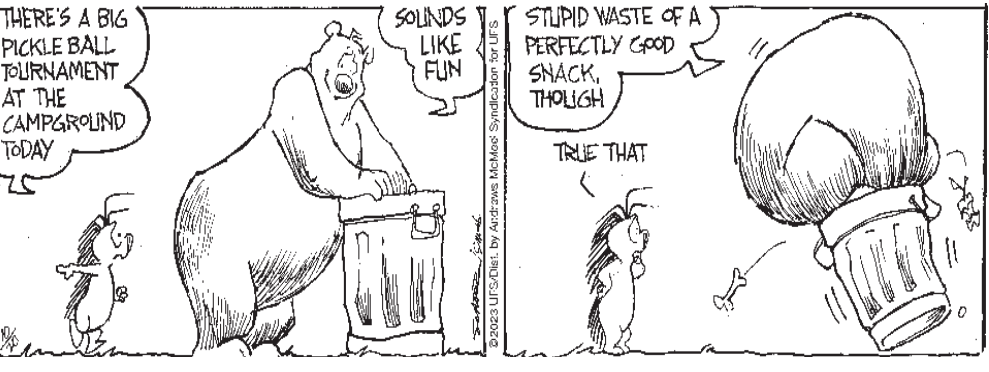
FRANK & ERNEST



GARFIELD



THE GRIZZWELLS



PEANUTS

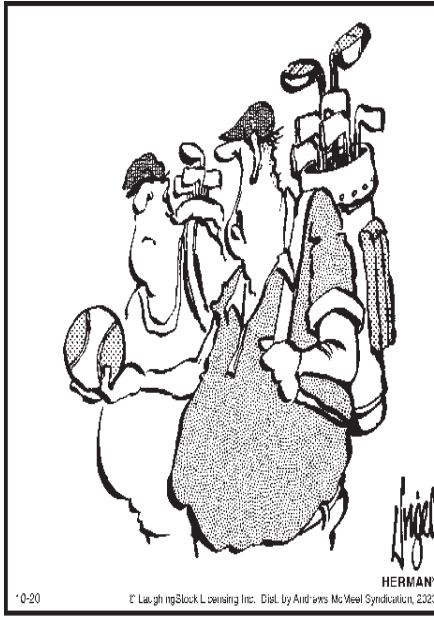


SUDOKU

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

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			9	1	4			7

HERMAN



Family walks on eggshells amid fertility struggles

DEAR ABBY: My son married a wonderful woman. Sadly, they are having great difficulty conceiving a baby. They have opted out of many conventional medical procedures because of their religious beliefs, for which I admire them.

While their struggles persist, another close family member has recently had a baby. My daughter-in-law has chosen not to see this family member or the baby because of the emotional pain of not being able to conceive herself. My son, who I know is torn, is supporting his wife. Our visits with them never include the new mom, dad and baby. My son has met the baby twice on the down-low without my DIL.

Our hearts are heavy. Our nuclear family has always been close, but this is putting a strain on the rest of us, although we empathize with my DIL's emotional pain. What advice can you offer for this situation? -- SADDENED IN THE EAST

DEAR SADDENED: Your daughter-in-law's circle of friends (not to mention family) is going to shrink to nothing if she persists in hiding from anyone who has reproduced. Unless her religious beliefs discourage psychological counseling, she should absolutely reach out for some, and your son (who is already seeing the

new baby on the down-low) should insist upon it.

DEAR ABBY: I have always had a great relationship with my in-laws. My father-in-law, "Jerry," is a contractor who has generously helped us with renovations and other work around our condo. We moved to a house last year and expressed interest in a new bathroom floor. We bought all the materials and removed the old floor so he could install the new one.

When Jerry offered to buy us a new vanity, we thanked him and accepted. After ordering it, he now wants us to put some money toward the sink and faucet. (We also owe him for air fare to an out-of-state wedding.) My husband, "Eddie," is mad and doesn't want to give his dad anything because he says Jerry "can afford it," while some months are more difficult for us. I don't know if I can morally live with not giving my father-in-law what we owe him. -- INDEBTED IN NEW JERSEY

DEAR INDEBTED: And ... the difference between you and Eddie is this: You have character, while your husband is ungrateful and entitled. Your father-in-law should be paid what is owed him. Warn Eddie that if he doesn't cough up the money -- on installments, if



ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

necessary -- his father's generosity is likely to "contract" and with good reason. Your husband should be ashamed of himself.

DEAR ABBY: Our next-door neighbor, "Fred," retrieves his newspaper nude every morning about 4:30. We realized it after installing a Ring doorbell. Our video captures a very graphic image daily. Should we tell him? -- X-RATED IN THE U.S.A.

DEAR X-RATED: If your neighbor doesn't realize he's on camera, he deserves to know he's overexposed. In this day and age, with the popularity of Ring, there are few secrets anymore. By all means, tell Fred -- and when you do, offer to give him a print. (Or a pair of shorts.)

Lifestyle

South Fork Chili Cookoff heats up bowls of success

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

This year's theme was "Star Wars," and each competitor did a wonderful job decorating the tables and surrounding room which made for a wonderful evening of neighborly fun. Chili contestants lined the expanse of the community center offering their own take on green chili, red chili, and salsa. People gathered outside and waited for their chance to come in and taste some of the best chili and salsa around.

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

Over the past month, the event came close to being canceled until one last marketing ploy from South Fork Friends Foundation president Luke Brennan paid off

and brought in about 15 contestants who were eager to keep the event going.

Brennan's determination coupled with new visitor center Director Larry Tumbleson and his wife Sharon's creative spark made for an evening of fun, hospitality, and the chance to meet with family, friends, and neighbors. In the years past, the event was something everyone looked forward to and now that the cookoff has received new life, the hope is that the community will look forward to it once again.

"Great job and thank you to all our wonderful supporters and volunteers. Thanks goes out to the Rio Grande Club and Resort for their generous contribution of two food and beverage certificates and rounds of golf certificates for raffles and awards. Huge thanks to the South Fork Friends Foundation for supporting, getting the word out and rounding up more contestants. To Dennis Shepherd and the Silverthreeder Club for providing drinks and desserts. To volunteers Travis Cross, Dustin Hund and wife Casey for cleanup and support and to all the contestants for their time and effort in providing some of the best and uniquely flavored chili in

Colorado!"

The event's winners were as follows: first place for the Red Chili Category was Ali Butler and Caitlyn Steffens and second place for the Red Chili Category went to the South Fork Friends Foundation. First place for the Green Chili Category was Jim and Monica Pemberton and second place went to Ramones Mexican restaurant. First for the Salsa Category went to South Fork Fire Rescue and second place went to Jones Riley.

The South Fork Friends Foundation also earned the Best Table Decoration award for the night.

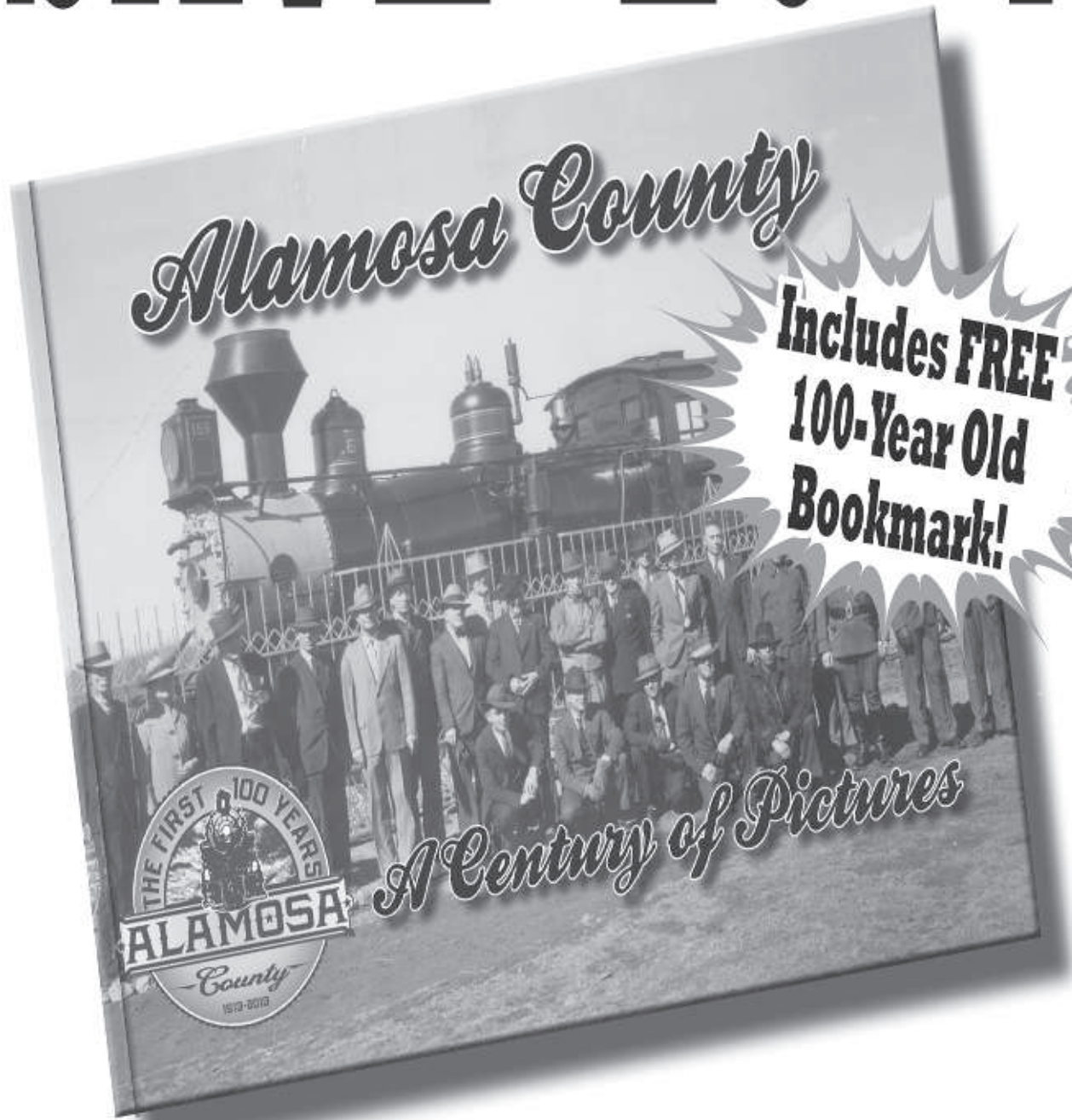


Courtesy photo
The annual South Fork Chili Cookoff saw more than 200 people decide the winners.



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

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