



Official SKI-HI STAMPEDE Program

Inside this week's Center Post-Dispatch

Shorts

Botany is focus of Forest Specialist Series on July 26

DEL NORTE — Learn about the good guys, the bad guys, and the weird guys of Rio Grande National Forest plant life with Rachel Hosna, a Rangeland Management Specialist focusing on botany and invasive programs. She'll share some resources for identifying which one's which and how you can contribute to the research.

The online program will be held at 5 p.m. on Wednesday, July 26, in partnership with the San Juan Mountains Association. Visit the Rio Grande National Forest website or Facebook page for event information.

CDOT crews to pave a short section of CO 142

SOUTH VALLEY — Beginning July 24, motorists can expect full stops and up to 20-minute delays while the Colorado Department of Transportation paves Colorado Highway 142 near the Rio Grande.

Operations will continue through late August and take place approximately 10 miles east of Manassa (Mile Points 13-15). Motorists are encouraged to plan for lengthy delays, Monday through Thursday between 9 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

CDOT crews will work as swiftly as possible to complete the surface treatment, however, resurfacing operations are weather dependent.

Arts Walk and Hollyhock Festival this weekend

STAFF REPORT

SAGUACHE — The Saguache Arts Walk and Hollyhock Festival will take place from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on July 29. For more than a decade, the Arts Walk and Hollyhock Festival drew crowds on different days. But after the Saguache Chamber of Commerce combined the events in 2021, the tradition became even more festive.

The artists will set up on the courthouse lawn. This year, hollyhock plants and seed cards will be sold across the street outside the Saguache

Hotel. The 2023 Hollyhock Seed Card features the artwork of Sarah Krantz, the 2022 art contest winner.

Former Saguache artist and resident, Byron Williams, sparked the first Arts Walk more than a decade ago. Known for his decorative gourds

Please see FESTIVAL on Page 2A

'Fairy Houses' hidden around town are one of many attractions traditionally part of the Saguache Arts Walk and Hollyhock Festival.

File photo



Photo by Marie Mccolm

Children take a ride on the fire engine at the Mosca-Hooper Volunteer Fire Department community barbecue on Saturday, July 22.

Mosca-Hooper Volunteer Fire Department holds fundraiser barbecue

By MARIE MCCOLM

MOSCA — The Mosca-Hooper Volunteer Fire Department held a community barbecue for the public on Saturday, July 22. There was no charge for the barbecue, but donations were accepted.

The volunteer fire department served beans, roasted pork, coleslaw, mashed potatoes, and a slice of bread with the dinner. There were several beverages to choose from including

ice water and lemonade.

At least 150 people attended the community barbecue.

Volunteer firefighters served plates of food to the public. Many of the children who attended the barbecue rode on a fire truck that was honking and flashing its lights as they went down the road.

Volunteer firefighter Tuck Slane spoke about being a part of the department and how he felt about

the barbecue.

"I have been with the department now for about 3 years," Slane said. "We aren't super busy, but we do have quite a few calls and we are first responders as well. We have a department here and we also have another station in Hooper. There are 24 volunteer firefighters in total, and others waiting in line to be firefighters. The firefighters and

Please see BBQ on Page 2A

Dark sky celebration to coincide with Perseid showers

By JOHN WATERS

CRESTONE — The 2023 Crestone Dark Sky Celebration will be held at the Crestone Charter School on the evening of Saturday, Aug. 12. The gathering will dovetail with the peak of the Perseid Meteor Showers.

According to NASA, the Perseid shower, which peaks in mid-August, is considered the best meteor shower of the year. With swift and bright meteors, Perseids frequently leave long "wakes" of light and color behind them as they streak through Earth's atmosphere. The Perseids are one of the most abundant showers with about 50 to 100 meteors seen per hour. NASA has called the Perseids the "fireball champion" of annual meteor

showers for its record-breaking frequency of super-bright meteors, known as fireballs.

Meteors come from leftover comet particles and bits from broken asteroids. When comets travel around the Sun, they leave a dusty trail behind them. Every year Earth passes through these debris trails, which allows the bits to collide with our atmosphere and disintegrate to create fiery and colorful streaks in the sky. The meteors can travel at speeds of up to 37 miles per second.

The fragments of space debris that interact with our atmosphere to create the Perseids originate from comet 109P/Swift-Tuttle. This comet takes about 130 years to orbit

Please see DARK SKY on Page 7A



Photo courtesy Scott Stevens

At the 2021 Crestone Dark Sky Festival participants gather before dark.

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2023



The annual Ski-Hi Stampede features three days of PRCA action, two days of parades and four nights of carnival rides.

File photo

STAMPEDE

Continued from Page 1A

to go out, have fun, and really enjoy themselves. The Bullfighters Only kicked it all off a couple of weekends back and the turnout was really good. We have the Rotary Chuck Wagon Dinner this week, and, of course, Carly Pearce coming out on Thursday night."

In addition to the dinner and the concert, there are three days of PRCA action on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Plus, nightly dances, a carnival and parades on Friday and Saturday mornings in Downtown Monte Vista.

While Metz enjoys all of the events, the community aspect is what brings a permanent smile to his face.

"I would have to say my favorite part of all of this is just seeing the community come out together and enjoy themselves and have fun. Community involvement is really what it's all about," he said.

This year's Stampede includes the Wrights Amusements carnival which will begin on Wednesday night. Wrights Amusements has rides for adults and children

alike. There is a special offer for Wednesday night only. Take two cans of food to the carnival and a person can purchase an all-you-can-ride pass for \$25. All food collected will benefit the local food bank.

Thursday night the tasty Rotary Chuck Wagon Dinner kicks off at 5 p.m. with roast beef sandwiches and all the fixings. Then at 7 p.m. Frank Ray will take to the arena stage, followed by the headliner, Carly Pearce. Gates to the concert open at 6:30 p.m.

Pearce is a 33-year-old singer-songwriter who began singing in her teens. Pearce has made her way up the charts with three albums and many great singles, including "What He Didn't Do," "Dear Miss Loretta," and "I Hope Your Happy Now."

Pearce is one of the hottest singers in country music this year. She has been featured on nearly every major country music event in 2023. Despite being released by Pearce in June, "We Don't Fight Anymore," a collaboration with powerhouse singer Chris Stapleton, is considered by many a top 10 country song

through the first half of 2023.

This year's dance will be held right after the concert on Thursday night and will feature tunes and sounds from the Justin Kemp Band, which is also performing Friday and Saturday nights after the rodeo. Rodeo and or concert tickets are your entry to the dance, or anyone can just attend the dance for a \$10 cover charge.

Downtown parades will be held on Friday and Saturday beginning at 10 a.m. This year's theme for the parade is "Grow Something Greater." Many local businesses and vendors will be in this year's parade, with their floats and treats for all who attend to see and enjoy. This year's Grand Marshals for the parade are Ron and Carole Martinez and Thad and Deanne Elliot.

There will be three PRCA rodeos held this weekend. The Friday night and Saturday night rodeos are from 7 to 9 p.m., and the Sunday matinee PRCA rodeo will be held from 2 to 4 p.m.

Tickets to all events are available online at skihistampede.com.

Trujillo Family Reunion set for Aug. 4-6 in Center

CONTRIBUTED

CENTER — The descendants of Maximiliano/Henry and Felina Trujillo from Center will have a "Trujillo Family Reunion" in Center the weekend of Friday, Aug. 4 through Sunday, Aug. 6.

Felina Segura was originally from Garcia and married Maximiliano Trujillo. In this marriage, they had four daughters, Aunt Mabel Alvarado, Colorado Springs, Maxine (Martin) Sanchez, Las Cruces, N.M., Eurcelia (Max) DeHerrera of Center, and Marie (Andy) Barela, Center. Also, they had two sons, Arthur (Gertrude) Trujillo and Mike/Adonis (Cora) Trujillo of Center. Tragically, Maximiliano was killed in an auto accident.

Felina then married Henry Trujillo, who was Maximiliano's brother. From this marriage, came Charlotte (Joe) Salazar, Colorado Springs, Betty (Art) Madrid, Colorado Springs, Edna (Gene) Velasquez of Monte Vista, Lorretta (Leo) Manzanaras of 7-Mile Plaza and Orlando (Janice) Trujillo of Denver.

From these 11 families, 69 first cousins were born.

In addition to these 11 families being represented at the reunion, the families of Anselmo (Celia) Trujillo of Center and Crisostomo Trujillo of Montrose will be attending.

On Friday, Aug. 4, there will be a Block Party in Center. This will give the attendees a chance to "meet and greet" long lost cousins.

Saturday, Aug. 5, the families will convene at the Center Community Park to join in festivities such as volleyball, softball, basketball, lawn games and of course, there will be a barbecue. This event is from 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

FESTIVAL

Continued from Page 1A

(and love of hollyhocks), Williams sought to celebrate more artists in town and showcase their work.

Once the hollyhock was selected as the town flower, Williams was instrumental in establishing the Hollyhock Festival around the same time as the Arts Walk. Hollyhocks are hardy, drought-tolerant, and flexible enough to adapt to soil conditions. The colorful flowers bloom today in the Middle East, Europe, and North America, some perhaps planted in the San Luis Valley during the early 19th century.

For the first year of the Hollyhock Festival, former mayor Greg Terrell dressed as a gnome. Williams dressed as "Johnny Hollyhock," a nod to



Courtesy photo

Descendants of Maximiliano/Henry and Felina Trujillo will have a family reunion Aug. 4-6 in Center.

Saturday evening, there will be a dance at the Monte Vista Elks Lodge for the families to put on their "blue suede shoes" and dance the night away.

The final weekend event will be in Center on Sunday morning as the families will gather one last time for breakfast burritos, juice, coffee, and donuts.

Thus far, there are close to 200 family members who have RSVP'd, and more are expected to join in on the festivities over the weekend.

This Trujillo Family Reunion is being organized by Lawrence Trujillo of Center, JoAnn Trujillo, and Freida Trujillo of Alamosa, Peggy Manzanaras of 7-Mile Plaza, Zach Manzanaras of Denver and Anthony Trujillo of Denver.



Photo by Marie Mccolm

The Mosca-Hooper Volunteer Fire Department held a community barbecue for the public on Saturday, July 22.

BBQ

Continued from Page 1A

station have been here since 1948. I really enjoyed the barbecue tonight. We do this for the community. We have had lots of people show up tonight and we didn't run out of food so that's a good thing. Every year, we try to have this, and it's usually the weekend before Stampede."

Slane said that his favorite part of being a firefighter is being helping the community.

"When something happens, something goes wrong you hope somebody comes. I enjoy helping people," Slane said. "We had an older lady call one time, in the winter,

for help. It's hard to wait and have someone come out from Alamosa or another town. It's nice to be local and be able to help the community like that."

Resident Ricky Dean was at the barbecue with his wife and daughter and stated they he really enjoyed it.

"It's a nice meal that they give to the community. I think everyone likes to come out and support the fire department. We come every year," he said.

Jay Young of the Colorado Gator Farm was also at the barbecue and stated, "It was an excellent barbecue.

The department is just excellent, they are heroes. We had a fire a few months ago at the Gator Farm and they came out and helped us so much. They got out there, they put out the fire, saved some buildings and saved a bunch of animals. We really appreciate everything they do. They are not just a fire department they are first responders, too, and they are a very important part of the community, and we appreciate them so much."

For more information on the Mosca-Hooper Volunteer Fire Department, call 719-378-2339.

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OPINION & EDITORIAL

Kaw-Liga

This past week found Ol' Dutch and Miss Trixie absolutely inundated with entertaining guests at Mountain Man Rafting/Narrow Ridge Outdoors and boy were we ever exhausted at the end of the week. Finally, the weekend loomed large in front of us, and Miss Trixie decided that a good way to rest up was to get up early and attend the auction down in the Amish country south of Monte Vista. And as they say, there is no rest for the weary so off we went with our friends Gidget and Moon Doggy for a day of fun in the sun.

Up to five auctioneers are hammering away all day to get all the goods moved from willing hands into wanting hands. So, you must pick your poison and decide just what kind of things you are wanting to bid on and stay close to that. There are basically two kinds of theaters of action that go on at this auction. One is the "follow the auction truck" kind of thing and the other is the sit in the shade auctions going on.

If you follow the truck, you will be standing in the sun all day as they sell the bigger items such as fence posts, house rafters, farm machinery and the like. The auctions held in the tent, or the buildings are more to my liking as the auctioneer's helpers bring the items to the platform and you can bid in the comfort of a seat, albeit a bit hard one.

Now Ol' Dutch wasn't born yesterday, as Miss Trixie likes to remind me more often than necessary, so after perusing the piles and rows of "treasures" for sale outside just in case I saw something there, I found a nice shady seat in one of the buildings. The hosts of the auction had installed some old-style school bleachers in strategic locations and so Mr. Cooper and I had a nice cool place to watch the sale of the "collectibles."

You may wonder just exactly what all that would entail and if I were to make a list it would reach from here to eternity. But there were such items as cast iron cookware, old signs, antiques, old jars full of marbles, old padlocks, bear traps, dishes, pots and pans and more handcuffs than I could count. That part caused me concern as I wondered where those binders of criminals came from.

Ol' Dutch, ever the peruser and seeker of unusual items did spot a few things that caught my eye and so I waited with bated breath for them to hit the auction floor. One thing I really wanted was one of the bear traps. Now you may ask yourself what in the wide, wide world of sports I would want a bear trap for? Why, to



Trout Republic
by Kevin Kirkpatrick

catch a bear of course. Well maybe not but I wanted one.

And the handcuffs did cause me a moment of pause, but Miss Trixie ruled those out immediately thereby crushing another dream as per her usual. I didn't get a bear trap either and was pouting around about that when I spied something I always wanted. A wooden cigar store Indian. That thing was a good eight feet tall, and I could see that in my future home as sure as Carter has liver pills.

I waited and waited for them to roll him up to the bidding floor and commence the action but as luck would have it the price of the old Indian exceeded the amount of money Ol' Dutch had to spend. Man, I wanted to buy that old wooden man and had been determined to stand and sing the song made famous by Hank Williams himself. Yes, I was gonna sing Kaw-Liga for all to hear.

But even though I didn't get the pine person and the crowd missed out on a country song, I am going to include my favorite verse from that song in memory of that fateful yet disappointing day.

He always wore his Sunday feathers and held a tomahawk

The maiden wore her beads and braids and hoped someday he'd talk

Kaw-Liga, too stubborn to ever show a sign

Because his heart was made of knotty pine

Poor ol' Kaw-Liga, he never got a kiss

Poor ol' Kaw-Liga, he don't know what he missed

Is it any wonder that his face is red?

Kaw-Liga, that poor ol' wooden head

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.

Equity and collaboration need to be the norm, not the exception

By JASON C. MEDINA

SAN LUIS VALLEY— As a fourth-generation native of the Town of San Luis, I am deeply invested in the vibrancy, growth, and preservation of our Valley. Having spent almost three decades working with a variety of small businesses and nonprofits in Colorado, I recently took on the role of executive director of the Community Foundation of San Luis Valley (CFSLV). It's an honor to serve our broader community in this role and I do not take my responsibilities lightly.

My goals for the first year include increasing the visibility of the Community Foundation, creating meaningful relationships with other nonprofits and governmental agencies, and breaking down barriers to increase collaboration in our communities. My vision is to create a culture of giving in our rural communities, while providing opportunities for urban funders to want to invest in our historically underserved rural communities.

According to the Secretary of State, there are more than 150 nonprofits in our six counties. They range from smaller and newer nonprofits to larger organizations which have existed for decades. It is my strong opinion that the recency or latency of establishment for these organizations should not affect their ability to be successful in serving their communities. Program dollars are aplenty in philanthropy, but nonprofits rely on operational dollars to accomplish

their goals and serve their communities effectively. Equity and collaboration need to be the norm, not the exception.

To help clarify, program dollars are what donors give to nonprofits for specific projects. This could be anything from a food drive, to scholarships, to creating specific opportunities for the people who they serve. Operational dollars are specifically for salaries and wages of employees, capital improvements (buildings, infrastructure, for example). It takes people to do the work, and often grants are not to be used to hire new staff.

Recently, CFSLV and the Dept. of Local Affairs announced that the Nonprofit Infrastructure Grant application is open to nonprofits across the state: the grant is designed for nonprofits in historically-marginalized communities that need more foundational help. We specifically seek to fund rural organizations that serve People of Color, low-income communities, and the LGBTQA+ communities. \$33,100,000 in grants will be awarded — with selected organizations awarded up to \$100,000.

Our goal is to grant upward of \$2.5 million into our six counties in the San Luis Valley, and Archuleta County to the west. The funds will be awarded at the end of 2023 and can be used until



the end of 2026. If you work with or operate a nonprofit in these seven counties, I highly encourage you to learn more about the NPI grant eligibility requirements and apply through CFSLV at www.cfslv.org/npigrant. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for many nonprofits in the Valley.

The Community Foundation of the San Luis Valley strives to ensure that our voices are heard, that our communities' needs are brought to awareness, and that any barriers nonprofits are facing are broken down to provide justice, equity, and inclusion to those who we serve.

On a final note, I am often asked how you as a community member can get involved. To start off, research the organizations in your area: most or all of the Valley's nonprofits have websites, or at least a social media presence. The SLV has organizations who help children, Veterans, the environment, animals, businesses, and everything in between. Find an organization that is doing work that is close to your heart and remember that your time is just as valuable as your money for nonprofits. Also, think about legacy giving, and thoughtful donations. Most of all, be present in your communities. If you don't, who will?

Jason C. Medina is the executive director of the Community Foundation of the San Luis Valley.

LETTERS

Glory Days Committee thanks community for support

Editor,
The La Jara Glory Days Committee would like to extend sincere thanks and gratitude to everyone who participated in the 2023 event, including car show participants, vendors, parade entrants, musicians, dancers, and everyone who braved the very hot weather to enjoy the day!

Preparing for the annual event is always an enormous undertaking by a few dedicated committee members. Without the support and help of the La Jara Police Department, Maintenance Department and numerous volunteers, the event would not have been as smooth and successful as it turned out to be.

Our day began with a community breakfast sponsored by Jack's Market and hosted by the La Jara Fire Department. Huge thanks to Mr. Bob Plane for graciously supplying all the breakfast items and to our volunteer fire department for cooking and serving breakfast to all the hungry folks.

Following breakfast, the first annual Art Lopez Memorial Car Show participants lined Main Street with their amazing vehicles. La Jara Town Park was filled with vendors, and music by Sol Boyz, Blue Skye and Salt and Pepper provided entertainment all afternoon.

The Glory Days Committee would especially like to acknowledge and thank the following individuals and

businesses for their support and/or monetary contributions which made the events of the day possible:

JEAR Collision Center/Espinoza Consulting Services, Jack's Market, La Jara Fire Department, La Jara Maintenance Department, La Jara Pharmacy, A & J Signs and Designs, Town of La Jara, Community Bank of La Jara, Joseph Baroz and Baroz Automotive, O'Reilly Auto Parts, La Jara Trading Post, San Luis Valley Federal Bank, SP Trash Services, Brian's Septic, Vaughn Jackson Medical Clinic, J. Fernandez, Jack and Sammie Carraher, Northerners Senior Citizens Center.

*Larry Zaragoza
Glory Days Committee Chair*

Ski-Hi Stampede Parade Committee thanks sponsors

Editor,
The Ski-Hi Stampede Parade Committee would like to thank its sponsors for their support in putting on this year's parades:

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New Legacy Project performs at Center United Methodist Church

By **MARIE MCCOLM**

CENTER — The New Legacy Project from Nashville performed at Center United Methodist Church on Friday, July 21. Approximately 45 people attended the gospel concert.

The group has been performing since 2000. The group was formerly called the Blackwood Brothers.

One of the lead singers for the group, Luke Yates, spoke about the group and how it has evolved since 2000.

“Our former leader was a singer in the group and when the Blackwood Brothers disbanded, and decided to call it quits, their leader Cecile Blackwood passed away, our then boss Rick Price and a bunch of the other guys who were in the group at that time decided to not let the music die and keep it ongoing,” Yates said. “They started this group, and it was originally called Blackwood Legacy. Later, it worked out that we were more than just a tribute band to the Blackwood Brothers quartet, which is a great legacy of music all in its own.

We wanted to kind of start something different, so we became New Legacy Project after that.”

Yates said that they originally started out doing 240 days a year on the road

with the music and ministry but had cut that down to 150 days a year to be more family friendly.

“We will go out for 2 weeks at a time or so, and then be at home for the other two weeks a month. We do that 12 times a year,” he said.

Yates said that the group enjoys migrating from town to town performing in small churches. The group believes strongly in performing in small churches as many groups only perform in big churches. There is never a charge for the performances, just a “love offering.” The group travels all over the United States performing.

Yates also spoke of a project that they feel strongly about that coincides with one of the songs that they sing called “I’ll Stand,” a song that honors Veterans.

“Our Veterans project is something that we are all excited about,” Yates said. “One of our former tenor singers wrote a song called ‘I’ll Stand,’ it’s a song that we sang here tonight and it’s on our brand-new album. It was a song basically dedicated to those men and women who have given so much of themselves for the freedoms that we enjoy today. We wanted to do something to honor them. Aside from singing every single

time that we step on stage, we also give out a CD with the song on it, a DVD sharing the story about it, explaining why the song was written. We also give out a bible. All 3 are packaged together with a yellow ribbon. Our goal is to send these packages free, to every Veteran, in every Veteran’s hospital that we can possibly send them to.”

Yates went on to say that they want to start with the United States and give the bundles to as many Veterans as possible to show their appreciation for the sacrifice that all Veterans make.

“We want them to know that we see them, and we love them, and God loves them as well,” Yates said.

The new manager for the group, Alex Price, also spoke about the group.

“My dad Rick Price started managing the group when I was still in diapers about 23 years ago,” Price said. “He had a big old tour bus; he had just left the Blackwood Brothers. Some of the members wanted to continue singing despite their leader Cecil Blackwood passing away, so they formed what was called Blackwood Legacy. They did that for about 15 years, touring and getting their name out there. Eventually those members left though, and the name



Photo by Marie Mccolm

The New Legacy Project from Nashville performed at Center United Methodist Church on Friday, July 21.

was changed to New Legacy Project. The group is amazing, and I love what I do.”

Price took over as the group’s manager when his father passed away last year.

“My dad taught me when he was alive

and guided me as best as he could. It wasn’t scary, I felt ready to do it. The group is going strong. We enjoy visiting little churches across the country. All of us are thankful to spread the goodness of the lord, and all of us love what we do,” he said.

Earthwork ‘Orisons’ opening celebration July 29

CONTRIBUTED

CENTER — The public opening celebration for “Orisons,” a large-scale, newly commissioned earthwork by artist Marguerite Humeau is taking place from 4 to 9 p.m. on July 29.

Black Cube, a nonprofit nomadic art museum in Denver, is organizing the event that will mostly take place at the Frontier Drive-Inn, 105 E County Road 11 North, Center. The earthwork is outside of Hooper.

At 160 acres, Orisons marks one of the largest earthworks created by an individual woman artist to date and a more environmentally conscious approach to land art by being minimally invasive and sensitive to the fragile ecosystem, according to Black Cube.

The public opening includes local food vendors from the San Luis Valley, vinyl and cocktails served by ESP HiFi, and a signature Orisons Elixir crafted by DRAM Apothecary, allowing visitors to drink the Orisons land.

Complimentary shuttles will run throughout the day between Frontier Drive-Inn and Orisons in Hooper. RSVPs are highly encouraged, as capacity is limited. RSVPs can be made online at eventbrite by searching — Opening: Marguerite Humeau “Orisons.”

Orisons is a subtle earthwork that transforms an unfarmable plot of land in Colorado’s San Luis Valley into a place of reverence, honoring its expansive history, existing ecosystem, and imaginable futures, according to Black Cube. The work consists of the land in its entirety, as well as a series of 84 sculptural interventions that invoke the land’s histories and vast network of interrelations. Dozens of whistling and rhythmic, plant-like sculptures inspired by the native and nomadic vegetation become activated by the wind, a legendary force in the Valley, to summon the site’s energies. Also, a part of the work are large-scale sculptures that hover over the ground and visually reference the outstretched wings of Sandhill Cranes, iconic birds that migrate through the region, which visitors can lay upon.

Orisons will be on view beginning July 29 and remain on view through June 30, 2025. Reservations can be made at www.orisons.art.

OPENING DAY SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

4-9 p.m.

• Complimentary, rotating shuttles to Hooper, CO from the Frontier Drive-Inn to see Orisons. The shuttles depart approximately every 30 minutes and seat 27 passengers on a first-come, first-served basis.

- Denver-based listening bar ESP HiFi will provide a soundtrack alongside a suite of specialty Orisons-themed cocktails, including one with a distinct elixir from DRAM Apothecary containing plants collected from the Orisons site.

- PrepFuel SLV and Sunset Grill will provide food for purchase.

4:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.

- Explore Skylos with architect Ronald Rael, one of the first permitted 3D-printed adobe structures ever constructed. Located at the Frontier Drive-Inn, the structures were rebuilt using a portable robot arm and pump system using sand and clay sourced from Rael’s family farmland in Antonito, Colorado. Two tours are available, each will be approximately 30 minutes.

6 p.m.

- “The Making of Orisons” Panel Discussion — Hear from several of the collaborators that helped bring Orisons to life with their unique perspectives, experiences, and attachments to the San Luis Valley. Panelists include Sarah Jones (Jones Farms Organics), Regina Lopez-Whiteskunk (Montezuma Land Conservancy), and Cathy O’Neill



Courtesy of the artist and Black Cube

Marguerite Humeau, Site visit to Orisons, 2022.

(National Resources Conservation Service), moderated by Angella d’Avignon (Black Cube Art Table Fellow) 7 p.m.

- Join artist Marguerite Humeau in conversation with Cortney Lane Stell (Black Cube Executive Director + Chief Curator) as they discuss all things Orisons, Humeau’s practice as a whole, and the significance of Orisons as the largest earthwork by an individual woman artist to date.

8 p.m.

- Close out the evening with a special screening by Marguerite Humeau.

All events, unless noted, take place at Frontier Drive-Inn.

Visitor guidelines and area information can be found at www.orisons.art/visit.



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Veteran gathering a success

By JOHN WATERS

ALAMOSA — The Veteran Resource Fair at the Colorado Army National Guard Armory on July 24 was considered a huge success with dozens of Veterans participating, according to organizers.

The focus of the fair was to educate Veterans about the benefits available under the federal PACT Act. The legislation, passed last year, allows Veterans who were exposed to burn pits, Agent Orange, and other substances during their service to be eligible for benefits.

Although there is no deadline to apply, Veterans who file claims before Aug. 9, 2023, can have their claims backdated to August 2022.

The fair was sponsored by the Veterans Coalition of the San Luis Valley. Mary Cornum with the organization said the event was a success and had over 100 Veterans and providers in attendance.

“We are a frontier community, we are underserved in healthcare, access, and in transportation to the Front Range,” Cornum said. “We have many elder Veterans who don’t want to travel and can’t travel and yet they have to get services in Denver. Many Veterans will not travel and don’t get services. The VA [Veterans Affairs] is a maze that is hard



Courier photo by John Waters

Seated (left) is Rio Grande County Veteran Service Officer Jack Rudder, and (right) is Eric Moncibais with the Colorado Division of Veterans Affairs at the Veteran Resource Fair on July 24 at the Colorado Army National Guard Armory.

to function in. Our purpose is to help Veterans function in that system.”

In addition to the coalition, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, the

Colorado Division of Veterans Affairs, and Alamosa County Veteran Service Officer Bill Brown, all were at the fair providing services to Veterans.

Veterans can reach Veterans Affairs at www.va.gov. Alamosa County Veteran Services Officer Brown is at 719-589-1109.

MV woman arrested on suspicion of distributing fentanyl in overdose death

CONTRIBUTED

MONTEVISTA — Detectives with the Monte Vista Police Department (MVPD) and the agents with the Colorado Bureau of Investigation (CBI) arrested Marissa Medina-Montoya, 23, Monte Vista, on July 24, for her involvement in the death of Letisha Serna-Lopez, 37, Monte Vista.

On Feb. 1, MVPD officers along with Monte Vista EMS were dispatched to a residence in the 500 block of Dennis Street for a possible drug overdose. When officers arrived on scene they found Serna-Lopez unresponsive and started life-saving measures to include administering NARCAN, a medicine used for the treatment of known or suspected opioid overdose.

Serna-Lopez was transported to the San Luis Valley Health hospital in Alamosa and later airlifted to Penrose Hospital in Colorado Springs where she died on Feb. 4, due to complications from opioid overdose.

Over the course of the next several months, MVPD detectives and CBI agents conducted numerous interviews and search warrants into the death of Serna-Lopez, resulting in the arrest of Medina-Montoya for allegedly providing the fentanyl that resulted in the death of Serna-Lopez.

This is the first time in the 12th Judicial District (San Luis Valley) that a suspected drug dealer has been charged under HB 22-1326, which provides for prosecution of anyone who provides synthetic opiates (fentanyl) to another and it is the proximate cause of death of the person, according to MVPD Chief George Dingfelder.

“Drug overdose deaths are very difficult and complicated to investigate as the majority of those involved are uncooperative and unwilling to provide investigators with information to lead to those providing the poison that is killing our citizens. This investigation was the result of thorough and detailed investigation by MVPD detectives with the assistance of CBI agents,” Dingfelder said.

In addition to the charge for distributing fentanyl, Medina-Montoya was charged with special offender as the drug distribution took place within 1,000 feet of a school.

Medina-Montoya was booked into the Rio Grande County Jail on a \$100,000 bond.



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Mid-summer seat belt enforcement period began Monday

Seat belt citations in Colorado are up 52% this year

CONTRIBUTED

STATEWIDE — Starting Monday, July 24, through Friday, Aug. 4, the Colorado Department of Transportation, the Colorado State Patrol (CSP) and 51 participating law enforcement agencies throughout Colorado will begin the July seat belt enforcement period.

During the same enforcement period last year, 788 citations were issued to drivers for not wearing a seat belt or having unbuckled passengers in their vehicle. That included 68 drivers who had an improperly restrained child in their vehicle.

Recent data shows that 479 drivers and passengers were killed in vehicle crashes in Colorado in 2022. Most of those lives lost (236) were not wearing a seat belt. Thirteen Colorado counties, including Gilpin County, Gunnison County and Logan County, reported that 100% of their roadway fatalities in 2022 were unrestrained vehicle occupants.

“Refusing to wear a seatbelt can’t be uncoupled with a possible consequence of death. So, while you may have the right not to protect yourself, I can’t accept that unbuckled fatalities in Colorado are a far too common occurrence,” said Col. Matthew C. Packard, chief of the Colorado State Patrol. “As we head into the last Click It or Ticket enforcement period of the summer, remember, there can be consequences much worse than a citation.”

Last year, 1,963 drivers were issued citations in Colorado during the April and May Click It or Ticket enforcement periods. This year, 2,992 drivers were cited during the same two enforcement periods. This is a nearly 52% increase from last year.

“Those who decide to go unbuckled must understand they are at greater risk of injury or death in the event of a crash,” said CDOT’s Office of Transportation Safety Director Darrell Lingk. “We

have the power to lower the rate of unbuckled traffic fatalities with one simple action: wear your seat belt.”

Properly wearing a seat belt is crucial — no matter if you’re the driver, a passenger, or sitting in the second or third row of a vehicle. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), wearing a seat belt in the front seat of a vehicle reduces the risk of moderate injury by 50% and fatal injury by 45%. Additionally, nearly 60% of backseat passengers who were killed in a crash in 2021 nationwide were unbuckled. Wearing a seat belt will always be the first choice a driver or passenger can make to prioritize safety while on the road.

The Click It or Ticket campaign urges Coloradans and visitors to fasten their seat belts, every ride, every time. Proper seat belt usage is the No. 1 way to protect yourself in the event of a vehicle crash and minimize the risk of injury or death. Fines for not buckling up begin at \$65, and parents or caregivers caught with an improperly restrained child can receive a minimum fine of \$82.

- **Adults** — Colorado has a secondary enforcement law for adult drivers and front-seat passengers. Drivers can be ticketed for violating the seat belt law if they are stopped for another traffic violation.

- **Teens** — Colorado’s Graduated Drivers Licensing (GDL) law requires all drivers under 18 and their passengers, regardless of their age, to wear seat belts. This is a primary enforcement, meaning teens can be pulled over simply for not wearing a seat belt or having passengers without seat belts.

- **Children** — Colorado’s Child Passenger Safety law is a primary enforcement, meaning the driver can be stopped and ticketed if an officer sees an unrestrained or improperly restrained child under age 16 in the vehicle.

Click It or Ticket is a nationwide campaign from NHTSA. Since Click It or Ticket was introduced in Colorado in 2002, statewide seat belt use has increased from 72% to 87%. For more information about seat belt safety and enforcement citation numbers, visit SeatBeltsColorado.com.

SLV Pride set for Aug. 25-27



Photo courtesy of SLV Pride

Members of SLV Pride accept a donation check of \$269 from the Narrow Gauge Book Cooperative in Alamosa. SLV Pride is gearing up for a weekend of events, including music, entertainment, food, and a parade in Alamosa the weekend of Aug. 25-27. On Aug. 25, the festivities get underway with a party at Spare Keg Brewerks in Alamosa at 7 p.m. Pride Fest at Cole Park in Alamosa is Saturday, Aug. 26, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. On Sunday a drag brunch begins at 9 a.m. at San Luis Valley Brewing Company in Alamosa and the cost for the brunch and show is \$30.



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PUBLIC NOTICES

Request For Proposal (RFP) Trash and Rubbish removal

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For question, please email Amber Wilson at atorrez@saguachecounty-co.gov or call 719-655-2231.

Proposal may be emailed, mailed or hand delivered. Email RFP to atorrez@saguachecounty-co.gov, mail to PO Box 326, Saguache, CO 81149 or hand delivered to 505 3rd Street, Saguache, CO.

Proposals must be received by 3pm on Thursday, August 31, 2023.

No. 1675 published in the Center Post Dispatch, Thursday, July 27 and August 3, 10, 17 and 24, 2023.

The Saguache County Board of Commissioners are accepting written offers for County Owned Property currently. The lots available will be accepted by the Commissioners, at their discretion, until July 25, 2024.

If you would like to submit a bid offer for any available properties a bid packet and a list of properties is available on the Saguache County website at www.saguachecounty.colorado.gov or you can call the Land Use office at 719-655-2321 or by email request to landuse@saguachecounty-co.gov.

Bids must be submitted on a County bid form. Funds must accompany bids. NO CASH WILL BE ACCEPTED.

****You must enclose the completed bid form in a sealed envelope marked "County Owned Property Bid" and indicate on the envelope the block, lot or lots and parcel number, the bid is intended for. ****

The Board reserves the right to refuse any bid submitted.

No. 1674 published in the Center Post Dispatch, Thursday, June 29 and July 6, 13, 20 and 27, 2023.



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RGH's Keeping the Dream Alive to promote wellness in all forms

Event is set for Aug. 12 in Del Norte

By **LYNDSIE FERRELL**

DEL NORTE — Almost everyone has heard the saying, “Live, Laugh, Love.” Add wellness to the end of that sentiment and it will equal the theme for Rio Grande Hospital’s annual fundraising event, Keeping the Dream Alive.

“We are promoting wellness in all forms. Laughter is good for the soul,” said Rio

Grande Hospital Communication Officer Eva Timberlake.

RGH has switched gears this year after dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic for almost three years. Now that the winds of change have shifted, Rio Grande Hospital is moving forward with plans for a Wellness Center and broke ground on the project in May. The center is going to be a new kind of community facility, open to the public and offering several different opportunities that support the hospital’s vision of health and wellness.

Rio Grande Hospital CEO Arlene Harms

spoke about the plans for the Wellness Center during the groundbreaking ceremony stating that the hospital was working to promote health and wellness in the communities they serve throughout San Luis Valley and that the hospital would be working to move away from only treating the sick, and work toward treating the healthy communities they serve.

The Wellness Center will include several facilities that the communities will benefit

from including a teaching kitchen so that families can come to learn how to cook healthy meals, a greenhouse and herb garden, an educational room, meditation room, access to the nearby trails and hiking and much more.

With the Wellness Center underway and plans for more growth, the hospital is grateful to the communities

they serve and is looking forward to hosting

Please see DREAM on Page 3



Photo by Dean Krakel, Special to The Colorado Sun

Fourth generation San Luis Valley farmer Tyler Neeley checks a pivot irrigation system on land his family farms along the Rio Grande near Del Norte, Colorado on July 19, 2022.

SLV counties, facing drought and thirsty neighbors

Move to block water exports

By **SHANNON MULLANE**

ALAMOSA — County officials in the San Luis Valley are adamant: They want their water to stay in the valley so much they’re actively building new roadblocks to shut down, or at least delay, attempts to sell it to the Front Range.

The San Luis Valley, home to about 46,000 people in southern Colorado, is at the center of a decades-old story in the West: a water-based tug of war between growing urban areas and rural, primarily agricultural regions. This month, six counties in the valley held public hearings, debated and, for some, approved an agreement to create a new regional oversight board that adds an extra layer of vetting for projects that propose taking water out of the valley.

Locals say they don’t have water to

spare. Once water leaves a basin, it doesn’t come back, and the idea of exporting water threatens their economies and way of life.

“We’ve seen attempts in the past to export the water from the valley out of the valley,” said Vern Heersink, an Alamosa County commissioner. “We’re all joined together, not only by the mountains, but the aquifer underneath us. So we should join together and try to protect that really vital asset.”

The San Luis Valley is a flat expanse with long, straight roads stretching between the San Juan Mountains and the Sangre de Cristo mountains, which rise like teeth to the west and the east. It’s bordered by New Mexico to the south, and to the north, Salida and the Arkansas River.

It’s a high-elevation desert where agriculture is the primary economic force, one capable of providing better-paying jobs in the local economy, according to the 2023 Colorado Water Plan. It’s even one of the top regions nationwide for

growing potatoes, which need 14 to 17 inches of water per irrigation season, or about twice the annual rainfall there of 8 inches.

But its water supply has been threatened by overuse and a long-term drought, just like the water supply in the Colorado River Basin, which lies across the Continental Divide to the west.

Crops are fed by rivers and streams in the Rio Grande Basin or by underground aquifers. In dry years, the runoff from the winter snowpack can be eight times less than average, according to the state water plan, and the valley must comply with legal obligations to share water with New Mexico, according to the 1938 Rio Grande Compact.

Since 1977, water users have pumped so much groundwater that the Closed Basin aquifer dropped by 1.2 million acre-feet, according to the water plan. In 2002, one of the driest years on record for the Rio Grande Basin, engineers recorded a 400,000 acre-foot drop in

Please see DROUGHT on Page 9

Access project updates on Rio Grande National Forest

Several significant projects are now or soon will be moving forward

CONTRIBUTED

DEL NORTE — The Rio Grande National Forest provided updates on several projects and high-interest issues. Some issues on the RGNF have garnered significant community interest and the need to provide accurate information on these matters is high.

“With significant activity having already begun, timing is ripe to provide an update to our communities on these important projects,” said Judi Perez, acting deputy forest supervisor for the Rio Grande National Forest. “We hope this up-to-date information will prove helpful with activity planning for our neighbors and visitors.”

The following projects are the ones of highest interest to communities and visitors alike. The updates are accurate at the time of publishing. However, it is possible that changes in schedules will be required.

- Forest Service Road 250 Horca to Jasper — Conejos Peak Ranger District

The popular 250 road is seeing increased traffic and the surface seemingly deteriorates more quickly. The district encour-

ages motorists to travel slower to help reduce the development of potholes and washboards. The RGNF road crew and Conejos County plan to conduct normal blading of the road a couple more times this year. The Forest is also currently soliciting / developing two separate contracts for the 250 road. One for a full road maintenance application and the second for developing a long-term improvement plan for the road surface. The intent is to reduce the needed annual maintenance and associated costs.

- Stunner Bridge — Conejos Peak Ranger District

The Stunner Bridge is expected to begin the replacement process in early September. The project will take up to a full year to complete, with access on Forest Road No. 250 over the Alamosa

River being only minimally impacted. The old bridge will serve as the temporary access while the new bridge is constructed adjacent to it. This

project will be the culmination of a nearly 10-year long project of replacing several bridges in the Alamosa Canyon.

- Embargo Creek Bridge — Divide Ranger District

Access to this bridge has also been restricted for over a year. Forest road crews are scheduled to move directly from the Continental bridge project to the

See UPDATES on Page 3



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Three Tiny Libraries open in Monte Vista

Chapman Park honors Peggy Jo Blenden with Tiny Library

By MARIE MCCOLM

MONTE VISTA — Two ribbon cutting ceremonies were held Tuesday, July 11, for the new Tiny Libraries in Monte Vista. Three local parks now have Tiny Libraries — Sanchez Park, Marsh Park, and Chapman Park.

People can take a book from the Tiny Libraries to read or leave a book for someone else to read.

The idea for the Tiny Libraries came from Cathy Armstrong. Armstrong is a retired schoolteacher who taught for 20 years. Armstrong said that she had many books stored away and always kept the books thinking that one day she would have grandchildren who would read the books.

Armstrong said that having retired for a while and not having any grandchildren yet, she was looking for a way to utilize these books somehow. While visiting her sons who live in Montana, she noticed some Tiny Libraries in a few towns in Montana.

“Being an avid reader, I would pick up some books over there, and I was always thinking about what I could do with all the books that I had from teaching,” she said. “Thinking of Mike and Peggy Blenden, I had been friends with Peggy for about 25 years. Mike is a gifted carpenter and Peggy was a great artist. I was going to ask Mike to do the construction of the libraries and Peggy to do the artwork on the libraries.”

Things took a left-hand turn though because Peggy passed away unexpectedly.

“I thought well, we still have this idea and it’s a good idea,” Armstrong said. “Peggy also loved to read. So, Mike went ahead and built one library, and I asked Mike’s sons if they would be willing to paint the Tiny Library structure and do the artwork on it and they did. So, we had the first one done at Chapman Park, and this one honors Peggy with a plaque on it.”

The LOR Foundation helped with the other two.

“We spoke with Ivette Atencio, and we submitted a proposal, and the LOR Foundation helped us cover the cost of the other two,” Armstrong said. “This is a project I really believe in. Reading is important to society, to children. These are books that are free that they can keep, you take a book, you leave a book. A different model to get books in kids’ hands, and to get parents to read to their kids, too.”

Mike Blenden also spoke about the free libraries in town and the free library dedicated to honor his wife.

“My wife Peggy died when she was 66 very suddenly,” he said. “I met her in college and we both were married in graduate school. When Peggy and I moved to Monte Vista she became very involved with the school system. Peggy was very involved with the teachers, supporting some of them in their classrooms. She also was the president of the Rio Grande Headwaters Land Trust. She was one of the first presidents.



Mike Blenden, left, and Cathy Armstrong pose for a photo in front of a newly completed and opened Tiny Library in Monte Vista. They, along with Blenden’s wife Peggy, who passed unexpectedly, were instrumental in getting three Tiny Libraries constructed in Monte Vista.



Children look through the books at one of three new Tiny Libraries opened recently in Monte Vista. Courtesy photos

They are involved with land conservation all over the San Luis Valley. One thing I always remember about Peggy is she always had a book in her hand. She was an avid reader, which is why I think that she was such an interesting person as well.”

Blenden said that his wife Peggy enriched herself with books and knew so much about science and math and other subjects, simply because she loved to read so much. Blenden said he believes Peggy would have been honored to have the library dedicated in her name, as she loved to enrich the lives of others and she was a model of courage, always stood for the right thing.

“I am so happy that this was dedicated to her. This was a genius idea that Cathy Armstrong had for our community,” he said. “This library gives us a monument with a plaque for Peggy. My son painted

the outside of the one little library and thanks to the LOR Foundation and Gigi Dennis and Rob Vance for their help with all this too. We now have three libraries here. Rob Vance

and his crew were a pleasure to work with too. It is our hope that these little libraries will help get everyone reading. Peggy would have been proud of that.”

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UPDATES

Continued from Page 1

Embargo bridge where they will replace the deck. The road will also be closed during this repair, which may take as long as a week to conduct.

• Continental Reservoir Bridge — Divide Ranger District

Access to the bridge was restricted after a 2021 bridge inspection. The bridge has been closed to motorized traffic over 60 foot wide since June 28, 2022. Specialized heavy equipment has been ordered for this project and Forest road crews are scheduled to begin the repair of the bridge abutments on Aug. 1, 2023. Access to the reservoir from this location will be fully closed during the repair which will take up to approximately four weeks. See the closure notice on the RGNF's Alerts and Notices web page.

• Forest Service Road 600 to Wheeler Geologic Area — Divide Ranger District

FSR 600 was closed on Aug. 1, 2022, due to extremely wet and

unstable conditions that were causing significant resource damage and multiple vehicles getting stuck. The road still has deep ruts, washouts and hidden voids below the road surface that can be very dangerous. Especially in the upper 4 miles. While timing remains undetermined, the Forest hopes to complete the needed repairs before the access is restricted by snow this year.

• Rito Hondo Reservoir — Divide Ranger District

Colorado Parks and Wildlife is currently conducting repairs to the dam. The Divide Ranger District has closed this area to provide for public safety during the repair process. Work will be ongoing well into the fall. See the closure notice on the RGNF's Alerts and Notices web page.

• Alberta Reservoir — Divide Ranger District

Colorado Parks and Wildlife is currently conducting repairs to the

dam. The Divide Ranger District has closed this area and FSR 391 at the end of the Wolf Creek Ski Area parking lot to provide for public safety during the repair process. See the closure notice on the RGNF's Alerts and Notices web page.

• Million Reservoir — Divide Ranger District

The RGNF has partnered with the Bureau of Reclamation to conduct improvements to the emergency spillway this week. Water level was slowly lowered to accommodate the construction work. Access to the outlet side of the dam is now closed for public safety. There is still public access at the dam's southern side. Visitors to the reservoir will need to stay on the south side of the dam and be aware of heavy equipment working in the area. The project is planned to take approximately eight weeks to complete.

For information on the Rio Grande National Forest, call 719-850-2374.

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DREAM

Continued from Page 1

ing them for this year's Keeping the Dream Alive fundraiser. The event will feature food provided by Mountainview Restaurant of Monte Vista and is supported by several local sponsors including SLVREC, Ciello, Del Norte Fire Department, uchealth, San Luis Valley Bank, Del Norte Bank and many others.

The event will take place on Aug. 12 beginning at 530 p.m. in the Del Norte Fire Department's new headquarters located in the old Del Norte High School Gym or otherwise known to locals as the Field House.

"We are really looking forward to this year's event. It is our 15th year, and we have something special planned for our community. We will have some wonderful door prizes and great auction items which will be auctioned off by our wonderful auctioneer, Darrel Plane," said Timberlake. "It is going to be a lot of fun."

For more information or to purchase tickets, visit www.riograndehospital.org.

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and Bridge Office 305 3rd Street, PO Box 476, Saguache, CO 81149 – 719-655-2554 or on the Saguache County website – saguachecounty.colorado.gov under the Road and Bridge Department tab. Please fill out and submit the County Application. A complete job description is available at the Road and Bridge Office. Completed applications can be hand delivered or mailed to Saguache County Road and Bridge – at the address listed above, sent by email to mhashbarger@saguachecounty-co.gov or faxed to: 719-655-2543. APPLICATION DEADLINE: Open until qualified candidates are hired. Saguache County is an Equal Opportunity Employer. (8-2)

WANTED: Saguache County Road and Bridge is looking to hire a Shop Foreman......Starting at \$27.00/hr SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS: Applicants must possess a current Class-A CDL license with heavy

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Monte Vista Chamber holds ribbon cutting for Bucks Diesel

By MARIE MCCOLM

MONTE VISTA — The Monte Vista Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting for Bucks Diesel on Tuesday, July 11.

Chamber Manager Heather Hillin and Chamber Board President Linda Burnett helped stretch a red ribbon that Bucks Diesel Owner Brad Harmon cut with the scissors.

"Yes, thank you all for coming," Harmon said. "This is something I have wanted to do for quite some time. I didn't think it would happen in the Valley, as it started off in the northeastern corner, but we are here. We are going to make a go."

Harmon also received an official business plaque from the MV Chamber of Commerce.

About 40 people attended the ceremony. The shop also served lunch.

Harmon spoke about his shop and his reasons for opening it.

"I opened this shop, knowing that there is a good demand down here for diesel work, not specifically for semis, or trucks, just diesel work in general," Harmon said. "I did go to Rush Peterbilt and was trained there. I did some time in the oil fields and came back here. I did farm stuff for 5 or 6 years, and then started working on this. My whole goal is to help with not just trucks but all diesel work."

Harmon said he can handle "anything and everything" diesel at the shop on 1122 North Highway 285 in Monte Vista.

"It's geared towards anything and everything diesel even ag equipment," Harmon said. "I have heard guys saying that they have to take road graters and some of their equipment clear over



Photos by Marie Mccolm

Bucks Diesel Owner Brad Harmon cuts the ribbon during a ceremony on July 11 at his new shop in Monte Vista. The event was organized by the Monte Vista Chamber.

the mountain to get worked on. If that's money saved on fuel for them, I can keep it in the Valley. That's what I am hoping to do. I know that a lot of people are looking for help. I know the neighbors across the street have a hard time keeping things rolling and need the extra help for all the farms in the Valley. This is not a competition for me. I am here to make money and help. Right now, I am a one-man show."

Shop hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

"We will see how things go and maybe next year move on to half a day Saturdays," he said.

Bill Overton, who attended the ceremony, said he thought it was nice and was looking forward to the diesel shop.

"We have a few of these in the Valley, but it's hard to find local, and it's hard to find someone who can work on things



Bucks Diesel Owner Brad Harmon holds the plaque he received from the Monte Vista Chamber of Commerce.

right away," Overton said. "I know there is always a wait period, but this is good for us right now. I live outside of Monte Vista, and I'll be bringing some of my equipment here. Hope it goes good for Brad. He's a nice guy and shopping local without traveling helps everyone."



Saturday, August 19, 2023
Chapman Park

OptiMystics CAN
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The OptiMystics CAN & The Poor Boys Car Club are co-hosting our 3rd annual festival at Chapman Park in Monte Vista, CO, from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. We've rebranded the festival as SoCo Suds & Sounds because this year we've got LIVE MUSIC featuring Ruben Dominguez, Absolution & Ol' Scratch!

VENDORS!



The Poor Boy Car Club hosts their 12th annual show. Call Richard Garcia at (719) 580-2673 for more info and/or to register. On-site registration is from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. Show & Shine from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.. Gate entry fees, etc.

ENTERTAINMENT!

The all-local live musical roundup kicks off with Ruben Dominguez of The Sol Boys at 3 p.m., followed by ALMA Battle of the Bands' winner Absolution at 4:15 p.m. Featured artists Ol' Scratch take the stage at 6 p.m.



Awards will be presented from 4 p.m. until 5 p.m. Pre-entry is only \$25. Gate entry is \$35. Additional car entry is \$5.

DROUGHT Continued from Page 1

the valley's aquifers. Water users in the region now face a 2031 deadline to repay the water debt, according to published reports.

"It's just a bad situation all around, and we just can't afford to lose more water. We need to police ourselves more than we have been," said Tom McCracken, a Saguache County commissioner.

Since the 1980s, some enterprising landowners — which some might call water barons — have come up with a few proposals to sell their water to Front Range counties in need. Locals are familiar with names like American Water Development Inc., Gary Boyce of Stockman's Water, and Sean Tonner of Renewable Water Resources.

The AWDI bought land in the San Luis Valley in the 1980s and unsuccessfully tried to export its water. It sold the land to Stockmans, whose efforts to export water were also stymied.

Valley residents quickly united against those efforts, McCracken said.

"Everyone's against the water exports," he said.

In 2002, The Nature Conservancy bought a portion of the company's land, and it is now part of the Baca National Wildlife Refuge and Great Sand Dunes National Park. The remainder of Boyce's land, Rancho Rosado, was sold to Tonner, former deputy chief of staff for Colorado Gov. Bill Owens, who is an RWR principal.

In 2021, RWR unsuccessfully proposed selling its water to Douglas County, and this year, the company has contributed thousands of dollars to candidates for the Parker Water & Sanitation District Board, one of the largest water providers in Douglas County.

The proposal wasn't viable from the get-go, said Cleave Simpson, general manager of the Rio Grande Water Conservation District, a San Luis Valley resident and a state legislator.

"I listened to them for two years. I watched them attack my character even though I didn't reciprocate," he said. "Without batting an eye, (I) could demonstrate to the Douglas County commissioners, or anyone who wanted to listen, that the proposal was without merit and could not be done."

How the agreement works

Enter the joint planning agreement. It's not yet finalized, but the intent is clear: Residents want to increase local control over projects that would take water out of the valley. And since what happens in one county impacts others, the officials want an avenue for local governments to weigh in when water export projects are proposed to their neighbors.

If approved as written currently, the

intergovernmental agreement would create the San Luis Valley Planning Board, which would include representatives from counties and local towns and cities.

These governments would also agree to create a joint planning area, which includes the six counties in the valley: Alamosa, Costilla, Conejo, Mineral, Saguache and Rio Grande.

If a member of the agreement, say Saguache County, gets a project proposal that aims to export water out of the valley, that triggers a joint planning board review. The extra layer of review does not apply to projects that occur entirely within the valley.

The planning board's job is to scrutinize whether the project meets all the appropriate permitting regulations, some of which are still being updated. After its analysis, the board will make a recommendation for approval or denial of the project and send it to the local government with permitting authority, like Saguache.

The local government makes the ultimate decision, but it must take the board's recommendation into consideration. This involves some tricky legal footwork because the board can't step on a local government's powers, but local officials wanted to give the board some teeth, said Heersink of Alamosa.

The idea is to make the approval process even more cumbersome to stall or delay water export projects.

"We hope it presents a roadblock to an applicant that they're like, 'This is too much to overcome. We don't even want to do it,'" Heersink said. "That's a hope."

The joint agreement becomes active as soon as all six counties in the valley sign on, but some counties are pointing out portions of the agreement that still need fine-tuning from legal teams.

County commissioners from Alamosa and Saguache signed the joint agreement after holding public hearings in early June. Conejos and Mineral counties plan to hold their public hearings in late June.

The county commissioners in Costilla and Rio Grande counties held public hearings on June 6 and June 14, respectively. Rio Grande commissioners decided to table their vote on the agreement after Dusty Hicks, a Rio Grande County landowner and local project manager for a controversial resort proposal on Wolf Creek Pass in Mineral County, pointed out a few provisions that either lacked clarity, specificity or could leave the planning board vulnerable to third-party lawsuits.

Costilla officials tabled their discussion over concerns about how difficult it would be to leave the agreement. Under

the current agreement, if a local government decided to split, they're bound by the terms of the agreement for five years after their withdrawal.

The finalization of the agreement could be delayed by a month or more while commissioners consider these local concerns. Once final, it could trigger a moratorium on new water projects in some counties while local officials update related regulations.

"This is a brand-new concept for counties to join together, form a joint planning area and a joint planning board," McCracken said. "We gotta do everything we can do, so innovative strategies are appropriate."

A new spin on water management

This level of regional collaboration is unique, said KC McFerson, a senior planner in the Community Development Office at the Colorado Department of Local Affairs.

Intergovernmental planning boards are not commonly used around the state, but governments do use them to set up joint review processes for development proposals and to formalize coordination among jurisdictions.

As far as McFerson knows, Colorado does not have any active joint planning boards that deal with water issues at the scale of the San Luis Valley agreement, which could include up to 23 local governments.

"Water is an issue statewide. In different ways, but it is an issue. Thinking regionally and planning regionally ... has been on the top of people's minds more and more in my opinion," McFerson said based on her work at the Community Development Office. "Finding more regional frameworks to deal with shared problems is a huge need given the growing pressures from things like drought."

The San Luis Valley plan also relies on an act passed in the 1970s, House Bill 1041, commonly known as 1041s. The statutes allow local governments to designate areas and activities as matters of state interest and to create corresponding local rules and regulations to manage them.

Each county in the San Luis Valley is creating or updating its 1041 regulations as part of this process. For example, they're adding provisions to say that site selection and construction of new water systems, or extending existing water systems, are matters of state interest.

Other counties have used the 1041 statutes to co-regulate planning issues that go beyond one jurisdiction's borders, often related to oil and gas regulations, historical preservation efforts or natural hazards areas. Some counties have used the statutes on water-related issues, typically dealing with wastewater treatment, McFerson said.

"Using 1041 powers isn't new. Using IGAs isn't new. Doing regional thinking isn't new. But putting all that together to face this emerging and growing issue around how do we effectively meet needs with this limited and increasingly strained resource? That is a new spin," she said. "I'm going to be watching this on the edge of my seat. Because I want to know, what are the lessons learned? What pitfalls do they run into? How do they overcome them?"

An additional layer of regional control will help the San Luis Valley with its water export pressure, but it's not an end-all solution.

In Saguache County, McCracken has been advocating for other ideas, like investing in research into alternative crops, soil health programs that could help improve the water-retention of the soils, and even agro-tourism and dark-sky tourism along Highway 17. There, drivers see signs for the "cosmic highway" and "UFO, UFO, UFO" flash by as they drive north or south across the valley.

Securing the San Luis Valley's future is a joint effort and this intergovernmental planning board has reinvigorated that collaboration, he said.

"I think we can carry that unity onto other activities and areas of concern for the valley," McCracken said. "I think it's a real positive thing that way."

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Solution to last week's puzzle

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E	A	G	A	N		P	A	L	S		A	B	L	E	
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"The beer selection is great. Was so nice to sit back and enjoy a brew while waiting for the pizza. And when the pizza came. Wow. Was it good. Had the hellfire pizza and the flavors were fantastic. Service was great. The guys working were very welcoming and friendly. Will come back again for sure!"
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Courtesy photo

Alamosa Live Music Association brings the world-famous Glenn Miller Orchestra to Adams State University on Tuesday, Oct. 10.

Famous big band sound coming to SLV

ALMA bringing Glenn Miller Orchestra to ASU Oct. 10

CONTRIBUTED

ALAMOSA — Have you ever wanted to experience firsthand the magic and majesty of a universally beloved big band? Now's the chance for you and your family and friends to experience it live in Alamosa, when the Alamosa Live Music Association hosts the world-famous Glenn Miller Orchestra on Tuesday, Oct. 10, at Richardson Hall at Adams State University.

The rare opportunity for a full evening of big band music starts when the doors open at 6 p.m. The music will begin at 6:30 p.m. when the show opens with local favorites the SLV Big Band. General admission is \$25, with ALMA members and ASU AS&F having the opportunity to purchase tickets for a discounted price of \$15. Tickets are on sale and can be purchased at <https://buytickets.at/alamosalivemusicassociation/948581>. Call 719-937-1255, for more information.

The history of the Glenn Miller Orchestra goes back almost 100 years and took many different forms over the decades. The legendary Glenn Miller was one of the most successful of all dance bandleaders back in the Swing Era of the 1930s and 40s. But the first Glenn Miller Orchestra did not make it at all — it was a total and absolute economic failure.

But Miller knew what he wanted, held on to that dedication, and relentlessly worked to succeed. He launched his second band — the one that lives on today — in March of 1938. This Glenn Miller Orchestra has been a "hit" ever since. A matchless string of hit records, the constant impact of radio broadcasts and the drawing power at theaters, hotels and dance pavilions built and sustained the momentum of popularity.

Miller disbanded his musical organization in 1942 at the height of its popularity to volunteer for the Army. There, he organized and led the famous Glenn Miller Army Air Force Band. It went to Europe to entertain servicemen performing numerous live and radio shows.

On Dec. 15, 1944, Maj. Miller took off in a single engine plane from Europe to precede his band to France, disappearing over the English Channel, never to be seen again. The Army declared him officially dead a year later. With the release of the major motion movie "The Glenn Miller Story" featuring Jimmy Stewart and June Allyson in 1954, interest and popular demand led the Miller Estate to authorize the formation of the present Glenn Miller Orchestra.

Today, the 18-member ensemble continues to play many of the original Miller arrangements, both from the civilian band and the AAFB libraries. Additionally, it also plays some more modern selections arranged and performed in the Miller style and sound. Just as it was in Miller's day, the Glenn Miller Orchestra today is still the most sought-after big band in the world.



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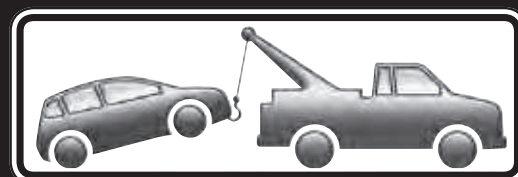
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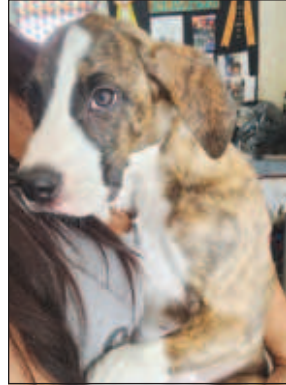
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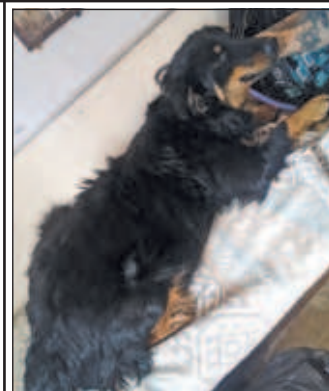
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Mini Cheerleaders have grown from 5 to 26 girls

Squad is excited to be a part of Ski-Hi Stampede

By MARIE MCCOLM

MONTE VISTA — Monte Vista Mini Cheerleaders Coach Jessica Ornelas is excited about the growth of the program.

“We are excited and can’t believe how the squad has grown,” Ornelas said. “We went from having five girls last year to having 26 girls this year. These girls are having fun and ready to cheer. We have a lot of fun planned for them and can’t wait to see how everything goes this year.”

The mini cheerleading team was started last year, in collaboration with the City of Monte Vista, as an effort to incorporate the schools and directly help families in the community by providing an avenue with potential growth to build a middle school cheerleading team and help future high school cheerleaders as well.

Kharesa Rivera, Genny Emmons and Ornelas are the head coaches for the squad. They started out with two cheer coaches but expanded to three with the addition of 21 girls.

“As our cheerleading squad grew, we grew as well. We are excited to be a part of Stampede again this year, and be in the parade,” said Ornelas. “Last year there were only five girls. We got together and were able to make a float. We made a pirate ship out of cardboard and newspapers. We had canons, we made a pirate ship with water, we made a sail out of a tire ring and a laundry basket. We had a pirate flag with swords on it. We

worked late nights for two weeks on this, at my grandma’s house actually. We had an assembly line done and we made outfits for the girls with our circuit machine as well. Last year we had limited resources but with fundraising we were able to make everything work. This year’s parade theme is ‘Grow Something Greater,’ we are looking forward to having our girls dress like flowers for the parade and with the expansion of our team we have certainly grown something greater, that we are really proud of.”

Ornelas said that last year the girls participated in a high school cheerleading camp, where they received a discounted rate of \$15 per girl. The girls said they loved the camp and will be participating again and will be paying the regular rate of \$50 per girl thanks to a grant the team received.

Rivera said the girls are looking forward to the camp and the parade this year. With the group’s expansion, the coaches spoke to Ivette Atencio of the LOR Foundation and obtained grant money to help them purchase uniforms. The grant money would also help fund other things for the girls, including the camp.

“We are very happy that we were able to obtain this grant for the kids,” Rivera said. “We are waiting for the uniforms that we ordered and hoping they come in before the Stampede Parade, if they don’t, we do have a backup plan. We put in blood, sweat, and tears with the girls and don’t mind doing it at all. They are picking up the cheer routines so well, and we are excited to have the girls show everyone. The main thing is we want them to enjoy themselves. We enjoy this, we are thinking because there are so



Courtesy photo

The Monte Vista Mini Cheerleaders received grant money from the LOR Foundation that helped the team purchase uniforms and attend camp.

many kids involved that we may just split the girls up when we take them to cheer. Since the middle school has no cheerleaders, we want to try to take them to those games. We also have the girls scheduled to do their first performance at the upcoming car show in August. We are looking forward to making our community smile with our squad and cannot wait to see what else we do this year.”

Emmons said squad feels more like

family than just a squad.

“Our kids are in the mini cheerleading team as well. This team is more than just a cheerleading team, we are like family too,” Emmons said. “We are all former cheerleaders and it’s nice to share that special bond with our daughters. We do things outside of the cheer team too, it really is like having another family. I moved here a year ago, and being a part of this really makes me feel like I belong somewhere. I am hoping

that our squad feels the same way. The relationship that these girls build here will really carry on through the rest of their school days. We want to make this as positive for the kids as possible. We also want to make our community smile too. We are so excited about our upcoming events. It’s great to be a part of this amazing team.”

For more information on the squad, contact Ornelas through her Facebook page.

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Email Sarah Krantz for more information about the Arts Walk @ saguacheartswalk@gmail.com

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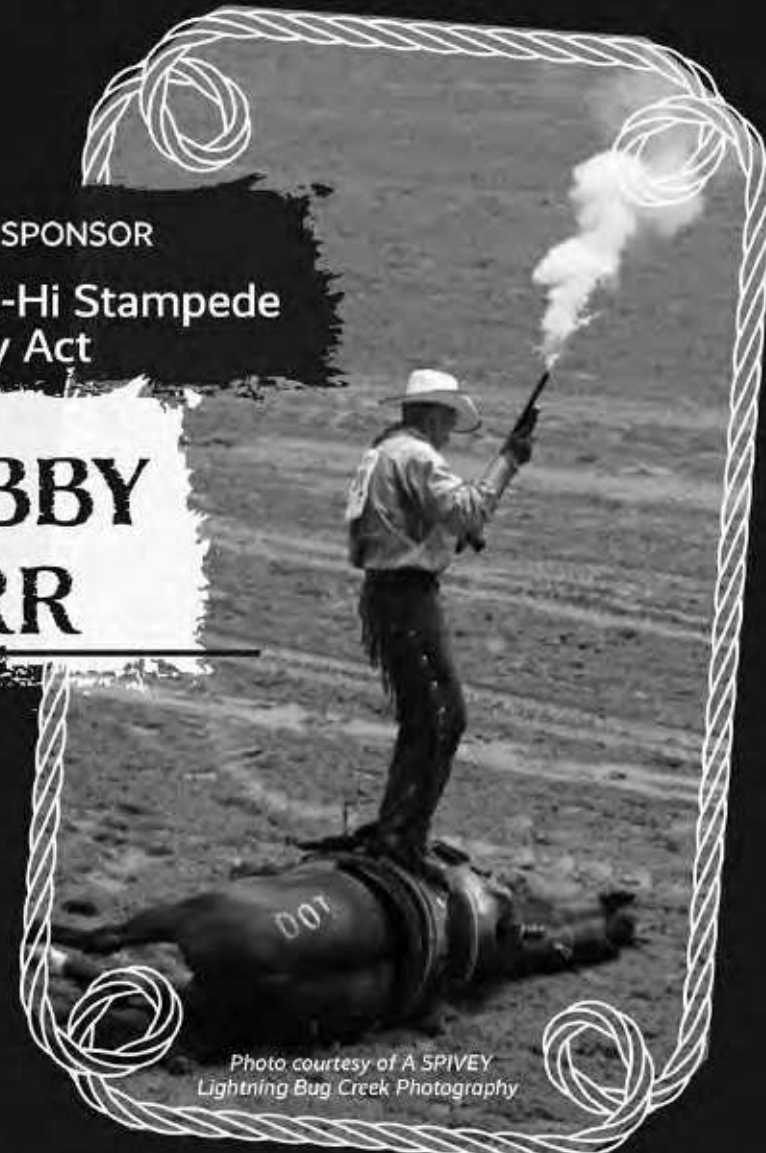
Front left to right: Helen Smith, Nick Malone, Charlie Burd, Greg Metz, Rock Southway, Kelsey Kimberling, CE Glunz; Middle: Mark Deacon, Derek Cooper, Eric Kimberling, Ryan Rumley, David Cooper, Karla Willschau; and Back: Jason Tillman, Keith Rogers, John Willschau, and Brandon Rogers.



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Welcome to the 101st Ski-Hi Stampede Rodeo Program

We are so excited to celebrate our 101st anniversary this year! On Thursday, July 27, the Monte Vista Rotary Club will be doing dinner serving roast beef, baked potatoes, and beans, with cookies and a drink.

After the supper, we are pleased to announce another spectacular concert featuring Carly Pearce with special guest Frank Ray.

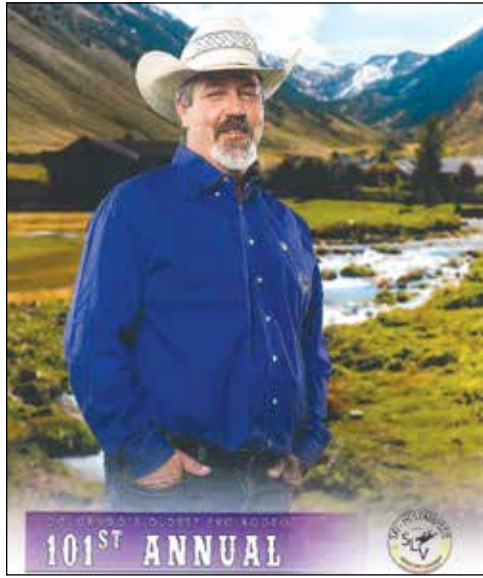
Immediately after the concert, make sure to stay and watch the fireworks, and then join us for the first dance of the weekend featuring Justin Kemp. On Friday, July 28, the first rodeo of the event will kick off at 7 p.m. with world-class stock contractor Stace Smith and rodeo announcer Boyd Polhamus. Friday night is family night at the rodeo.

Rodeos will also take place on Saturday the 29th at 7 p.m., and Sunday the 30th at 2 p.m.

Saturday's Rodeo theme is "Tough Enough to Wear Pink" — so make sure to wear your pink that day. There will be parades on Friday, July 28, and Saturday, July 29, at 10 a.m. This year's parade theme is "Grow Something Greater."

Don't forget to take your family to Wright's Amusement Carnival as they exceed our expectations every year.

We hope you don't miss this opportunity to get out and spend time with friends and family



and enjoy what the San Luis Valley community has to offer.

For more information, check out our website at www.skihistampede.com, like us on Facebook and Instagram, or add us on Snapchat!

Have a great time at the 101st Anniversary of the Ski-Hi Stampede!

Greg Metz
Stampede Committee President

Stampede, ASU partner on annual scholarships



Courtesy photo

During the 2022 Stampede, rodeo scholarships were awarded to Burke Temple, Kyla Davis, and Trista Simmons. Applications are available at www.skihistampede.com. Pictured, left to right, Burke Temple, Kyla Davis, Adams State University President David Tandberg, and his wife, Darin Tandberg. Not pictured, recipient Trista Simmons.

MONTE VISTA — San Luis Valley Ski-Hi Stampede, Inc. and Adams State University Foundation both know the importance of being involved in local communities and supporting local youth.

The San Luis Valley Ski-Hi Stampede and Adams State University Foundation have teamed up to provide three \$3,500 scholarships to any male or female San Luis Valley resident. The scholarships will be awarded to qualifying applicants during the 2023 Stampede rodeo. Qualifications include in the year of scholarship application, the applicant must have or will be participating either in the San Luis Valley Ski-Hi Stampede Rodeo, San Luis Valley High School Rodeo, San Luis Valley Little Britches Rodeo, or the San Luis Valley Fair as a 4-H or FFA participant; or be a stockholder or child of a San Luis Valley Ski-Hi Stampede shareholder or be a volunteer during the Stampede.



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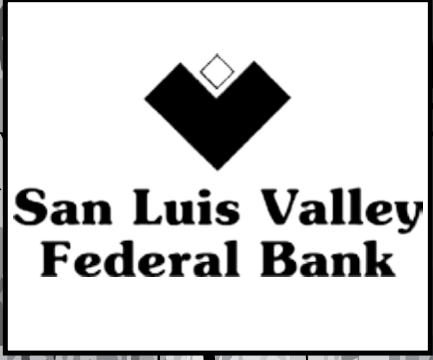
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Polhamus announcing Ski-Hi Stampede

MONTE VISTA — The oldest rodeo in Colorado will be welcoming a familiar voice to announce the goings-on in the arena, this year. Boyd Polhamus will be heading up the announcing duties for 101st Ski-Hi Stampede.

Polhamus was the announcer of the Ski-Stampede around the turn of the century.

It's been a wild 37 years. The first time Polhamus was "paid" to announce a rodeo was in 1985 at 19 years of age. It was his hometown college rodeo in Uvalde, Texas. No one could have predicted the next three-and-a-half decades.

He would receive his Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA) membership the following summer in 1986. By 1990, at the age of 25 he was selected to work his first National Finals Rodeo (NFR).

In the next 30 years, he would be on the announcer podium at the NFR 26 times. Plus, he served a year as Production Manager of the NFR, and a year as General Manager of Production of the same event.

"Very Blessed," said Polhamus when asked to describe his career. He points to his 28 years at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo and his 27 years at the Snake River Stampede in Nampa, Idaho. He also points to his 23 years at the National Western in Denver and the Dodge City Round Up in Kansas; and his 22 years in San Angelo, Texas.

Those are rodeos he's worked for over two-decades, but Polhamus points out that almost all of the rest of his schedule includes rodeos he's been announcing for at least 10 years or more. "Yes, being hired back is the greatest compliment you can be paid, just hopeful each rodeo I announce is a better rodeo than the year before," said Polhamus. "I try to help them get better as a production



Boyd Polhamus

and a business enterprise," he continued. "I don't want to only be paid a fee for my service as an announcer, I want to help the venue in any way I can."

The rodeo industry has noticed. He's a three-time Women's Professional Rodeo Association Announcer of the Year. He's been the PRCA's Announcer of the Year four times, and received the Lane Frost Memorial Award for his dedication to the sport.

It's a time-consuming occupation with plenty of travel and time away from home. Polhamus was asked at age 55, how much longer he would pursue his career? Polhamus said, "As long as God wants me to, I'm here because of Him, not because of me."

Contractor Smith Pro Rodeos provides quality stock

MONTE VISTA — If the bulls look meaner, the horses rougher and the calves and steers more agile, thank perennial Stampede favorite stock contractor Stace Smith.

Stace Smith produces more PRCA rodeos than any other PRCA stock contractor. In addition to PRCA rodeos, Smith Pro Rodeos produces PBR and Bronc Match events throughout the year. It is in large part to his experience that Stace Smith has been named PRCA Stock Contractor of the Year in 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014. This consecutive 11-year accomplishment has never been achieved in PRCA history.

Stace has worked at every level of rodeo, beginning as a contestant, then spending time as chute boss, and pickup man. Smith was chosen as pickup man for the Texas Circuit finals in both 2005 and 2007 and continues to pick up at several events.

In 2009, Stace Smith became a shareholder in Mesquite Championship Rodeo, and in 2014, Smith Pro Rodeos has served as the

committee or partners with the committee at 26 of the 39 events produced. This one-of-a-kind experience gives them an inside edge on what it takes to help the committees achieve one of the ultimate goals of spectator sports, putting spectators in seats. In 2014, Smith Pro Rodeos had seven PRCA rodeos nominated in the four "Rodeo of the Year" categories. Smith Pro Rodeos produces rodeos across nine different states from Mississippi through Texas, Colorado, North Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming.

Each performance is carefully planned, from building equal, exciting pens of livestock, to planning the order they will be presented according to the stock and rider's attributes. All timed event livestock come directly from the Smith ranch, so there are no mismatched pens or delivery issues. Because of these efforts, turnouts are at a minimum, so each rodeo is a balanced representation of the sport.

For more information, go online to www.smithprorodeos.com.

Bring canned food to carnival on Wednesday

MONTE VISTA — The Monte Vista Food Bank is once again partnering with Ski-Hi Stampede and Wright's Amusements for the annual food drive.

Come down to the carnival on Wednesday, July 26, for opening night. Those who bring two canned food items can purchase an all-day carnival pass for \$25.

They will be set up toward the east end of

the carnival. Look for a horse trailer with the banner.

This offer will only be available Wednesday, July 26.

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The Mustang Man

MONTE VISTA — The Mustang Man is headed to Monte Vista.

For this year's Ski-Hi Stampede, Bobby Kerr, renowned horse and dog trainer, will perform as specialty act during each performance of the Stampede thanks to sponsor San Luis Valley Federal Bank.

The Hico, Texas cowboy will bring his mounts: Poncho, Trigger, Newt and JT, wild mustangs he has trained.

The horses do a variety of things: work as liberty horses (with no bridle or reins), responding to physical and verbal cues from Kerr, spin, make lead changes, and lay down as he shoots a gun over them.

Cow dogs are part of the act, too. At Kerr's whistle commands, a dog jumps onto a horse with Kerr, while the mustang demonstrates its athleticism and ability to handle cattle. The dog works as the cow, while the mustang does the "cutting" — separating one dog from the other dog. Then a third horse comes into the arena, working at liberty -with voice commands only -from Kerr.

The grand finale of each show is when his main horse, Poncho, jumps into the seat of Kerr's 1936 Chevrolet (the Good N Broke limo, he calls it) as Kerr gets in the driver's seat and drives out of the arena.

It's a testament to the bond between man and animal, and what can be accomplished with the American mustang.

Kerr has bonded with the mustangs and they trust him. He spends hundreds of hours with them, teaching them, loving on them, and showing them he is trustworthy.

His superb talent with horse training was evident when he won the Ft. Worth Stock Show and Rodeo's Mustang Magic Celebrity Freestyle competition in February, in which competitors were required to put on a six-minute show, using at least one mustang. He won the event, pocketing \$25,000 for the win.

Kerr got his start with mustangs more than 10 years ago, when he participated in the Mustang Makeover, finishing in the top five both years



Courtesy photos

he took part in it (2011-2012) and competing in the Mustang Million in 2013, a mini-series on NatGeo Wild. He finished second on one mustang in the million-dollar contest and third on another one.

He's won recognition in the PRCA, too, being selected as the PRCA Dress Act of the Year four times (2017, 2019, 2021-2022) and being selected to work the Wrangler National Finals Rodeo in 2016.

People love the mustangs and the dogs, and Kerr loves to show the public the adaptability and intelligence of the mustangs. He appreciates what the horses have taught him.

"They've changed my whole outlook on training

horses," he said. "I get along with them, buddy up to them, and get their talent to shine."

Before he was a mustang trainer, Kerr trained cutting horses. He's also a metalworks artist and has designed custom motorcycles.

Kerr and his wife Susan travel across the U.S. with their animals and have performed at rodeos across the country: from Helena, Montana to San Antonio.

This year's Ski-Hi Stampede is July 27-30. Performances begin at 7 p.m. on July 28 and 29 and 2 p.m. on July 30.

Tickets are on sale online at www.skihistampede.com and at the gate.



Tentative schedule of events

Thursday, July 27

Wright's Amusement Carnival
5:30-7 p.m.: Rotary Chuck Wagon Dinner at Ski-Hi Park
7:30 p.m.: Concert (gates open at 6:30 p.m.): Carly Pearce and Frank Ray
9 p.m.-1 a.m.: (begins after the concert) Dance: Justin Kemp Band

Friday, July 28

Family Day at the Rodeo
Wright's Amusement Carnival
10 a.m.: Parade
1 p.m.: Local Rodeo, amateur events and professional slack
7 p.m.: PRCA Rodeo
9 p.m.-1 a.m.: Dance: Justin Kemp Band.

Saturday, July 29

Tough Enough to Wear Pink
Wright's Amusement Carnival
10 a.m.: Parade
7 p.m.: PRCA Rodeo
9 p.m.-1 a.m.: Dance: Justin Kemp Band.

Sunday, July 30

Wright's Amusement Carnival
10 a.m.: Christian Cowboys' Service at Ski-Hi Park
2 p.m.: PRCA Rodeo
Saddle Awards
For more information, visit www.skihistampede.com

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Still tough enough to wear pink on Saturday

SAN LUIS VALLEY — For 100 years, the Ski-Hi Stampede has entertained crowds from all over the country and provided one of the best pro-rodeo events in the state. Not only has the Ski-Hi Stampede brought joy to the Valley, guests to the area and fun for all who attend, they have also provided donations to a local cause and have helped save the lives of many through their generosity.

The Stephanie L. Miner Women's Imaging Center at San Luis Valley Health in Alamosa was created when Miner, a local teacher, was diagnosed with breast cancer after her fourth child was born. When Miner lost her fight with cancer, her family approached SLV Health with the idea and starting funds for a center where women could go for early detection, prevention and all the state-of-the-art equipment needed to fight the disease.

It was in 2006 that the members of Ski-Hi Stampede board of directors approached the hospital and asked if they could help by becoming a part of a nation-wide program known as "Tough Enough to Wear Pink." The Saturday, July 23, program is an initiative supported by Wrangler and has participants from around the country.

"The Ski-Hi Stampede Committee's commitment to the TETWP campaign has raised more than \$100,000 to directly benefit the Stephanie L. Miner Women's Imaging Center," stated Kelly Gurule, SLV Health Foundation director.

The Stampede committee, in conjunction with the San Luis Valley Health Foundation, is encouraging everyone to participate. All staff and volunteers for the event will be wearing pink throughout the festivities. "We know everyone is proud to be 'Tough Enough to Wear Pink,'" said Gurule.

Tough Enough to Wear Pink was created by project founder Terry Wheatley in 2004. Wrangler presented the pink western shirts during the Wrangler National Finals Rodeo that same year and has continued as the head



Courtesy photo

SLV Health Foundation picture for the Tough Enough to Wear Pink and making the pillar for \$100,000 of donations — pictured are Brandon Rogers, Rocky Southway, Charlie Burd, CE Glunz, Cliff Edwards, Greg Metz, Amy McKinley, Bob Carlucci, Rosalee Martinez, Jason Tilman, Kelly Gurule, Keith Rogers, Sheila Hicks, Derek Cooper, Roxanne Sittler, Duane Bussey, Karla Willschau, Kelsey Kimberling, Helen Smith, Nick Malone, Eric Kimberling, Mark Deacon. Missing David Cooper and John Willschau.

sponsor for events nationwide. The program has raised cancer awareness as well as raised funds for research, equipment and to help families with financial assistance. The amount of money raised has been staggering in the 18 years since the program's inception.

Wrangler donates all funds raised that come through their program to the national Breast Cancer Research Foundation that has been dubbed one of the best charitable programs in the nation. According to the website, "The Breast Cancer Research Foundation® (BCRF) was founded in 1993 by Evelyn H. Lauder as an independent, not-for-profit organization

dedicated to funding innovative clinical and translational research. In 2010, BCRF awarded \$33 million to 172 scientists across the United States, Canada, Latin America, Europe, the Middle East, and Australia. Currently, more than 90 cents of every dollar donated is directed to breast cancer research and awareness programs."

Gurule was pleased to talk about the things the donations have done for the center to date. Funds from previous years have been used to purchase equipment and maintain the center so the services provided there can be available to those that need them.

"There is one thing that people really need to understand," said Gurule. "The money that is raised here stays here in the Valley to help local residents and provide local services."

The women's imaging center in Alamosa directly benefits from the funds raised during Ski-Hi Stampede, so keeping the money local is of the utmost importance. Breast cancer awareness, prevention and early detection is paramount in the fight against this disease.

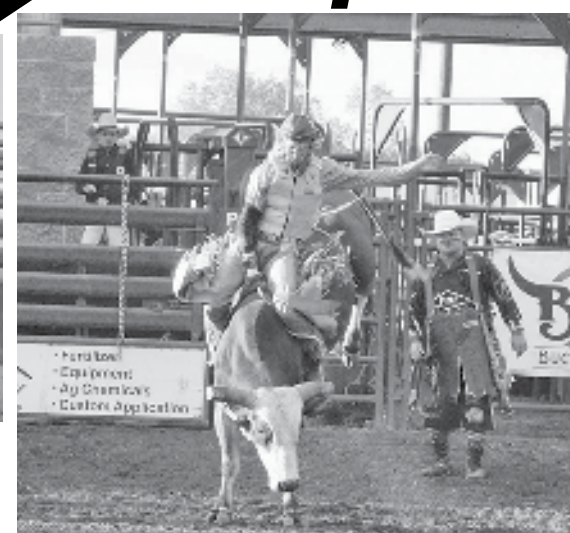
Through these efforts, women from all over the world have the tools and support necessary to overcome the disease and find new hope in life.

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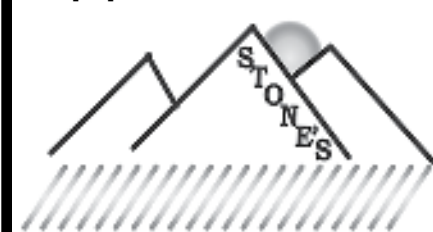
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Courtesy photo

Past Miss Ski-Hi Stampede Queens and Royalty pose for a photo during the parade.

Miss Ski-Hi Stampede Queens

- | | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1919 Kitty Halferty | 1958 Kathleen Grimwood | 1983 Sandy Hodgell |
| 1928 Esther Godfrey | 1959 Sylvia Claunch | 1984 Betty Claunch |
| 1933 Agnes Aust | 1960 Diane Selters | 1985 Brenda Rippe |
| 1934 Dorothy Dorris | 1961 Ann Ulstrom | 1986 Frances Slane |
| 1935 Mickey Gross | 1962 Barbie Roberson | 1987 Janell Booth |
| 1936 Vivian Goff | 1963 Janice Haws | 1988 Verla Rutgers |
| 1937 Marian Fennell | 1964 Donna Selters | 1989 Christy Wintz |
| 1938 Betty Trueblood | 1965 Jody Phillips | 1990 Isabel Jaramillo |
| 1939 Bonnie Hocker | 1966 Loretta Morgan | 1991 Robin Stagner |
| 1940 Louise Johnston | 1967 Clarine Claunch | 1992 Esther Sanchez |
| 1941 Dorothy Haigler | 1968 Nancy Rhodus | 1993 Michelle Claunch |
| 1942 Catherine Lague | 1969 Marcia Wright | 1994 Misty Brook Stagner |
| 1943-45 (no queen) | 1970 Cheryl Wright | 1995 (no queen) |
| 1946 Elinor Linger | 1971 Cindy Kane | 1996 Tammy Aldridge |
| 1947 Virginia Whitten | 1972 Rita Curtis | 1997 Jennifer Edwards |
| 1948 Lucille Ryan | 1973 Debbie Beiriger | 1998 Marcia Berggren |
| 1949 Donna Glee McOllough | 1974 Jackie Pavlovsky | 1999 Holly Binnian |
| 1950 Marianne Finley | 1975 Renee Smith | 2000 Jeanie Andreatta |
| 1951 Betty Jane Johnson | 1976 Cindy Wallace | 2001 Corin Crowther |
| 1952 Loretta Wiescamp | 1977 Tammy Wiescamp | 2002 Jaclyn Gabbel |
| 1953 Charlene Wright | 1978 Anita Hunter | 2003 Kristen Prator |
| 1954 Ella Mae Noffsinger | 1979 Carol Carter | 2004 Johanna Steffens |
| 1955 Beverly Mann | 1980 Laura Wiescamp | |
| 1956 Sue Schroeder | 1981 Taina Andre | |
| 1957 Gretchen Shellabarger | 1982 Darius DeHerrera | |

— List provided by
Gretchen Haller



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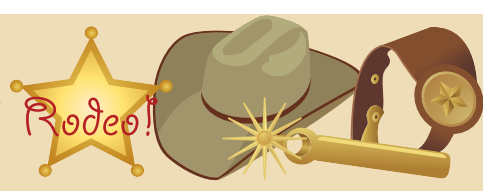
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Mutton Busting, an unforgettable experience

MONTE VISTA — Nobody expects to break or ride a sheep, but it has a benefit. It's a chance for little kids to get a taste of adventure, a feel for what it's like to be a cowboy. They might get bruised and they'll definitely get dirty, but it's an experience they will never forget. Mutton busting is the sport of bareback sheep riding. Kiddie competitors challenge themselves and the sheep to see who can hold on the longest as they try for a qualifying time in the rodeo arena.

Mutton busting is similar to bull riding, except that the contestants wear more protective gear and are closer to the ground. A sheep is held still, either in a small chute or by an adult handler, while a child is placed on top in a riding position. Once the child is seated, the sheep is released and usually starts to run in an attempt to get the child off. Often small prizes

or ribbons are given out to the children who can stay on the longest.

There are no set rules for mutton busting, no national organization, and most events are organized at the local level. However, children who begin as mutton busters could go on to be top Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA) money winners or, at least, tops on the hometown rodeo circuit. The vast majority of children participating in the event fall off in less than 8 seconds. Age, height and weight restrictions on participants generally prevent injuries to the sheep and implements such as spurs are banned from use. In most cases, children are required to wear helmets and parents are often asked to sign waivers to protect the rodeo from legal action.

The practice has been documented as having been

introduced to the National Western Stock Show in Denver, at least by the 1980s when an event was sponsored by Nancy Stockdale Cervi, a former rodeo queen. At that event, children ages five to seven who weighed less than 55 pounds could apply, and ultimately seven contestants were selected to each ride a sheep for six seconds.

There are no statistics about the popularity of the sport, but anecdotal reports suggest thousands of children participate in such events every year in the U.S. Supporters consider the event both entertaining and a way to introduce young children to the adult rodeo "rough stock" riding events of bull riding, saddle bronc, and bareback riding, and they may liken its rough-and-tumble nature to the way youth sports such as football are played.



Photo from 2021

Stampede amateur events announced

MONTE VISTA — The Ski-Hi Stampede Committee announces the 2023 amateur events and rules.

All amateur contestants will participate in the slack-qualifying round of the Ski-Hi Stampede rodeo on Friday, July 28, at 1 p.m.

All participants must be residents of the San Luis Valley — no exceptions.

- Entry fees will be \$100 per person per event.
- Calf Roping - \$100
- Barrel Racing - \$100
- Team Roping - \$200
- An individual may enter only once per event.
- Event will be a one go round timed trials.
- The 8 (eight) fastest times, who were successful in the qualifying round, will advance to the Ski-Hi Pro Rodeo performances on Saturday and Sunday, bottom four Saturday and top four Sunday.
- Amateur monies will be paid to the fastest four contestants during Friday's qualifier.

Stock, secretary and judges fees will be deducted. Pay off will be as follows:

- 1st-40 percent; 2nd-30 percent; 3rd-20 percent and 4th-10 percent

• There will be no additional entry fee for participation in the Stampede Pro Rodeo. The fastest time in each event will be the winner of the amateur

saddle for the event. The amateur saddle will be presented to the winner at the Sunday performance of the San Luis Valley Ski Hi Rodeo. In the event of a tie for the saddle, tie-breaker will be the best time from the qualifying round.

Individuals and teams will be scheduled in the Ski-Hi Pro Rodeo as follows:

- Number of individuals and teams will be divided equally for each of the two days (Saturday and Sunday) of the Ski-Hi Pro Rodeo.
- Competition order will be from slowest times from qualifier at the Saturday performance to the fastest times at the Sunday performance.
- Example (with eight maximum qualifiers with performance date and running order): Saturday, July 29 - Qualifiers 8,7,6,5; Sunday, July 30 - Qualifiers 4,3,2,1
- Once individuals and teams have qualified, and performance times have been set, there will be no changes or additions even if a qualifier must draw out for any reason.

• All communications about complaints or grievances shall be directed to the Ski-Hi Stampede Board of Directors at a monthly meeting by asking for a spot on the agenda to express the concerns. At no time will sponsors or other individuals be approached about grievances. Any violations of this clause may result in disqualification in this

year's eligibility as well as all future year's eligibility in Ski Hi Stampede Rodeo events.

• Registration will be from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m., Monday, July 24 at the Ski-Hi Stampede Committee Building, 2330 Sherman Ave., Monte Vista. Contestants must have the following for registration: Entry fee (cash or check; if a participant's check bounces, they will not be allowed to compete for the saddle in the pro rodeo); proof of health insurance; proof of residency (driver's license of 90 days in the Valley)

• Anyone under 18 years of age must be accompanied by a legal guardian or have a notarized release from your legal guardians.

- Team Roping – Must be the complete team!
- All participants must enter in person!

Mutton busting

Participants must be between ages of 5 and 7 years old and less than 50 pounds. They must be a San Luis Valley resident and show proof of age and insurance. Child must be present at entry office to weigh in. There will be a limit of 10 mutton busters per day. All mutton busters must report to the west end of the grandstand before the saddle bronc riding begins. Contestants not reporting on time will not be allowed to compete.

See website for more information and all the rules, www.skihistampede.com.

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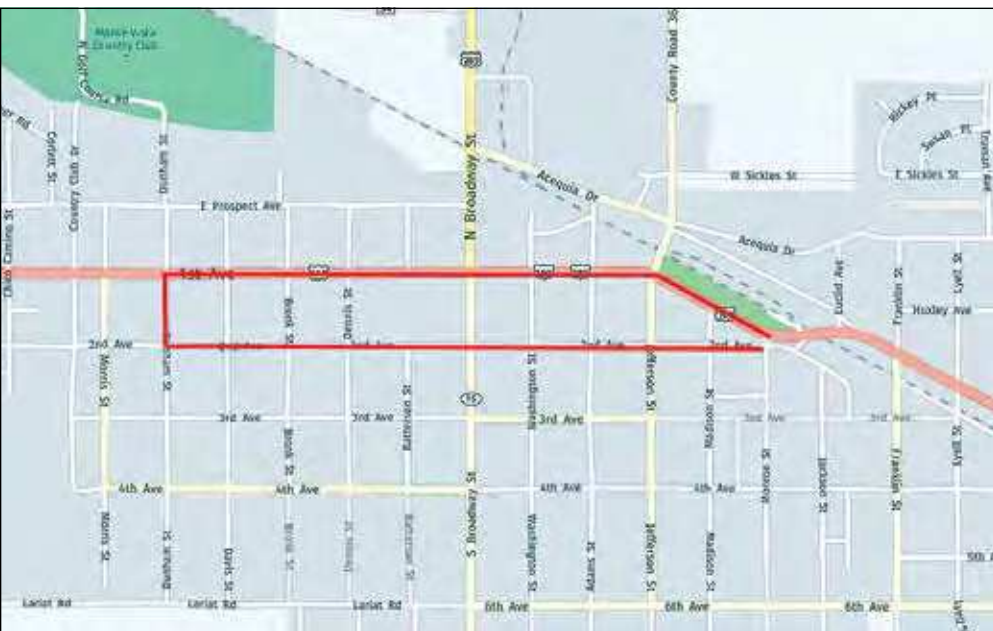
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Parade route

Stampede parade basic info

Friday and Saturday, July 28 and 29

Lineup will begin at 8:30 a.m. Floats and antique vehicles will assemble by the First Stop store, east of the railroad tracks on Highway 160. Drivers should remain with their entry in case it needs to be moved. Bikes, 3/4 wheelers, walkers, etc. will assemble at the west end of Fullenwider Park by the Sugar Shack. Horses/riders will assemble between the convenience store and the Information Center. Please no horses in the area of floats and vehicles.

Highway 160 closes at 9 a.m. and the line moves forward. The parade starts at 10 a.m. Be prepared to line up early and wait.

The parade route travels west on 1st Avenue (Highway 160), turns south on Davis Street, then turns east on 2nd Avenue and returns to Safeway.

Parade entry numbers will be issued when the entry form is returned to the Colorado Potato Administration Office, 1305 Park Ave., Monte Vista. FAX 719-852-4684. Place the number on the left front (driver side) of your entry. Horse entry numbers are to be placed on the left side of your horse. Please secure all four corners so judges can identify your entry quickly. Entry numbers are not required for bands, entries not wanting to be judged. Award winners will be announced Saturday.

During the parades: no group or individual may stop to perform or hold up the parade. All performances must be done while moving forward. Groups with small children must be

able to keep up with the parade pace to avoid gaps. No candy or trinkets may be thrown from your entry. Nothing can be shot from an entry. If you wish to hand out items, you must have walkers that walk along the edge of the street and distribute them. These rules are in place for the safety of children who may run into the street.

Sand Dunes Shrine Club — A Favorite in the Parade

For those who have been attending the Ski-Hi Stampede parade for years or even those who have just been fans for a little while, one of the most memorable entrants is the Sand Dunes Shrine Club, as well as Shriners from throughout this part of the state.

It looks like fun, but there is a greater purpose. The Shrine's charitable arm is the Shriners Hospitals for Children, a network of 22 hospitals in the United States, Mexico and Canada. It was originally formed to treat young victims of polio, but as that disease was controlled, they broadened their scope. They now deal with orthopedic care, burn treatment, cleft lip and palate care, and spinal cord injury rehabilitation.

All treatment offered at Shriners' Hospitals for Children is offered without any financial obligation to patients and their families, and there is no requirement for religion, race, or relationship to a Shriner.

Patients must be under the age of 18 and treatable. In 2008, Shriners Hospitals had a total budget of \$826 million. In 2007, they approved 39,454 new patient applications and attended to the needs of 125,125 patients.

Grand Marshals Thad and Deanne Elliot

By MARIE MCCOLM

MONTE VISTA — Thad and Deanne Elliot were chosen to be the Grand Marshals for the 101st Ski-Hi Stampede Parade on Friday, July 28, in Downtown Monte Vista.

Thad Elliot graduated from Sargent School in 1967. Thad's mother and three daughters also graduated from Sargent School, and he now has two grandchildren attending Sargent. After Thad graduated high school, he attended college and earned a degree in Education at Adams State.

Thad student taught for a couple of years in Aspen but decided to work at a ski shop after his student teaching.

"I left Aspen then came to Wolf Creek and worked there for a couple of years. I became a ski bum for a while. We still ski quite a bit, and we farm," she said.

Thad said his father, Si Elliot, was a farmer and a teacher. Si taught in Monte Vista for a few years.

The Elliots are currently living in the house that originally belonged to his grandparents. His grandparents farmed potatoes, alfalfa, and barley and raised sheep. On both sides, between the generations, the Elliots have over 100 years of farming in their family.

Thad and Deanne said they have been farming since about 1975. Deanne said she grew up on a farm and is very used to farm life.

"I was raised on a farm, and my dad and my grandparents were all farmers. I guess it's in our genes," Deanne said, with a chuckle.

Deanne's family moved to the Valley when she was in high school. After Deanne graduated, she attended college in Greeley for home economics. Deanne said in 2013 she started the Monte Vista Farmers Market.

"It feels funny to say, but I did start the Farmers Market back then. For the last 2 or 3 years, Carol Pastore has come in and given some great information at the markets too, but back in 2013, I did start the Farmers Market," she said.

The Elliots spoke a lot about their farm, and now their oldest daughter is also farming with them. She has a few cows on her farm.

Deanne said that their two grandkids who belong to their oldest daughter really enjoy the farming part as well.

"They are just 7 and 9, but they do enjoy it," Deanne said.

The Elliots said their middle daughter lives in Breckenridge, and is college educated as well, but as she lives in a tourist town, she enjoys waiting and makes good money doing that. Their



Deanne and Thad Elliot

Courtesy photo



Photo by Marie Mccolm

Thad Elliot's grandmother had this playhouse built for a float during a Stampede Parade years ago. The playhouse is on the Elliot's farm.

youngest daughter lives in Mexico City and works as an English-Spanish translator.

The Elliots travel at least twice a year to see their daughter in Mexico City. The Elliots said their kids were in 4-H growing up and in Girl Scouts as well.

The Elliots family on both sides have a rich history and strong ties to the Valley and farming.

In their yard, Thad and Deanne have an artifact that dates back to Stampede of years ago.

"We have a little playhouse in the yard and the story is, that Thad's grandmother had that built so that it could be on a float in the Stampede Parade. The uncle who did that for her moved to California and gave the playhouse to her. Our kids played in it when they were little, but it was originally built to be in a Stampede Parade," Deanne said.

The Elliots have been married 45 years and said that they met at a Stampede dance. Thad also remembers riding a horse in a few Stampede parades. Thad also had a grandmother they called Grandmother Pfeiffer and years ago she rode in the Stampede Parade on a stagecoach.

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Grand Marshals Carol and Ron Martinez

By MARIE MCCOLM

MONTE VISTA — Carol and Ron Martinez were chosen to be the Grand Marshals for the 101st Ski-Hi Stampede Parade on Saturday, July 29, in Downtown Monte Vista.

Ron and Carol are well-known in the Monte Vista community. Their son is one of Monte Vista's fallen heroes, Sgt. Glen E. Martinez, who passed away May 2, 2008.

Carol Martinez is originally from Gunnison and moved to Monte Vista when she was in grade school. Carol said she met Ron in high school. Ron and Carol have been married 54 years and were high school sweethearts.

Ron and Carol together taught Catechism classes for the Catholic church for 18 years.

Ron Martinez was born and raised in Monte Vista. Ron lived on Lariat in Monte Vista. Both Ron and Carol remember picking potatoes as teenagers. Carol really didn't care for it, but her father taught her what she started, she needed to finish, so she finished out her two weeks and did not want to work picking potatoes anymore.

Ron played sports in school before going overseas due to the Vietnam War.

"I started as a running back when I was a sophomore. Back then we were only 3-year schools, after that it became 4-year school. I was a running back as a junior, and we had some good teams," Ron said. "When I went to Germany then for the military during the Vietnam War, I was top 2. The top 2 went to Germany and the bottom 16 went to Vietnam. I was in weapons loading. I loaded bombs, and guns on the F-4s."

Ron remembers Carol throughout his military career driving to see him. Carol once drove to Italy to see him. Carol made it a road trip with one of her friends. Their first child, Lori, was born while the couple was in Germany.

When the couple returned to the states, their second child, Glen, was born. Lori was 5 years older than her brother Glen and always was the overprotective sister in school.

Carol and Ron love being parents and grandparents. They now have a grandbaby that stays with them during the week from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. They also have another grandbaby that they try to see at least once a week if not more. The Martinezes enjoy their grandchildren immensely.

Ron has worked for local schools and

has enjoyed being a wrestling coach for the Monte Vista school system for many years. He has also enjoyed dragging the chains on the football field.

Ron knows many of the students who have graduated over the years, coaching them, and working personally with them. Carol also helped with "pairing" in wrestling when Ron would work as a wrestling coach.

Carol was also a nurse at the Colorado State Veterans Center at Homelake for many years.

Carol started the Wreaths Across America ceremony at the Veterans Center in 2009, after her son passed away in 2008. Carol felt strongly about this, and called everyone she could think of for donations to ensure that each Veteran had a wreath on their grave for their special day.

Carol, Ron and their daughter have beautiful memories of Sgt. Glen Martinez. At home, they left his room just like he had before he deployed. The Martinezes have added his military outfit to his room and have pictures of Glen throughout their house.

In a special case in their living room, they also have the chain that Glen was wearing when the bomb went off that killed him while in Iraq.

Ron and Carol give out scholarships every year to two graduating high school seniors, in honor of their son — the Glen Martinez Memorial Scholarship.

Carol said that Glen loved everyone, and she knows he would have been proud to help students succeed because that was who he was.

In high school, Glen was a quarterback, a champion wrestler, an honor student, a baseball player, and the prom king. The Martinezes are proud of their son and daughter, who is a counselor for the Monte Vista School system.



2021 file photo



Ron and Carol Martinez give scholarships every year to two graduating high school seniors, in honor of their son — the Sgt. Glen E. Martinez Memorial Scholarship.

Courtesy photos

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Carly Pearce performing at 101st Ski-Hi Stampede

STAFF REPORT

MONTE VISTA — Grammy Award-winning singer-songwriter Carly Pearce will perform July 27 to kick off the 101st Ski-Hi Stampede in Monte Vista. Frank Ray will be opening for Pearce at the Ski-Hi Complex.

Pearce, 32, will heat up the stage with hits like “Never Wanted To Be That Girl,” “Hide the Wine,” “Next Girl” and her latest chart-topper, “What He Didn’t Do.”

Pearce is a three-time Country Music Association Award winner, a four-time Academy of Country Music Award winner, has received one CMT Music Award and one Grammy Award. She became a member of the Grand Ole Opry in 2021.

Pearce and Ashley McBryde earned a Grammy in February. They are the first female pairing to win the Grammy with their chart-topping hit “Never Wanted To Be That Girl.”

Pearce was touring earlier this year with Blake Shelton as part of the “Back to the Honky Tonk” tour and in late March released her first live album, “29: Written in Stone (Live from Music City).” Gwen Stefani, who is married to Shelton, and Pearce delivered ‘90s nostalgia at the CMT Music Awards on April 2. The singers teamed up to perform No Doubt’s 1995 hit “Just a Girl” during the ceremony.

Pearce is known to be fiercely rooted in the classics. The girl who left her Kentucky

home and high school at 16 to take a job at Dollywood has grown into a woman who embraces the genre’s forward progression. Honored as one of Country Music Television’s 2022 Artists of the Year, the 2021 Country Music Association Female Vocalist of the Year and reigning Academy of Country Music Awards Female Artist of the Year, Pearce is living out her childhood dream.

Pearce first gained major recognition in 2017 when her self-penned “Every Little Thing” found an audience on satellite radio. The song helped Pearce secure a major label recording contract and became a major hit, reaching number one on the Billboard country chart. Her debut album of the same name debuted in the top five of the Billboard Top Country Albums chart.

Pearce has since released new material, including the 2020 single “Next Girl” from “29,” an EP released on Feb. 19, 2021. On Sept. 17, 2021, she released her third studio album, “29: Written in Stone.”

Ray, 36, is a relative newcomer to the country music scene. In 2021, Ray signed with BBR Music Group and released his debut single “Streetlights.” The song features Ray singing in both English and Spanish. Later in 2021, he issued another single, “Country’d Look Good on You.” This was followed in January 2022 by his first performance on the Grand Ole Opry. The same month, “Country’d Look Good on You”



Carly Pearce

entered the top 40 on the Billboard Country Airplay charts.

For more information, visit www.skihistampede.com.

Colorado’s Oldest Pro Rodeo is celebrating its 101st anniversary in 2023. The San Luis Valley Ski-Hi Stampede will be July 27-30.

Dance the nights away with the Justin Kemp Band



Courtesy photo

MONTE VISTA — Thursday, Friday and Saturday night’s dances will feature the Justin Kemp Band.

Justin Kemp was born and raised in Hobbs, N.M., on the Texas Border. Growing up in a musical family he was heavily influenced by the great Merle Haggard, George Jones, Keith Whitley, and all of the legends going back to the 1970’s.

Once he picked up the guitar at the age of 11 there was no turning back. He began songwriting in high school and pursued music at South Plains College in Levelland, Texas. With the support of his father, David Kemp, who also plays bass and keyboard with the band, the Justin Kemp Band was born.

Justin co-writes many of the original songs the band records along with his father and bandmate David Kemp. Their recent releases include “Borrow A Kiss,” “Money In My Pocket,” “Better Man,” “Heart’s Desire” and “Legends Never Die.”

Justin and the band tour nationally and he also performs as a duo with David. They have opened for many major acts including Joe Nichols, Chase Rice, Dylan Scott, Travis Tritt, Tanya Tucker, Josh Abbott Band, Kev-

in Fowler, and Wade Bowen to name a few.

He likes and covers the music of Luke Combs, Brett Young, Jon Pardi, Midland & Cole Swindell. Justin and the band have toured primarily in the South West.

In 2018 he signed a management deal with Heart Songs Records and he has spent the last year writing, recording in Nashville and continuing to tour with his five-piece band.

Justin Kemp Band was on multiple 2019 Country Artists to Watch lists. His successful single “Better Man” garnered him a place on Apple Music’s hot tracks for 9 weeks.

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Barrel racing is an exciting sport

Sports fans and athletes have a plethora of sports to enjoy in this country and around the world, and those options include equestrian events. Equestrian sports have a deep-rooted history and have inspired some avid fans, including those enamored with the sport of barrel racing.

Barrel racing originally was established as an event for women on the rodeo circuit. While men rode bucking broncos and bulls and competed in roping events, women displayed horse speed and stamina in barrel racing competitions. Today, barrel racing primarily is a female sport at both the collegiate and professional levels.

Barrel racing can be an entertaining experience for spectators and a rewarding one for riders. The goal of the barrel race is to complete a perfect pattern in the least amount of time, so the rider who completes the pattern the fastest wins the competition.

The pattern riders face is a complicated cloverleaf design. Riders can choose to enter the first barrel to the left or the right. They circle the barrel and proceed across to barrel number two, then finish out at the third barrel, where they will complete the pattern and exit the course. The approach to the first barrel should be carefully timed and executed to set the stage for the rest of the course.

An official distance between barrels exists for professional races. Riders cover 90 feet between barrel one and two. There is 105 feet between barrels one and three and between barrels two and three. Finally, 60 feet marks the distance between barrels one and two and the entry/exit "score" line.

According to Michigan State University Extension, barrel racing requires a mild-tempered horse with natural athletic ability. Horses need to be fast, agile and intelligent. A hot-headed horse is not a good choice because he may fight the rider and cause injury. Riders also must be in tune with their horses' movements and sit correctly in the saddle to allow the horse to hug the sides of each barrel. Riders need to be both physically fit and capable of planning ahead to accommodate their horses' speed.

Experts advise riders to run horses through repetitive drills to improve their performance. A horse learns by release and will think he's done a good job if a rider moves on to a new task. If riders are unhappy with a turn, they



Photo from 2021

should return to the same barrel over and over until it is mastered, as riders need their horses to remember the good techniques. Horses can do drills running straight lines as well as circles. Soon both horse and rider should develop a feel for each other and move more intuitively together.

Although barrel racing has been around for a long time, one of the premier governing bodies of the sport was only established 66 years ago. The Girl's Rodeo Association was formed when 38 cowgirls came together in San Angelo, Texas, to create an organization dedicated to the promotion and advancement of women in the sport of rodeo. In 1981, the association changed its name to the Women's Professional Rodeo Association, and it remains one of the most influential sanctioning bodies in the sport. It also is the oldest women's sports association in the United States and the only one governed entirely by women.

In 2007, the WPRA instituted the My Horse's Choice Junior Division for girls ages 17 and under. The junior division introduces a whole new group of members to the ranks of professional competition and allows mothers and daughters to compete for world points at some of the same events.

Barrel racing is most popular in the western and southern areas of the United States and some parts of Canada. To learn more about a particular racing circuit or the sport of barrel racing, visit www.wpra.com.



Photos from 2021

Bull riders' gear protective and functional

Many fans of sports like baseball, basketball and football enjoy wearing jerseys of their favorite players when attending a game, watching at home or gathering with fellow fans to watch somewhere in public. While it's nearly impossible to attend a professional sporting event today without seeing someone decked out in the same attire as their favorite player, such sightings are less likely to occur within the sport of rodeo.

Unlike baseball and basketball uniforms, the gear worn by many professional bull riders has more practical applications, namely to protect riders as much as possible. The following is a rundown of the gear professional bull riders wear during competition.

* **Headgear:** While many professional bull riders are allowed to wear cowboy hats during competitions, the Professional Bull Riders, Inc., mandates that all new members who turned 18 years of age on or after Oct. 15, 2012, wear helmets. Those born before that date do not have to wear helmets, but some choose to do so to protect their heads from potentially threatening blows. In addition, bull riders can wear face masks to shield their faces and jaws from injury.

* **Vest:** A protective vest is worn by bull riders to absorb shock and dissipate any blows to the body. The vest also was designed to protect riders' torsos from punctures caused by direct contact with the bulls' hooves and horns during competition.

* **Glove:** Bull riders only wear one glove, which is on the hand they use to grip the bull rope. This leather glove makes it easier to grip the rope and offers some measure of protection to riders' hands



and fingers.

* **Chaps:** Riders wear chaps on their legs, and professionals often wear chaps emblazoned with logos of sponsors. Chaps offer extra protection for a rider's legs against the hooves and horns of the bull.

* **Bull rope:** The bull rope, which is equipped with a handle braided into the rope, is a rider's only anchor during a ride. The rope is flat and braided from nylon or grass and goes around the bull's girth area behind the animal's front legs.

* **Boots:** Bull riders' boots include a special spur ridge on the heel, and this helps their spurs to remain in place. Some riders wear pull-on boots, while others prefer boots that lace up.

* **Spurs:** Spurs help bull riders stay in position once the ride begins. These spurs come equipped with dull rowels, which are the revolving disks at the end of spurs. The rowels are dull so they do not injure or cut the skin of the bull.

More information about bull riding is available at www.pbr.com.

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Photos from 2022

Stampede carnival offers fun for all

MONTE VISTA — The Wright's Amusements Carnival is expected to be at full capacity for 2023.

Based out of Elbert, Colo., Wright's Amusements has been in operation for over 50 years. The carnival is a part of Stampede tradition and features a variety of attractions from children's rides to newer varieties of thrill rides.

In 1962, Floyd Wright and his two brothers, Frank and Charles, launched a traveling carnival that put family fun first. A half century later, Floyd Wright's nephew, John Ring, runs the show in the same treasured tradition. "My life — my heritage—is all about making sure people have a great time," says Ring. "What better 'job' is there?"

There are several options that are available for purchasing carnival tickets. Pre-order armbands are available at the Ski-Hi Stampede Office. On Wednesday, July 26, the carnival will hold a canned food drive. Those who bring two canned food items can purchase an all-day



carnival pass for \$25.

There will be fun for all ages at the 101st Ski-Hi Stampede and the attractions that Wright's Amusements provides will be no exception.



Renowned rodeo champions



The Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association has produced its fair share of memorable performers over the years. One of the more prestigious honors a rodeo rider can earn is the PRCA All-Around Cowboy Champion, which is given to the rodeo competitors who are most successful in two or more events. The following are a handful of rodeo competitors to win multiple All-Around PRCA All-Around championships.

- **Trevor Brazile:** The record holder for most all-around titles, Brazile eclipsed former record holder Ty Murray in 2010 when he won his eighth all-around championship. The 2014 season marked the ninth straight year the Texas-born Brazile was named the PRCA All-Around Cowboy Champion.

- **Ty Murray:** Though Murray's record for most all-around championships has been eclipsed, he remains one of professional bull riding's most recognizable faces, having crossed over into popular culture with appearances on television shows such as "Walker, Texas Ranger," "WWE Raw" and

"Dancing With the Stars."

- **Lewis Feild:** A member of the Pro Rodeo Hall of Fame, Feild is a three-time winner of the PRCA All-Around Cowboy Championship, with three consecutive wins from 1985 to 1987. Feild's son, Kaycee, is an accomplished rider as well.

- **Tom R. Ferguson:** The Oklahoma-born Ferguson is another legend of rodeo, having won six all-around championships during the 1970s. Ferguson was also something of a trailblazer in rodeo, as he was the first rodeo competitor to earn more than \$100,000 in the arena in a single year, a feat he accomplished in 1978.

- **Larry Mahan:** Upon winning the PRCA All-Around Cowboy Championship in 1970, Mahan became the first rodeo competitor to win five such championships in a row. Mahan's 1973 comeback even garnered him some acclaim and attention in an unlikely place: Hollywood. "The Great American Cowboy," a documentary film from Kieth Merrill, focused on Mahan's comeback and battle with Phil Lyne for the world championship. The film would win the 1973 Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature.

- **Jim Shoulders:** The first competitor to ever win the bareback, bull riding and all-around events at the PRCA Championships, Shoulders also had a successful career outside of the rodeo arena, where he was a notable presence in print and television advertisements for jeans, boots and beer.

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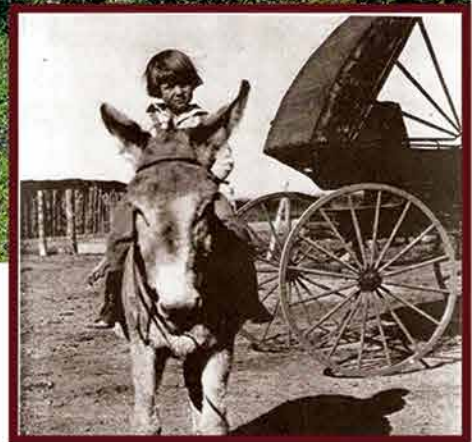
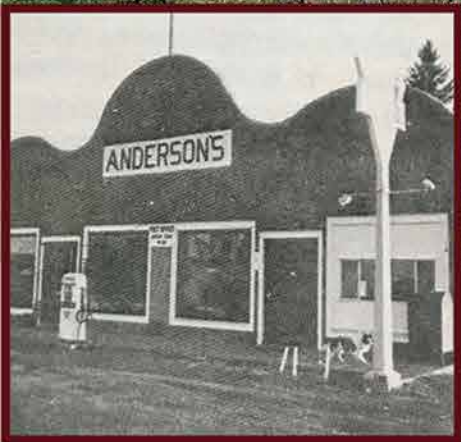
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