

Center car show dazzles aficionados



Photo by Patrick Shea

Center Community Park sparkled under chilly, windy skies on April 15 with more than a dozen classic cars and trucks buffed for the 2nd Annual C-Town Car Show.

BY PATRICK SHEA

CENTER — Fierce, freezing winds on April 15 did not stop the 2nd Annual C-Town Car Show from drawing fans and classic cars to Center Community Park.

Center Viking Juniors Jordan Duran and Jesus Valadez inherited and expanded the show, a capstone project initiated in 2022 when more than 30 cars and trucks wowed the judges. Despite clear skies, the chilly winds this year kept a few cars in garages. Still, more than a dozen vintage vehicles shined in the stadium. Competitors paid a \$20 entrance fee to help fund the event.

Free for fans, the second running of the show featured two food trucks, music, and a table full of equipment raffled off for \$1 a ticket. At the start of the random draw, Center Mayor Tony

Garcia announced the first number with a joke for the older crowd.

“Allright, the ticket number is 8-6-7-5-3-0-9,” Garcia said. “Oh, wait a minute. Sorry. That’s Jenny’s number. My bad.”

Raffle winners took home useful gear, which was donated for the cause. Also, two anonymous residents donated another \$400. In a sense, the show winners also donated by accepting plaques instead of cash prizes. Judges evaluated cars based on a variety of criteria.

Ivan Wrench won the Best of Show People’s Choice Award. The other top nine winners included Miguel Guerrero, Gerald Garcia, Dillon Velasquez, Tony Garcia, Steven Velasquez, Alan Gonzales, Tommy Mondragon, Tyler, and Manuel.

Please see SHOW on Page 2A

Shorts

Mountain Shoot Out Call for Entries opens

CREEDE — The 2023 Mountain Shoot Out Call for Entries is now available on the Creede Arts Council website. The deadline for entry is May 26. We will have our traditional Opening Reception at 5 p.m. on June 16 at the Creede and Mineral County Visitor Center. The photographs will be displayed in the Visitor Center through Sept. 10.

This year’s judge, Robert Seago, will select first through third place awards and Honorable Mentions. Visitors will vote for their favorite photo, and the winner will receive the People’s Choice Award. The winning photo will be purchased by the CAC, framed, and displayed at the Creede and Mineral County Visitor Center.

For more information and to download the call for entries, visit CAC’s website <https://creedeartscouncil.com>.

Free diapers available at three locations in DN

DEL NORTE — The San Luis Valley Early Childhood Council recently announced that it received a grant and will be offering free diapers to anyone needing help this spring.

There are free pickup locations throughout the Valley including three in Del Norte. Rio Grande Department of Social Services, Rio Grande Department of Public Health and the Del Norte Public Library will have diapers available for pick up by April 17.

For more information or a list of pickup locations, visit eccslv.org.

Emotions run deep in loss of reptiles at Gator Farm



Courier photo by Keith R. Cerny

Colorado Gator Farm owners Jay and Erin Young share a group hug with members of their staff after a fire destroyed their reptile barn early Tuesday morning, taking many animals with it.



BY KEITH R. CERNY

MOSCA — Tears flowed freely Tuesday morning as owners and staff of the Colorado Gator Farm shared a group hug in wake of the farm’s reptile barn being destroyed by fire and dozens

Please see FIRE on Page 6A

An early morning fire on Tuesday destroyed the reptile barn at the Colorado Gator Farm north of Alamosa. Many reptiles, snakes, lizards, parrots, and cats were lost in the blaze, but some caimans, tortoises and turtles survived.

Photo courtesy of Colorado Gator Farm

Saguache County adopts nuisance ordinance

BY PATRICK SHEA

SAGUACHE — The Saguache County Board of Commissioners voted 2-1 on April 18 to approve a nuisance ordinance that specifies evaluating the ordinance itself for the next 16 months.

The commissioners held the first public hearing on the nuisance ordinance on Dec. 15, 2022.

“We made some amendments to it after input from that meeting,” Commissioner Tom McCracken said.

Then the commissioners published the full text of the ordinance on March 16 and March 23 in a local newspaper as well as on the county website (saguachecounty.colorado.gov). They held another public hearing on April 4. According to statute, the commissioners did not need to read the full text of the 18-page ordinance on April 18 because they already held public hearings.

Before voting, Commissioner Liza Marron made a statement and Commissioner Lynne Thompson

and McCracken responded.

Marron thanked her county colleagues “for wanting to beautify Saguache County, as do I,” she said. “It means a lot to me that we clean up our most egregious places. But I will be voting ‘no’ for several reasons.”

Marron characterized the approach as “whack-a-mole for the poorest in the county. We haven’t had enough time to craft this well, and junk vehicles

Please see ORDINANCE on Page 6A

Martinez’s bipartisan bill to help reduce recidivism through college credits

CONTRIBUTED

DENVER — Governor Jared Polis on Wednesday, April 12, signed bipartisan legislation into law sponsored by Representative Matthew Martinez to allow Coloradans who are incarcerated to earn time off their sentence by pursuing higher education.

“With this law, we’re preparing Coloradans who are incarcerated for success by giving them the education and skills they need to thrive after they’re released,” said Rep. Martinez, D-Monte Vista. “Education is the number one way to reduce recidivism because it creates strong pathways for people who are incarcerated to earn a

degree or certificate, secure a good-paying job after they’ve served their time and support their families. I’m beyond proud of the bipartisan work and support that’s gone into this important legislation.”

HB23-1037, sponsored by Representative Matthew Martinez, D-Monte Vista, left, watches as Colorado Gov. Jared Polis signs HB23-1037 into law on April 12. The bill allows Coloradans who are incarcerated to earn time off their sentence by pursuing higher education.

HB23-1037, sponsored by Representative Matthew Martinez, D-Monte Vista, left, watches as Colorado Gov. Jared Polis signs HB23-1037 into law on April 12. The bill allows Coloradans who are incarcerated to earn time off their sentence by pursuing higher education.

Courtesy photo



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SAGUACHE COUNTY SHERIFF'S REPORT

SAGUACHE COUNTY — The following information was provided by the Saguache County Sheriff's Office for the period between April 10 and 15, 2023.

Sheriff's office staff made nine traffic stops and issued three traffic citations. They handled abandoned vehicles in Moffat and Villa Grove and responded to a report of a stolen vehicle. They patrolled Saguache seven times. Staff addressed a sex offense and a separate assault in Moffat. In Saguache, they took calls about harassment, noise complaints, theft, and threats. Suspicious activity drew deputies to Center, Saguache,

and Moffat.

Staff monitored eight controlled burns, conducted a welfare check in Villa Grove, responded to a medical alarm, and arranged five ambulance rides. They also faced five animal problems, civil disputes in Crestone and Saguache, and loose livestock in Center and east of Moffat.

ARRESTS

- A 28-year-old Center man was arrested for failure to appear in court for a traffic offense.
- A 30-year-old Saguache man was arrested for obstruction of telephone service and violating a protection order

Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive May 13

CONTRIBUTED

COLORADO — Saturday, May 13, marks the 31st anniversary of the National Association of Letter Carriers Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive.

Letter carriers walk through the community every day, often coming face to face with a sad reality for too many, hunger.

So, each year on the second Saturday in May, letter carriers across the country collect non-perishable food donations from customers. These donations go directly to local food pantries to provide food to people in Colorado.

Over the course of its 30-year history, the drive has collected well over 1.82 billion pounds of food, thanks to a postal service universal delivery network that spans the entire nation, including Puerto Rico, Guam, and U.S. Virgin Islands.

The need for food donations is great. Currently, more than 35 million Americans are unsure where their next meal is coming from. More than 12 million are children who feel hunger's impact on their overall health and ability to perform in school. And nearly 5.2 million seniors over age 60 are food insecure, with many who live on

fixed incomes often too embarrassed to ask for help.

Foodbanks and pantries often receive most of their donations during the Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday seasons. By springtime, many pantries are depleted, entering the summer low on supplies at a time when many school breakfast and lunch programs are not available to children in need.

Participating in this year's Letter Carrier Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive is simple. Just leave a non-perishable food donation in a bag by your mailbox Saturday, May 13, and your letter carrier will do the rest.

OBITUARY

Kennie Ann Still

Kennie Ann Still, 79, of Ft. Collins, daughter of Kenneth Hocker and Dorothy (Milner) Ellithorpe, died in the early morning of April 8, 2023, after suffering with Vascular Dementia. Her husband, Doug Still, along with her daughter Jennifer Hurley and son Christopher Still were by her side to help ease her passing.

Kennie Ann was born on March 11, 1943, in Monte Vista, Colo.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Kenneth Hocker, who died in World War II, and Dorothy (Milner) Ellithorpe and Bill Ellithorpe, who raised her, brother Jim Ellithorpe and by her oldest son, Scott Still.

Kennie Ann is survived by her husband Doug, her children Jennifer Hurley (Gerry) and Chris Still (Jess) and her five granddaughters, McKenna Hurley, Riley Hurley, Camryn Hurley, Sequoia Murphy-Still and Edie Still who will carry on her legacy of laughter and kindness. Kennie Ann is also survived by her brother Rick Ellithorpe and sisters Laurie McClung and Kathy Ellithorpe. There are numerous relatives in the Hocker, Milner and Ellithorpe families who will miss hearing her gentle voice as well.

Kennie Ann studied microbiology at CSU before graduating from Adams State in 1966 where she earned her Master's Degree as well. Kennie Ann was a devoted lifelong learner who worked in Buena Vista and Canon City correctional systems providing GED support to inmates.

She was also an animal lover and gave a home to many stray and unwanted dogs. There was always room for one more!

Above all, Kennie Ann was a wonderful Mother and Grandmother. She will be dearly missed by those who knew her.

A memorial service will be held at the Monte Vista Cemetery Chapel on June 3, 2023, at 2 p.m.

In lieu of flowers she requested donations be made to the Conour Animal Shelter in Monte Vista for their new kennel project or to Heifer International.



BILL Continued from Page 1A

Representatives Martinez and Rose Pugliese, R-Colorado Springs, will allow people who are incarcerated and sentenced for a nonviolent felony offense to reduce their sentence by completing an accredited degree or other credential awarded by an accredited higher education institution while the person is incarcerated in the Department of Corrections (DOC).

Specifically, people who are incarcerated can receive 6 months of earned time for an earned credential or a 30-credit hour certificate, one year of earned time for a bachelor's or associate's degree, 18 months of

earned time for a master's degree, and two years for a doctoral degree.

Currently, people who are incarcerated in the DOC can reduce their sentence through earned time by participating in group living, counseling sessions and through specific work and training. Generally, individuals cannot reduce their sentence by more than 30 percent. This law will add higher education achievements to the list of ways students can reduce their sentence through earned time. HB23-1037 aims to encourage people who are incarcerated in Colorado to pursue higher education and better prepare them for a high-earning career

post-sentence.

Access to education opportunities while in prison is one of the most efficient and cost-effective tools to reduce recidivism. Colorado's recidivism rate is 50 percent, one of the highest in the nation. A comprehensive, nationwide study showed that the recidivism rate among people who are incarcerated that earn associate's degrees is around 14 percent and just 5.6 percent for those who earn bachelor's degrees. These recidivism rates are significantly lower than people who were incarcerated that receive no education while in prison.

SHOW Continued from Page 1A

On the heels of the car show, the 2nd Annual C-Town Drag Races will screech down the runway at Leach Field on May 6. Registration will begin on the Center Schools campus the day before the race (\$35 for early sign-ups). The entrance fee rises to \$45 on race day. Registrants must provide proof of a valid driver's license, insurance, plates, and a signed waiver. All vehicles must be street legal.

Beginning at 9 a.m. on race day, the chip draw will set the schedule. The line-up procedure this year is designed to improve the flow from the staging area to the starting line and beyond the finish line at the end of the 1/8th-mile track. For racers, the double-elimination format ensures at least two runs to become one of the top three competitors to receive prizes.

Fans will pay \$5 to enjoy improved seating for viewing the finish line this year. In addition to sampling multiple food trucks, they will have a chance to watch specialized races and grudge matches.

During intermission, drivers



Center Mayor Tony Garcia announces the winning tickets on April 15 for the raffle at the 2nd Annual C-Town Car Show at Center Community Park.

can pay \$15 to race against one of the police cars. If they lose, they can pay another \$25 and try again. For more information about the C-Town Drag Races, email adamf@centerco.gov.



Car show winners received plaques.

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OPINION & EDITORIAL

Some people just like to get things done

My pig bit me



Trout Republic
by Kevin Kirkpatrick

It is that time of year again when Spring comes rushing into the Southern United States with a passion and leaves a person never knowing if you will need the furnace or the air conditioning on any given day. And having been down in those parts some ten or more years in a row, Ol' Dutch knows that hot summer weather will find us faster than crap through the proverbial goose.

Plans as of now are for me and Miss Trixie to be far from these climes come hot weather and be basking in the mountainous regions of Colorful Colorado on our summer and fall sojourns. But for now, at least, here we are watching the seasons change once again and all that entails such as the cows calving, trees leafing out, gardens being planted and last but not least all the crazies coming out of the woodwork.

And nowhere is there a better place to see what warmer weather elicits than on the local crime reporting page. This is a Facebook page dedicated to letting all the locals know just what is going on minute by minute in the world of crime. Now you would think that would wax towards boring after a while but the introduction of such things as meth, fentanyl, marijuana, and other narcotics has added a new dimension to just what people will do.

In the past year we have had a husband on the roof being held hostage there by his wife who wielded a rake for instance. You cannot make that kind of thing up nor can you get that kind of entertainment for any dollars at least where Ol' Dutch hangs out.

Just last week it was reported that a wife came home to what was probably the dishes not done and proceeded to tear the house completely apart. Dishes were thrown, walls bashed in, furniture broken, and clothes tossed out the front door. And that was just the preview to the main show I heard.

High speed chases are now a daily occurrence on the Interstate and most of these involve stolen automobiles of some flavor. There is a new sheriff in town here locally however and he is all business and so kept busy with apprehensions, jailing and of course, bonding out of said criminals so that he can catch them again. I find that to kind of be like catch and release fishing as if you let the fish go you catch, then you can catch them again another day. It is a job security program of sorts and many of the offenders are on their 4th or 5th capture and release.

Ol' Dutch does appreciate the Facebook page as it keeps us all informed of all the crazy things

going on. Why just the other day there was a report of a man in a tree who would not come down. Rescue units were rushed to the scene for some reason, and I guess they never saw Andy Griffith, or they would know that if you leave a cat stuck in a tree alone, he will finally find his way down on his own.

There are more and more psychotic incidents occurring and each time one is reported Ol' Dutch has to stop and check his own location to make sure it is not me. With all the things going on in the world today there are times I feel like I am going a tad crazy myself. But so far, I have not been picked up or helped and Miss Trixie says she is amazed at that fact.

Of course, some incidents do stand out among the many and yesterday was about the best I have heard. There was a flash alert on the page about a man being bitten by a pig and needing emergency response teams.

Now I do not know how that is even possible or why the pig bit the guy unless he saw him eating his bacon in the morning and decided to take revenge for poor cousin Porky's death. But regardless of the reason the man suffered a bite which then elicited dozens of responses of well-meaning locals about said bite. We learned for instance that 5 pigs can consume a 200-pound human body in 15 minutes from one connoisseur of pigdom, that one woman's aunt lost her foot to a pig and another guy who got bitten by his pet pig when he hit said porcine with his cane.

Man, I love the internet and God bless Al Gore for inventing it. And with that I will close for this week as Miss Trixie has my bacon ready for breakfast.

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.

By JOHN CLAYTON

Although I've lived in a small Western town for 30 years now, I have never known much about one of its fundamental institutions, the service club. Many small-town residents still center their lives on Lions, Elks, Rotary or similar organizations.

Not me: I'm not a joiner. Yet as our national culture moves farther away from such settings for broad discussions, I worry that I'm part of the problem.

A while ago when I was asked to speak at our local Rotary Club, I hesitated, picturing white guys networking with each other, and complaining about newcomers. But I had published a book, and publishers instruct authors to market wherever you can.

Upon arrival, I cataloged the changes since my last Rotary visit decades ago: The president was a 20-something woman, we ordered off a menu, and people seemed less guarded.

Our local Rotary, I learned, was known as relatively liberal, and some of the older men seemed pretty vigorous. The faces reflected the town's lily-white complexion, but I noticed that the room contained Republicans and Democrats, evangelicals and atheists, entrepreneurs and socialist-leaning nonprofit workers, feminists, and fans of traditional gender roles.

Of course, we didn't talk about any of that. As one man said, the point of the club was to avoid ideology and to focus on projects that help people. Perhaps that's why they'd invited an author — to be supportive of local literature.

So, we talked about something close

to my heart, and as it turned out, to theirs. My book, "Natural Rivals," chronicles an 1890s collaboration between Sierra Club founder John Muir and U.S. Forest Service founder Gifford Pinchot. The two men are often seen as enemies: Muir's preservation philosophy dictated a hands-off policy to nature, while Pinchot advocated aggressive management of natural resources to provide for human needs.

So, when Muir and Pinchot camped together in 1896, alongside Montana's Lake McDonald in what would later become Glacier National Park, did they argue about whether to cut down trees or dam valleys? No. They set aside their ideological differences to focus on a bigger threat.

The then-new idea of public lands — national parks, national forests, and other lands held collectively and managed with public involvement by our democratic government — was controversial. While disagreeing about the priorities for those lands, Muir and Pinchot were united in believing that public lands mattered.

The Rotarians I met immediately connected with this message. That's what lively small-town folk do: Set aside differences to get things done.

By contrast, in metropolitan areas, I've found that people resist the message about collaborating on common goals, especially when I suggest it could work today. Surely the 1890s were different, they say. Ideologies were different, personalities were different, or the stakes were not as high.

To me, the difference is that today we cluster in like-minded neighborhoods.

Our stores, restaurants and media are all ideologically segregated. We wrap our identity in ideology. And we forget how to find common ground.

I say "we" because I do it, too. My attempted justification is the one I mentioned: I'm not a joiner.

But John Muir wasn't a joiner either. The individualistic mountaineer wasn't even an official member of the blue-ribbon commission visiting Montana's Lake McDonald. He just decided to tag along so that he could converse with — and listen to — people who disagreed with him.

In the dramatic results of those conversations, Muir's essays, and interviews of 1896 and 1897 merged his ideas with Pinchot's to help persuade citizens of the value of public lands.

If we still think of today's Rotarians as old-fashioned, maybe it's because they attract members of all stripes who embrace idealistic values about helping people help themselves. I learned, for example, that they work to end the scourge of polio internationally while providing scholarships to high school kids. And they don't have a political test for pitching in.

They just pick their causes, and then they fight for them.

John Clayton is a contributor to Writers on the Range, writersontherange.org, an independent nonprofit that promotes lively dialog about the West. He lives in Montana and is the author of several books including Natural Rivals: John Muir, Gifford Pinchot, and the Creation of America's Public Lands.

LETTER

Lockhart running for SLV REC District 7 Director-at-Large election

Editor,

It has been my honor to serve the San Luis Valley as a Director on the SLV Rural Electric Co-op Board for the past four years. Now it is time for the District 7 Director-at-Large election. Note that ballots will be mailed out to members on May 11.

Having learned a great deal, I believe I can contribute even more in the future and my commitment to economical, renewable energy remains strong. In addition, my re-election to the Board is important to maintain a balanced representation for the SLV REC membership. I am a voice for:

- Maintaining reliability and affordability while studying and taking opportunities when they arise to improve our future
- Reducing our cost of purchased power from Tri-State, (50% of our operating expense), by developing local SLV generated solar
- Growing new sources of revenue to offset drop in demand from irrigation (due to drought)

For background, SLVREC, by long-term contract, buys 95% of its power from Tri-State G&T. Under this agreement, developing new solar, or any co-op owned power source,

is limited to a mere 5%. Irrigation provides 60% of SLVREC annual revenues and has historically been the bread and butter of the co-op, and the reliability and affordability of that power is a primary consideration. SLVREC power usage follows a bell curve through the year with the peak in mid-summer during irrigation season. It then tapers off to a monthly peak load of 20 to 30 megawatts (MW), or about half or less of the summer peak. These seven months of non-irrigation could be well covered during the daylight hours by SLV generated solar; however, for this to occur we would need a new, more flexible, power supply contract from Tri-State, (which is not out of the question).

Another key area of concern is the serious risk of wildfires and power outages. All our Tri-State power comes over Poncha Pass, a vulnerable area. One idea that is being considered is an additional line to the SLV from a different direction. I am also advocating a local option to provide both security and resiliency, which is to research and develop our own power generation here in the SLV, eliminating the need for an expensive new transmission line. Especially for isolated communities

such as Creede or Crestone/Baca, an idea long utilized in remote areas of Alaska and on military bases is the use of microgrids. SLVREC will be researching this option with a state grant. Fortunately, new financial incentives and policy developments, from both federal and state levels, are helping us along this road. More about microgrids can be learned at: <https://www.microgridknowledge.com/editors-choice/article/11427591/new-studies-point-to-microgrids-as-8216once-in-a-generation-solution8217>.

As your SLVREC Director-at-Large, I represent all members: residential, commercial and agriculture, and one of my primary aims is in making our power supply more sustainable and secure. That said, my re-election as a residential member is important - your VOTE is needed! I welcome your comments or questions and you can also visit "Wade for Slvrec" on Facebook. Our board meetings are open to the membership and are held on the last Tuesday of the month, via Zoom or in-person. The annual meeting will be held on June 13, 2023, at the Ski Hi Complex in Monte Vista. For more information, call 719-580-3538. Thanks!

*Wade Lockhart
Director-at-Large, SLVREC*

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Courtesy photo

A rocket is shown blasting off during the 2021 National Sport Launch held in the San Luis Valley.

New Statistical Profile of San Luis Valley released

CONTRIBUTED

ALAMOSA — Increases in median household income and retail sales, and a drop in public school enrollment were the notable takeaways from the 2023 San Luis Valley Statistical Profile, according to the San Luis Valley Development Resources Group and Council of Governments (SLVDRG).

The 2023 San Luis Valley Statistical Profile uses data from the U.S. Census Bureau, Colorado State Demography Office, and other reliable public sources to illustrate changes in population, housing, school enrollment, and labor force.

“Three trends, or at least substantial changes from last year’s profile, jump out,” said SLVDRG Regional Grants Navigator Craig Barraclough, who compiled the 2023 regional profile. “First, is median household income for the San Luis Valley. There was an estimated 13.1 percent increase from 2020 to 2021: \$40,368 to \$45,644.”

Median household income is a key indicator of a region’s wealth and economic health. While an increase

of 13.1 percent is welcome news and a sign of economic growth, the Valley’s median household income still lags significantly behind the statewide level of \$80,184.

“Second, public school enrollment is down across the board. Specifically, K-12 fall enrollments in the Valley has dropped significantly, showing a 9.2 percent decrease from 2018 to 2022,” Barraclough noted. That is a trend echoed statewide. Colorado’s K-12 fall enrollment has declined 6.6 percent over the past five years.

“Third, retail sales in the Valley went up 9.5 percent from the last year’s statistical profile, with an overall positive trend from 2017 to 2022 of 67.5 percent — quite a jump,” Barraclough said. That noteworthy jump compares to an increase of 20.4 percent for the period of 2016-2021.

Some of the increase in retail sales can be attributed to two factors. The region saw an influx of millions of dollars in relief by the federal government during the pandemic, bolstering business and personal spending during shutdowns. Secondly,

the state began collecting taxes on online retail sales during this period, which enabled tracking of previously unrecorded online sales transactions.

Besides illustrating trends over periods of years, the statistical profile also shows single-year numbers for population, area incomes, poverty rates, and wages.

“The statistical profile is essential for local governments and other organizations because it identifies economic drivers for the region as a whole in a single snapshot,” according to SLVDRG Executive Director Sarah Stoeber. “Armed with this knowledge public officials, non-profit leaders and local business owners can leverage the information to make informed decisions in the allocation of resources, strategic planning, workforce development and forecasting for future growth. It can also identify areas of socio-economic inequality which further highlights areas of needed investment.”

The 2023 San Luis Valley Statistical Profile is available for viewing or download at www.slvdr.org.

Registration open for annual CROP Walk

ALAMOSA — La Puente recently announced that registration is open for its May 7 annual CROP Walk, a 5K that supports Church World Service and its efforts to help families struggling with hunger.

CROP began in 1947 under the wing of Church World Service, which was founded in 1946. CROP was an acronym for the Christian Rural Overseas Program. Its primary mission

was to help Midwest farm families share their grain with hungry neighbors in post-World War II Europe and Asia.

On May 7, in addition to the fundraising walk, there will be a deejay, Frito pie, face painting, and more planned.

“Together we will provide more meals for the growing number of people in our community who need them and create greater food security

in communities worldwide,” local organizers stated.

To register as a team or an individual, visit events.crophungerwalk.org/2023/event/alamosa. If you have any questions or are interested in volunteering for CROP Walk, call 719-589-5909 ext. 212 or e-mail volcom@lapuente.net.

For more information, lapuentehome.org/cropwalk23.

Rocketry event returning to the San Luis Valley

STAFF REPORT

ALAMOSA — The National Sport Launch West of model rocketry has picked the San Luis Valley for its annual major event for the next three years, this year over Memorial Day weekend.

The local San Luis Valley Rocketeers were offered the three-day event and accepted and will host May 27-29 at a launch site southwest of Alamosa in Conejos County.

Matt Abbey, one of the sponsors of the local club, said early bookings for the event are climbing, noting that “our little local club has established the San Luis Valley as the premier launch site in the west.”

He said the launch site is getting

some upgrades and the Federal Aviation Administration has raised the flying ceiling here to 52,000 feet above ground level. The local club last hosted the event in 2021 bringing hundreds of visitors to the SLV and Abbey said the 2023 launch will follow a similar format.

The club will again host local youth who want to show up and fly a rocket for free in the “fly it, take it” offer, where youth are given a rocket and engine and some training to fly it before eventually going home with the rocket.

Estes Rockets of Penrose sponsors the event and expects to have 300 rockets available to local youth.

More details will be announced as the event nears.

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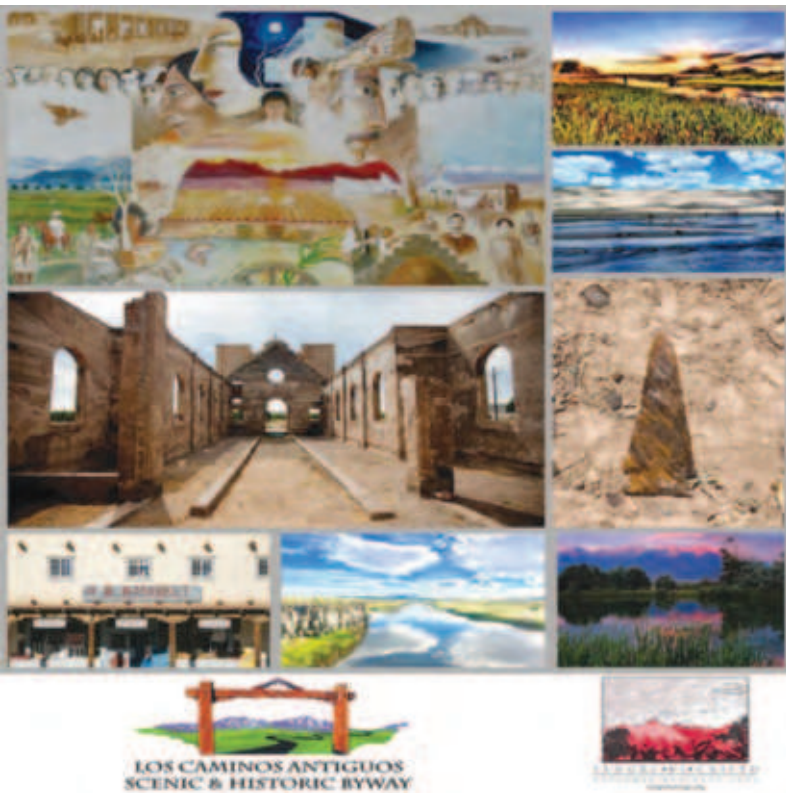
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Courtesy graphic

Los Caminos Antiguos photo collage.

Los Caminos Antiguos wins national byway award

CONTRIBUTED

MILLERSBURG, Ohio — The National Scenic Byway Foundation awarded the Los Caminos Antiguos Scenic and Historic Byway of Colorado its 2023 Byway Organization Award for Interpretation. This is one of the Foundation's eight national awards presented annually.

"Our byway Interpretive plan called for the design and installation of seven large way-showing structures made of wood, metal, and adobe," Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area officials stated. "Nine low-profile metal signs were added. The byway now has 19 interpretive signs along the 129-mile corridor. More signs are being planned and designed for specific locations along the scenic byway. The ambitious project involved partners, including not only local historians, but actual descendants living along the byway to tell their authentic story that is unique to the site. This oral tradition cannot be found anywhere else!"

In addition to interpretive signs, the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area partnered with the San Luis Valley Museum Association through a Colorado Tourism Grant to create a GPS self-guided tour through the TravelStories app. Travelers along the byway simply download the app to their phones, then select and download the Los Caminos Antiguos Scenic and Historic Byway tour. The tour can be linked to the traveler's vehicle stereo system via Bluetooth.

Oral histories can then be played along the byway as the traveler nears a historical site or point of interest. Using this GPS app, travelers will not need phone service to listen to the oral histories. Interested individuals who are not traveling on the byway can still access the oral histories on the app via phones, tablets, or computers.

The Los Caminos Antiguos Scenic and Historic Byway was designated a Colorado byway in 1991. Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area was designated in 2009 and now manages the byway, one of the heritage area's signature projects. The heritage area is committed to promoting, preserving, protecting, and interpreting its profound historical, religious, environmental, geographic, geologic, cultural, and linguistic resources. For more information, visit their websites at www.sangreheritage.org/los-caminos/ or www.travelbyways.com.

The National Scenic Byway Foundation is a nonprofit organization serving as the National Voice of Scenic Byways and Roads, dedicated to strengthening byways through education, training and shared expertise. It is the vision of the National Scenic Byway Foundation that the nation's designated byways will be recognized and valued worldwide for their distinctive experiences, stories, and treasured places.

For more information, visit www.travelbyways.com; www.nsbfoundation.com; or email: info@nsbfoundation.com.

CPW seeking public input on proposed changes to State Wildlife Area regulations through May 24

CONTRIBUTED

DENVER — Colorado Parks and Wildlife is seeking public input on proposed regulation changes for State Wildlife Areas.

CPW manages about 350 State Wildlife Areas (SWAs) across the state, which are properties held to benefit wildlife populations or provide opportunities for wildlife-related recreation. To help ensure SWAs are benefiting wildlife and manage increasing recreation demand at SWAs, CPW is proposing updates to SWA regulations and is seeking public input on the proposed changes.

SWA visitors are encouraged to learn more about the proposed

changes to general SWA regulations and property-specific changes. The public can learn more and provide feedback on EngageCPW — engagecpw.org/hub-page/state-wildlife-areas — through Wednesday, May 24. CPW is looking for specific feedback regarding its general provision and property-specific changes. Comments will be reviewed by CPW staff and considered by the Parks and Wildlife Commission.

The proposed regulations are tentatively scheduled to be discussed at the May Parks and Wildlife Commission meeting before final consideration and possible adoption at the June PWC meeting.

In recognition of National Child Abuse Prevention Month

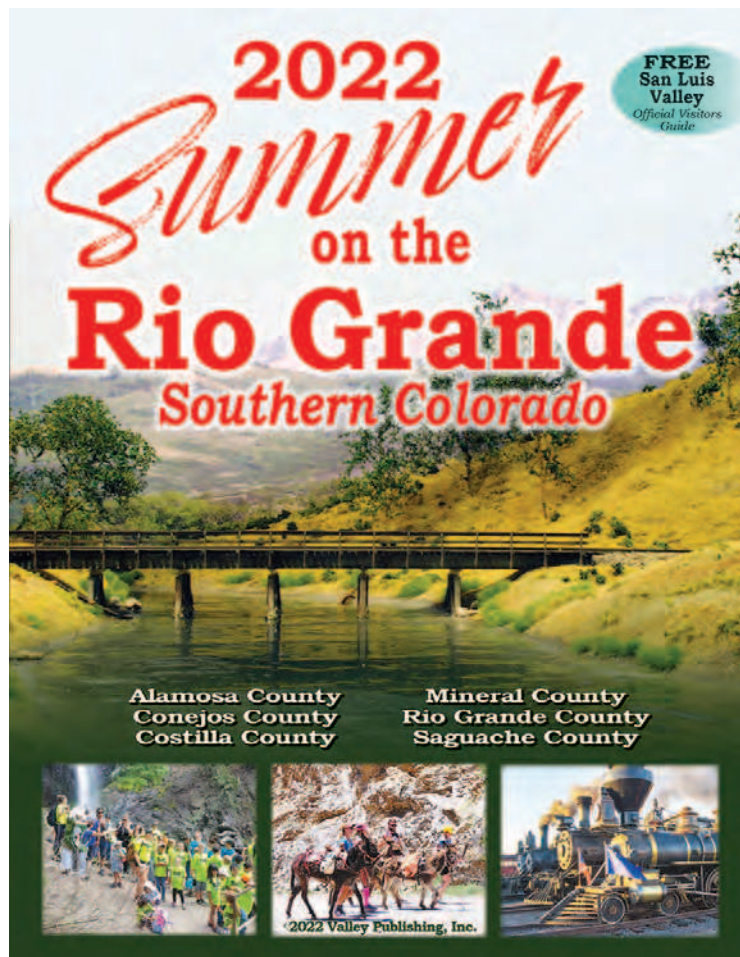


Courtesy photo

The San Luis Valley Quilt Guild presented comforting quilts, well-stocked, handmade hygiene bags and colorful pillowcases on Thursday for children and families seeking support from Tu Casa's Child Advocacy Center of the San Luis Valley. The guild presents such items, each year during April in recognition of National Child Abuse Prevention Month. For more information about the services provided by Tu Casa, call 719-589-2465. Visit the San Luis Valley Quilt Guild online at <https://slvquiltguild.weebly.com/> to learn more about its meetings, classes and community-based activities. Pictured from left to right are: Trina DeHerrera, Shelly Martinez, Rose Molina-Wesley, Anjolei Cohen, Tiffany Martinez, Megan Lang, Sue Foster, and Janet Davis.

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Biannual Silver Threads Quilt Show scheduled for the fall

By **LYNDSIE FERRELL**

CREEDE — Even though spring is barely beginning to show throughout the San Luis Valley, now could be the time to consider plans for the coming summer and fall. One of the area's favorite events is on the schedule for the fall of 2023 and they have been working through the last year to bring some of the most amazing works of art to the Creede community for yet another year.

The Silver Threads Quilt Guild is ready and roaring to host its biannual show Sept. 15-17 in conjunction with the Cruising the Canyon Car Show in mid-September and is looking forward to joining the Creede community to

showcase award-winning quilts from quilters near and far. This year will be the guild's 21st year hosting the biannual show and they have some special things planned.

One of the highlights of the fall event is the Raffle Quilt. This quilt is worked on throughout the year by several if not all members of the guild and is one that is done with a special theme in mind. The quilt will be showcased at events across the Valley so that everyone has a chance to put their name in to win the quilt. This year's theme is Amethyst Anniversary.

The guild is also known for the Quilts of Valor, a project dear to their heart. The guild makes quilts for veterans at

Colorado Veterans Community Living Center at Homelake and they have done this for nearly the full 21 years they have been a guild. In addition to the Quilts of Valor, the guild also creates works of art for Children's Hospital Colorado in Denver and other local projects.

The guild is always seeking new members to continue the art of quilting and in previous years have offered mid-year classes prior to their show in the fall. More details about potential classes this year will be announced as dates and times become available.

"We just love sharing our knowledge with others. It doesn't matter your ability, we have a great time and are

always welcoming new members," said Silver Thread Quilt Guild Member Vi Koch.

Vendors this year will include

Stitcher's Garden, of Pueblo, Bob's Sewing and Vac, of Albuquerque, N.M., Quilt-It-Ya-Ya, of Aztec, N.M., and Stitch, of Durango.

ORDINANCE

Continued from Page 1A

stand out to me in that area. Number three, Ag is exempt."

Marron explained that she took Thompson's advice and reached out for input from veterans in the field (ranchers and cattlemen), including former Saguache County Commissioner Ken Anderson.

"If it is truly a public health hazard," Marron elaborated, "then our whole county should be part of this nuisance ordinance."

Before vowing to pursue beautification solutions to close her remarks, Marron said, "I trust this administration greatly. But, this will live on and could be used against people in a different time."

McCracken and Thompson followed with comments before voting 2-1 to adopt the ordinance. Both commissioners pointed to next steps in the evolution of the process.

"We have never yet made anyone homeless," Thompson emphasized, encouraging an open mind about implementing the ordinance. "Let's give it a chance. Let's see how it works. We're willing to help people.

So just give us a chance to roll this out and see how we do. I think you'll be pleasantly surprised that it's workable for a lot of people because that is what we want to do. We don't want to make people homeless."

McCracken then pointed to wording in the ordinance for further scrutiny over the first 90 days. In coordination with the

enforcement officer, land use office staff shall evaluate the performance of the ordinance. Together, they need to report their findings to the commissioners within a month of the 90-day trial, offering recommendations for amendments. For two subsequent six-month reviews, the commissioners and land use department will spend another year refining the process. This requirement is also included in the nuisance ordinance under section 13.

With two code enforcement officers who can work with sheriff department personnel, Saguache County has the staff to implement the new nuisance ordinance. As it is currently written, the provisions for regulation and abatement follow definitions of "blight" and 18 other terms. The ordinance describes procedures for registering complaints about a nuisance, as well as inspection protocols and notification. Residents can contest the violation through an appeals process. But once "all avenues are exhausted," abatement and penalties follow.

In addition to monitoring how the nuisance ordinance performs, another passage in the text directs the Saguache County Land Use Department to "coordinate public education containing information regarding the Ordinance, including available means of disposal of nuisance materials covered under this Ordinance."

FIRE

Continued from Page 1A

of animals with it.

The owner, Jay Young, and Mosca-Hooper Fire Chief Blaine Witherspoon both speculate that the fire, which broke out around 4 a.m., may have started in an electrical box.

"The most fire damage we could see was around that box," Witherspoon said.

Among the reptiles lost were numerous snakes, turtles, tortoises, caiman, and others. Young said firefighters were able to save three caimans and several turtles and tortoises. No human injuries were reported.

In a Facebook post Tuesday, Colorado Gators said, "most of the rescue snakes, lizards, tortoises, parrots, and cats perished."

"We are devastated," the post went on to say. "All of the other alligators and crocodiles outside that building are fine, everything in the fish building, the turtles and fish and sharks are fine. And we have hundreds of animals that are healthy that we still need to take care of."

Young said he attempted to enter the burning barn by crawling beneath the smoke but could not find the fire extinguishers inside due to heavy smoke and had to retreat.

Through tear-filled eyes, owners Jay and Erin Young said, "we will rebuild, but we lost a lot of 'family' in there."

"Watch out for the rattlesnakes," Witherspoon said he warned firefighters entering the burning structure. And in fact, there were snakes on the floor.

Among the reptiles lost was a 40-year-old reticulated python, that Young believes was the oldest living snake of that species.

"We still have hundreds of animals



Courier photo by Keith R. Cerny

Colorado Gator Farm owners Jay and Erin Young share a group hug with members of their staff after a fire destroyed their reptile barn early Tuesday morning, taking many animals with it.

to take care of," Young told his staff, adding that no admission charges would be assessed on visitors for the time being. The farm's large gator population is fine as well as dozens of other types of animals.

Colorado Gators began in 1977 as a tilapia fish farm for human consumption. A geothermal well there is 2,050 feet deep and flows at 87 degrees Fahrenheit. The first gators came in 1987 to dispose of dead fish.

The Gator Farm has been one of the top tourist attractions in the San Luis Valley for about 30 years.

Witherspoon said 19 of his 24 firefighters responded to the scene around 4:35 a.m. with seven trucks. Center Fire Department responded with four trucks and eight firefighters with Alamosa bringing two trucks and five staff.

Colorado Division of Fire Protection

and Control provided coverage at the Mosca-Hooper station. Also responding were the Alamosa County Sheriff's Department and Alamosa EMS.

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

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Plaintiff: BABYLON HOLDINGS LLC, a New York limited liability company	▲ COURT USE ONLY ▲
v.	
Defendants: ELVA ENDICOTT, DOUGLAS KOSS, and ALL UNKNOWN PERSONS WHO CLAIM UNDER OR THROUGH THE NAMED DEFENDANTS AND ALL UNKNOWN PERSONS WHO CLAIM ANY INTEREST IN THE SUBJECT MATTER OF THIS ACTION	
Attorneys for Plaintiffs: Zachary A. Grey, Atty. Reg. 49269 Frascona, Joiner, Goodman and Greenstein P.C. 4750 Table Mesa Drive Boulder, CO 80305 Telephone: 303-494-3000 Facsimile: 303-494-6309 Email: zac@frascona.com	Case Number: 2022CV030034 Division: C Courtroom

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Dated: April 6, 2023
Published in the *Center Post Dispatch* Newspaper.
First Publication: Thursday April 6, 2023
Last Publication: Thursday May 4, 2023

Frascona, Joiner, Goodman and Greenstein, P.C.
/s/ Zachary A. Grey
Attorney for Plaintiff

Shumei's 21st Anniversary in Crestone May 20 and 21

CRESTONE — Shumei International Institute will celebrate its 21st anniversary on Saturday and Sunday, May 20 and 21, in Crestone. "For 21 years we have been honored to be a part of this community and you are invited to join us in this Anniversary Celebration. All events are free and open to the public," Shumei officials stated.

The spiritual fellowship known as Shumei grew out of the teachings and philosophy of Mokichi Okada (1882-1955). In the 1930s Okada, known as Meishusama within Shumei, began exploring a method of farming called Natural Agriculture (NA).

NA utilizes only the natural elements of the land, pure water, and mindfulness of the farmer in its practice. During that time Meishusama also developed Jyorei, a non-touch spiritual healing. Meishusama believed that divine light moves through all people.

Shumei members are trained as Jyorei practitioners to channel that divine light. Jyorei is always offered free of charge.

Shumei's founder also believed in the importance of art in daily life, teaching that art has the power to heal and that spending time with beautiful

things lightens the spirit and creates peace within the world.

The Crestone-based center is one of the three sacred sites in the Shumei tradition and represents the earth element.

May 20 is the World Peace Prayer Sampai which will be zoomed at 6 p.m. "Together with Shumei Centers around the globe we will sync our clocks and pray together for World Peace," Shumei officials stated.

Visit our website for more information or to receive a link www.shumeicrestone.org.

On May 21, starting at 10:30 a.m. festivities will continue at Crestone Center with the anniversary Sampai and a keynote speech. After Sampai, SII will express its gratitude to the community by offering a free luncheon.

Sunday's activities will also include an open garden for self-guided tours and art hanging in the gallery. "The charm of smiles" is a collection from photographer Koji Kitagawa. The show has been traveling through Shumei Centers in America and "we are delighted to have the show available for viewing during our 21st anniversary."



Courtesy photo

Shumei International Institute will celebrate its 21st anniversary on Saturday and Sunday, May 20 and 21, in Crestone.

After lunch at 2 p.m., settle in for the power of Taiko when the well-loved local HIKARI Taiko takes the stage. After taiko, Baroque cellist Stephanie Hunt and Jeffrey Noonan, playing theorbo, a long-necked bass lute, will offer "The Evolving Cello."

Hunt began examining this little-known repertoire several years ago and has recently offered it to audiences in St. Louis, Cincinnati and Louisville. These listeners leapt to their feet the end of her concerts, cheering her expressive and virtuosic playing of this demanding music. The cello sonatas on the program reflect the technical and musical experimentations of seldom-heard player-composers like Giovanni Bononcini, Giuseppe Dall'Abaco and Antonio Vandini. These virtuoso cellists were acclaimed across the

continent and their music inspired and challenged players and listeners in all the major courts and cultural centers of the era.

Hunt will be joined for this concert by Noonan, playing theorbo, a long-necked bass lute. The intimate character and low register of the theorbo make it an ideal accompaniment instrument for the solo cello. Noonan is returning to Shumei for the third time, and "we are very happy to have him again."

In addition to their active performing work, both are educators with decades of experience in the studio and classroom. Over the years, their students have ranged from the tiniest tots to retired amateurs. Both recognize the value and power of music for individuals and communities and

appreciate the opportunity to share their music with Shumei and the broader community of the region. Hunt and Noonan recognize that music is far more than just sound and that important relationships between performers, composers, listeners, dancers and more develop as the result of live music-making. Offering a concert like this in the mountains for an appreciative and committed community is an opportunity both musicians warmly welcome. All events start promptly at the times listed. Plan to arrive early to park, walk to event locations and for best seating. A shuttle will be available at 10 a.m. on Sunday at the Shumei Office.

A complete schedule can be found on the SII website www.shumeicrestone.org.

Eligible Coloradans encouraged to apply for Colorado's Low-income Energy Assistance Program

CONTRIBUTED

DENVER — May 1 is the last day to apply for Colorado's Low-income Energy Assistance Program (LEAP), a program that helps to save eligible Colorado households money by paying a portion of winter home heating costs. All potentially eligible Coloradans are encouraged to submit their LEAP application by the May 1 deadline.

A statewide program, LEAP helps keep Coloradans warm during the winter months by making a one-time payment directly to the utility company on behalf of each LEAP eligible household. Since Nov. 1, more than 125,000 Coloradans have applied for LEAP, a 16 percent increase over last season. Eligible households have received an average benefit of \$441.

"With the recent reduction in SNAP benefits and the cost of heating up more than 35 percent over the last two winters, the choice between heating or eating is real for too many in our communities," says Theresa Kullen, LEAP manager. "We encourage anyone who thinks they may be eligible for LEAP to apply."

To qualify for LEAP, Coloradans may have an income up to 60 percent

of the state median income level, which equates to a household income of less than \$66,468 a year for a family of four. Additionally, LEAP recipients must pay home heating costs directly to a utility company or landlord as part of their rent and have at least one U.S. citizen or permanent legal resident of the U.S. living in the household.

Currently, LEAP recipients may also qualify for the Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP), which is a temporary program that is part of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). LIHWAP provides funds to make a one-time payment to the water vendor directly on behalf of eligible households who are facing eviction due to unpaid water bills or whose account is either in arrears or shut off as long as funding is available and the water vendor is a LIHWAP participant.

To access the LEAP application, visit cdhs.colorado.gov/LEAP. Online applications are processed through the CO PEAK system. People can also call the HEAT HELP line at 1-866-HEAT-HELP (1-866-432-8435) to receive an application via mail or email or visit the local DHS office to pick up or drop off an application.

Trade Your Pain for God's Beauty

Everyone deals with emotional pain to some degree. Whether it's a difficult relationship, an addiction, abuse, depression...it can cripple us and prevent us from moving forward. But regardless of what's happened in our past, God still wants us to have a great future.

For years, I thought I had to settle for a second-rate life because I had been sexually abused by my father. I thought my future would never be as good as it could have been.

That's what our enemy, Satan, wants us to think. He wants us to believe that our past pain has permanently ruined what God can do with our future.

Maybe that's where you are today. You look at everything you've been through and think, "My situation's just a hopeless mess. Maybe it would be different if God had done something sooner, but now it's beyond repair."

If so, I want you to know that God can fix the unfixable and bring dead things back to life! Jesus said in Matthew 19:26, "...With God all things are possible" (NIV).

If you are brokenhearted—if you've been hurt, abused, disappointed or unfairly treated in any way—it doesn't limit what God can do in your life. In fact, God can give you a future that's better than it would have been if you had never gone through the painful times you've experienced.

Double for Your Trouble
Isaiah 61:7-8 has meant so much to me over the years. It says, "Instead of your shame you will receive a double portion, and instead of disgrace you will rejoice in your inheritance. And so you will inherit a double portion in your land, and everlasting joy will be yours. For I, the Lord, love justice..." (NIV).

This scripture helped me understand that no person could pay me back for what I'd gone through—but God could! And He'd even give me double for all the pain I'd been through.

I've witnessed this firsthand in my own life. God has used His Word to transform me from the inside out. Instead of anger and bitterness, I now have peace and joy. Instead of being a victim of past abuse, He is using my experiences to help many find healing and total restoration from emotional pain.

Isaiah 61:1-3 says Jesus came "to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners...to comfort all who mourn...to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair..." (NIV).

Jesus has already opened the prison doors! We no longer have to stay in "prisons" of emotional pain, rejection, disappointment, worry, depression, anger, addictions or bad habits.

Let It Go and Move On with Your Life

Pain from the past has a way of lingering and even affecting your future. But you don't have to live stuck in the pain of your past. You can make an exchange—you can trade your pain for God's promise and have beauty instead of ashes.

God offers each one of us healing and restoration, but we also have a part to play in the process. We can't expect to keep our "ashes" and still receive God's beauty. We have to choose to move forward and leave things like bitterness, resentment, and self-pity behind.

Self-pity is a major trap that will keep us stuck in our pain—it's turning inward and pitying ourselves when we should have compassion flowing out of us to other people.

It's the same with bitterness and resentment. It took me a long time to get past the point of thinking, "Someone owes me." I was bitter and angry about my past, and I ended up taking it out on the people around me, trying to "collect" from those who had



no way of paying me back. I had to decide to let go of my anger and resentment and trust God to restore what I had lost. He alone could make wrong things right...in His way and in His timing.

Whatever you've gone through or wherever you are today, your pain doesn't have the final say in your life. God can take any situation and turn it around for His good.

If your life is a fragmented mess, let Jesus gather up the pieces. Be determined to maintain a positive, grateful attitude, focusing on God's blessings and the great things He is doing in your life.

As you do, your pain will become someone else's gain, your mess will become your message, and what you've walked through will help to bring someone else to their miracle. You'll have a life of beauty, joy, and gratitude for all God has done!

For more on this topic, order Joyce's teaching resource *Healing the Soul of a Woman Action Plan*. You can also contact us to receive our free magazine, *Enjoying Everyday Life*, by calling (800) 727-9673 or visiting www.joycemeyer.org.

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

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

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Rio Grande State of the Basin Symposium May 6

CONTRIBUTED

ALAMOSA — Registration is open for the fifth annual Rio Grande State of the Basin Symposium on Saturday, May 6, on the Adams State University campus. Craig Childs will deliver the keynote address. The event is free and open to the public.

Sponsored by the Adams State Salazar Rio Grande del Norte Center, the symposium will begin at 8 a.m. with registration and breakfast in Richardson Hall. The symposium begins with brief introductions and reports by Adams State Interim President David Tandberg, State Senator Cleave Simpson, Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) Nathan Coombs, and Regional Assistant Commissioner of the Colorado Department of Agriculture George Whitten.

A panel discussion, The Future of Water, begins at 9:20 a.m. Panelists include Rio Grande Farm Park Program Director Seth Armentrout, Costilla County Conservancy District Manager Ronda Lobato, Fairfield and Woods, P.C. Director Philip E. Lopez, and Rio Grande Water Conservation District (RGWCD) Deputy General Manager Amber Pacheco.

Following a short break, Colorado Division of Water Resources (CDWR) State Engineers Kevin Rein will address interstate issues; and Craig Cotton will address interstate issues and Valley water supplies, respectively.

Just before lunch, Utah State University graduate research assistants will present on "Evapotranspiration Trends in the San Luis Valley."

Participants will then move to the Student Union Building for lunch and keynote address by Childs.

According to Amazon, Childs is an Arizona native who now lives in western Colorado. Winner of the 2009 Rowell Art of Adventure Award, he is part deep traveler, part writer who focuses on natural sciences, archaeology, and journeys into the global wilderness. He



Photo by Amy Kucera

The fifth annual Rio Grande State of the Basin Symposium is May 6. The event is free and open to the public. Register now at adams.edu/about/salazar-center.

is a commentator for National Public Radio's Journal, Outside, the Sun, and Orion. Subjects range from pre-Columbian archaeology to US border issues to the last free-flowing rivers of Tibet and Patagonia. For more information, or to register, visit adams.edu/about/salazar-center.



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- Waffenstein GX920 3PT Backhoe att. Like new
- NH L783 skid steer
- Westerdorf TA-46 with mounts (like new)
- Deutz pump motor
- Hobart welder on trailer
- 45KVA Whisper Watt Generator on trailer
- 3- truck mounted manure spreaders
- International 584 w/loader
- Ford 6700 with loader
- Versatile 9030 with loader
- Supreme 1200 twin grinder/mixer
- Supreme 700t grinder/ mixer
- 1086 Case
- Alice Chalmers 7000
- International 766
- Case 585
- Farmall Hydro 100 parts
- Ford 8N
- Ford Jubilee/loader
- JD 4020 Power shift
- JD 4020 w/loader fire damage
- JD 2840
- Items too numerous to mention

Having Equipment

- Hesston 8450 16'sickle
- NH 2450 12' sickle
- JD 4890 16' sickle 3000hrs
- 2-9435 Hesston 14'sickle
- NH 1114 windrower
- NH 1441 rotary
- NH H7150 pull type sickle
- Hesston 565t Rnd Baler
- JD 535 Rnd Baler
- Case 8545 baler w/accumulator
- JD 449 Rnd Baler Like new
- Krone Swadro rake
- Hesston 4550 baler
- Pro Ag HD4sr Bale wagon
- Rowse Double mower
- JD 705 Basket rake
- Hesston 4910 Baler
- Case 96 Rake
- Bale head for small bales
- Big Bale Head for loader

Trailers

- Barrett 48' Cattle pot
- 1985 Barrett Alum. Gooseneck stock trailer
- 2 -Cattle pots
- Teck steel Lowboy 3 axle with ramps (semi)
- 89 fruehauf 53' 102" step deck
- Martinez custom semi lowboy
- Al Ray 4 horse bumper pull
- 2-two horse trailer bumper pull
- 2 axle bumper pull trailer
- Pickup bed trailer
- Single axle flatbed

Trucks

- 1978 Peterbuilt Dump truck 2500mile on new motor
- 1971 Peterbuilt 350 Cummins
- 1999 International C12 cat 13sp
- International DT466 dump truck w/ snow plow
- 2 International 1700 snow plow trucks
- F600
- Kodiak truck good motor needs trans
- 1980 C70 truck and flatbed
- Chevy c65 Dump truck
- 75 C65 Tanker Truck 6X6
- 84 GM pumper truck
- 69 International 1700 dump truck

Miscellaneous

- 20 large spruce trees
- 2 New Micro Rain Sprinklers
- Compost tea brewers tanks
- Poly tanks
- Grow lights
- Grow tents
- Fuel tanks
- Netting
- Commercial parts washer
- Commercial 3ph Hotsy
- 1 55gal drum paint thinner
- 1 55gal drum boiled linseed oil
- 1 55gal drum Thompson waterproofing
- 8 units of scaffolding w/ planks
- Tools
- Tool box
- Belsaw/Foley sharpening system (12 machines)
- Horse drawn sleigh
- Horse drawn sleigh large
- Saddles
- Two sets of Draft horse Harness
- Tack
- Ammo and reloading Equipment &Supplies.
- 16'x13' shed/building
- 11r20 tires on rim new
- 2-11r22.5 with rims
- 22.5 trailer tires
- 2-460/85r34 tires
- Ac/refrigeration supplies and equip.
- Reclaim bottles
- Evac. Pump
- Reclaim tanks
- Gauge sets
- Metal shelving

Vehicles

- 1979 c3 corvette
- 1982 Datsun 4x4
- 1960 Chevy Apache (nice)
- 1995 F250 w/Mech. Box
- 1977 Chevy pickup
- International scout??
- 1998 F550
- Chevy 3500
- 1996 F250
- 1983 Chevy pickup
- 2000 GMC ex cab 4x4
- 98 dodge 1500 4x4
- 78 F150 swb460eng. Restored
- 1995 f250 gas motor
- 99 Ram 2500 Diesel need transmission

RV's/ATVs

- 2003 Montana 3 slides 3670rl
- 2002 Jazz 2 slides with solar
- Flagstaff Hw31scth used once
- Artic cat 600 powder special
- CF 500 4 wheeler (nice)
- ATV trailer
- Several ATVs for parts
- EZ-e-Go Golf Cart

Antiques

- 2 nice wood cook stoves
- Antique JD lawn tractor
- Plow
- Steel tractor seats
- Singer sewing machines
- Disc
- Corn planter

Cattle Equipment and Hay

- 1500 small bales of timothy grass hay tarped
- In 21 bale bundles.
- Priefert cattle chute
- Powder river chute
- Several older chutes
- Powder river portable loading dock
- Priefert cattle alley tub
- Panels/gates
- Supreme bale processors
- Supreme twin grinder mixers



Auctioneer's Note: This is a partial listing! Photos will be put on web as it tolerates, call for questions. Inspection Friday May 9th or call. Must call hours under tent!
Call Brady for any additional information at 719-588-2573
A great offering that includes the Deth Hunsbete Estate and Gary Hill disposal as well as many others.



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Lifestyles

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Supplement to The Monte Vista Journal, Center Post-Dispatch, The Conejos County Citizen, The Mineral County Miner, The South Fork Times, and The Del Norte Prospector.

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Respawn Game Room and VR Lounge opens in Del Norte



Photos by Lyndsie Ferrell

Respawn Game Room and VR Lounge is a new business in Del Norte. Owner Brenton Williams is looking to offer a fun and interactive option to adults and youth in Del Norte.

BY LYNSIE FERRELL

DELNORTE — After changing directions, local business owner and Del Norte Town Trustee Brenton Williams has dedicated his time to opening a new entertainment opportunity in town and the results have been nothing short of fun for the entire family.

Williams and his wife previously owned a mechanic shop in town and after deciding to cut their losses and change directions, Williams said that he wanted to see about bringing something new to the area that would not only provide a place to host birthday parties and family gatherings, but entertainment for local children and adults alike.

“There just wasn’t anything to do here for local youth and I wanted to see what I could do to help change that. We had a driving simulator at the mechanic shop I owned, and my wife suggested I find another location to put it and that was when we came up with the idea for this place,” said Williams.

Since the idea took form, Williams has been busy moving into the old chapel in the old hospital that was bought by local entrepreneur Stan Johnson. Johnson has since rented space

in the old hospital to several businesses including Napa Auto Parts, an art gallery, an antique store, Salon SLV and Respawn with plans to bring in even more businesses, creating a culturally diverse and economically sustainable business district of sorts.

Having four children himself and working on the town board, Williams approached this new business venture with a unique understanding of how little there was to do in Del Norte, especially when it came to having a place to throw a birthday party.

“We always had to leave the Valley to do something fun for birthdays. I wanted something in Del Norte, for Del Norte to bring people to Del Norte. So now we have the arcade and a space that can be rented for birthday parties or other gatherings like our Dungeons and Dragons group,” explained Williams.

The arcade features booths where guests can play games on different gaming consoles including Nintendo Switch and PlayStation as well as three joystick consoles that have thousands of games uploaded such as Pacman and other vintage games, two

Please see RESPAWN on Page 2

Elk at sunset

Elk gather near water as the sun sets on the Sangre de Cristo Range.

Photo by Patrick Shea



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,

Please see PEARCE on Page 2



Carly Pearce

Mountainfilm on Tour to screen in Monte Vista April 28

CONTRIBUTED
MONTEVISTA — Mountainfilm on Tour brings a selection of culturally rich, adventure-packed and incredibly inspiring documentary films curated from the Mountainfilm festival in Telluride. The tour will visit Monte Vista at the Vali 3 Theater on April 28 with films that explore themes connected to Mountainfilm’s mission of using the power of film, art and ideas to inspire audiences to create a better world.

Mountainfilm on Tour in Monte Vista is hosted by San Luis Valley Great Outdoors (SLV GO!) in partnership with Monte Vista Chamber of Commerce, The Law Office of Mark Loy, LLC, Rio Grande Bank, Sweetgrass Therapeutics, and San Luis Valley Health.

SLV GO! has been organizing Mountainfilm on Tour for three years and has been working to provide residents and visitors throughout the San Luis Valley with accessible and inclusive outdoor recreation opportunities that balance conservation, connect communities, improve wellness, encourage stewardship, and contribute to the

economic vitality of the region for 10 years.

SLV GO! believes that by practicing a collective impact model and bringing stakeholders together they can provide leadership for effective collaboration among partners with shared goals that reflect the organization’s mission and the SLV vision.

While hosting an inspiring collection of films, the show is also an opportunity to raise funds for SLV GO! to support ongoing projects to inspire conservation efforts of Dark Sky. SLV GO! has gathered a unique bundle of locally made items as part of the fundraising giveaway, learn more by stopping by Rain Brews starting at 4:30 p.m. on April 28 to donate to the cause and put your name in a hat to win.

The show kicks off at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, April 28. Doors open at 6 p.m. Tickets for Mountainfilm on Tour in Monte Vista are on sale now online at eventbrite.com, search mountainfilm Monte Vista. Tickets will also be available the day of the event at Vali 3 Theater on Adams Street in Monte Vista. The cost for each show is \$15 for general admission.



Courtesy photo

‘This is Beth’ will be shown during the Mountainfilm on Tour on April 28 at the Vali 3 Theater in Monte Vista. Seven short-film documentaries will be shown.

See the complete playlist at www.mountainfilm.org/tour-show/monte-vista-co/.

Mountainfilm is a documentary film festival that showcases stories about environmental, cultural, climbing, political and social

justice issues. Mountainfilm is held every Memorial Day weekend in Telluride. Along with exceptional documentaries, the festival goes beyond the film medium by bringing together world-class athletes, change makers and visionary

artists for a multi-dimensional celebration of indomitable spirit. Mountainfilm’s mission is to use the power of film, art and ideas to inspire audiences to create a better world. To learn more about Mountainfilm, visit www.mountainfilm.org.

RG BANK appoints Cox to its board of directors

CONTRIBUTED
MONTE VISTA — Pagosa Springs resident and business owner Jason Cox has been appointed to the RG BANK Board of Directors. Cox owns and operates Riff Raff Brewing Company in Pagosa Springs with his wife Shelly and

two other partners. He moved to Pagosa Springs in 2008 after earning his undergraduate degree at Texas Tech University and a master’s in computer information systems from the University of Denver.

“We are excited to welcome

Jason to our Board at RG BANK,” said RG BANK Board of Director Chair Mark Lounsbury. “Jason brings a wealth of knowledge and understanding of not only Pagosa Springs but all of Archuleta County. He is heavily involved in many community organizations and has served on several boards. His dedication to the community makes him a great asset to RG Bank and our customers.”

Cox currently serves on the Board of the Upper San Juan Health Service District (Pagosa Springs Medical Center) and has previously served on the boards of the Archuleta County Fair, Archuleta Housing Corporation

and Pagosa Springs Community Development Corporation. His interests beyond brewing extend into property management, broadband connectivity, software engineering, skiing and snow removal.

“I look forward to working with RG BANK to help residents and businesses in Pagosa Springs and Archuleta County,” Cox said. “We want to hook up people to capital to realize their dreams in the beautiful mountains of Southwest Colorado.”

RG BANK is headquartered in Monte Vista with branches in Alamosa and Pagosa Springs. Established in 1905, RG BANK



Jason Cox

is a mutual and is still driven by the tenet “neighbors helping neighbors.”

RESPAWN

Continued from Page 1

driving simulators that offer a very realistic driving experience with force feedback steering and finally, a Virtual Reality section, for those wanting an escape from reality.

The building where the arcade and VR Lounge is located is a story all its own having served as the old hospital’s chapel. Williams has spent considerable time and effort with the help of Johnson to remodel the room without losing the charm of the building.

Williams has plans to expand his business as time and money allow but for the time being he is just ecstatic to be able to offer

something fun to the greater Del Norte community and beyond.

“We have something really great here and I am doing this for Del Norte,” Williams said.

Respawn is open Wednesday through Sunday from 2 to 8 p.m.

PEARCE

Continued from Page 1

“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” entered the top 40 on the Billboard Country Airplay charts.

Tickets for the kickoff concert featuring Pearce with special guest Ray were not available for purchase as of press time. For more information, visit www.skihstampede.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.

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Rio Grande Department of Social Services breaks ground on expansion project

BY LYNSIE FERRELL
RIOGRANDE COUNTY — The Rio Grande County Department of Social Services (RGDSS) located in Del Norte broke ground April 5 on their new expansion project which is expected to be finished by the end of the year depending on weather and material availability.

Rio Grande County Department of Social Services Director Jody Kern and her team of leaders gathered with Rio Grande County Commissioners Gene Glover, Scott Deacon, and Tyler Ratzlaff along with Bob Vanwaarden,

the project builder and Brad Ash, the project architect with Reynolds and Ash at the site of the expansion for a groundbreaking ceremony. “We are really excited to be here this morning and to begin this project. Our goal was to do as much as we could with what we have in order to provide a safe and secure building for our clients and team members. Our top priority is to provide this expanded facility to the communities we serve,” said Kern.

The group of leaders grabbed shovels and dug in, breaking ground

for what will eventually be an expansion of the existing building for RGDSS which will include a new meeting space and waiting area for the public.

“This project design was made to utilize the space that we have without doing much. Safety for our customers and convenience for our employees is our main concern. The way the building was originally designed isn’t working to our advantage and these changes will help with that,” said Kern.

The project’s main scope is to

expand the building to the north, expanding both the waiting area and office area on the bottom level of the building and allowing for more room for customers and employees.

In addition to the expansion, Kern is also asking contractors to install heated sidewalks, like those that are in front of the county annex building to help with ice during cold months.

“We are always concerned about the safety of our clients and with the way the building is facing, there is almost always ice near our entrance. Since we were tearing up the sidewalks

to complete the expansion work, we were able to include the heated sidewalks to ensure the safety of our clients,” said Kern.

Kern explained that the current conference room will be changed into a more open office area for employees and the expansion will include space for a conference area.

“We wanted to do things in a way that could streamline the use of our small staff and in a way that allowed easier access to office equipment. Plus, it will give clients more room in the lobby area,” Kern said.



Photo by Lyndsie Ferrell

The Rio Grande County Department of Social Services, with help from Rio Grande County Commissioners broke ground on an extension project on April 5 at the social service building in Del Norte. The project is expected to be finished by fall.

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Summerfest on the Rio seeking food and craft vendors

CONTRIBUTED
ALAMOSA — Alamosa’s iconic “Welcome to summer in the San Luis Valley” is back for 2023 on June 2-3. This annual festival provides arts and craft talents, food, musical entertainment for the entire family and a multitude of activities for kids.

Situated along the winding Rio Grande in the beautiful and spacious Cole Park, the festival is known for its music, family fun, and culinary delights.

Arts and crafts as well as food vendor applications are being accepted now. The deadline for vendors to apply has been extended to April 30 for food and May 26 for arts, crafts



and Information booths. Reasonable sponsorship opportunities are available as well. Go to www.summerfestontherio.com, for more information.

“We are also looking for community-minded people to volunteer for a couple hours during the festival to help sell and pour beverages,” organizers stated. “This small but valuable commitment helps us keep the festival free to attendees by avoiding staffing costs. Plus, giving back to the community feels good too; you may even get a few drink tickets.”

To sign up or for more information, contact info@summerfestontherio.org.

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SUDOKU

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

Fun By The Numbers
 Like puzzles? Then you’ll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Level: Advanced

Here’s How It Works:
 Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

Solution to last week’s puzzle

	S	L	R		F	O	N		S	C	H				
	T	I	E		I	C	E		H	O	E				
A	W	I	N	G		N	A	B	A	L	A	R	M		
P	A	C	K	A	G	E			B	U	L	L	D	O	G
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					G	I	N	S		S	C	O	T		
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		E	N	E		E	C	G		O	L	M			
		T	E	D		D	U	E		L	Y	E			

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63 TRUCKS
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04 Lost & Found

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

reports into patient charts, medical records requests, collect copays, insurance eligibility, daily reconciliation, other duties as assigned. Please apply online at riograndehospital.org or contact Jennelle Gallegos at jennelleg@riograndehospital.net 719-657-4114 RGH is an EOE (5-10)

Ecodynamics Inc is hiring a general shop and field worker. Tasks include inventory, loading customer orders, shop cleaning, pump tech. assistant in the field.

05 Notices

WE BUY ANTLER: Spring Prices! Use code "ELK18" and you will get \$18/lb for Elk Grade A and \$13/lb for Deer Grade A. 5 miles west of Del Norte on Hwy 160. 719-657-0942 (TFN)

07 Help Wanted

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Valley Wide Classifieds

Please drop off resume in person at 5492 US Hwy 160 E, M.V. For more info, call 719-852-2662 (5-3)

Farm Credit of Southern Colorado (FCSC) is seeking an Appraisal Assistant to join our team. The chosen candidate will be responsible for researching sales and market data. The intention of this position is a true assistant to our Appraisal department in our Southern Colorado Territory. This position is full time and is benefits eligible. Reporting to the Assistant Appraisal Manager the Appraisal Assistant researches sales and market data and maintains the association appraisal department sales database; reviews appraisal request for complete information and starts work files. The Appraisal Assistant will be responsible for market data research, real property appraisal services and chattel appraisal services. This position will provide support and assistance to our existing Appraisal team. Research and assignments are primarily office / computer based, with some travel required. Please visit aglending.com/careers for more information. EOE/M/F/D/V (4-26)

PART-TIME SALES

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

Job Vacancy #32-23 Extension Area Specialist, Agriculture Production Systems, San Luis Valley
This position has been created to serve a farming and ranching community which is striving to maintain economically viable agriculture production while drastically reducing consumptive irrigation water use. You will be a member of the SLV Area Extension team where everything we do is designed to foster healthy youth and families, prosperous farms, ranches, and businesses, and strong, resilient, proud communities. Position will be officed at the SLV Research Farm. Successful candidate will provide education, including farm and ranch consultations, field research, demonstration trials, workshops, field days, and seminars on issues around restricted water use, alternative forage and crop production systems including irrigated, dryland, specialty, hay, and fiber crops, as well as livestock grazing. Constant focus will be on reducing consumptive water use while maintaining natural resource health and economic viability for individual producers, the local ag industry, and the local communities. Specialist will work cooperatively with CSU Extension, Research, and Water Center staff, ag producers, consultants, local elected officials, government agencies, and other partners. To view the complete, more detailed job announcement, requirements, and to apply, click link: <https://jobs.colostate.edu/postings/124030> For full consideration, all materials must be RECEIVED no later than

11:59 PM Mountain Time on Sunday, April 23, 2023. For questions about this position, contact Larry Brown, SLV Area Extension Director, 719-852-7381, L.Brown@colostate.edu. We are committed to increasing the diversity of our staff and providing culturally responsive programs and services. Therefore, we encourage responses from people of all backgrounds and abilities. CSU is an EO/EA/AA employer and conducts background checks on all final candidates. (4-19)

The Upper Rio Grande School District has received a grant for a full time K-12 School Counselor - for the next 3 years, starting in the 2023-2024 school year. Applicants must have a Master's Degree or higher and possess or be able to obtain an appropriate Colorado school counselor license. Please submit your application, resume, and cover letter to: Amy Duda, DNES Principal at aduda@urtigers.co or contact Amy at 719-657-4050. Applications for certified staff positions can be picked up at the District Office or online at www.urtigers.co. (4-26)

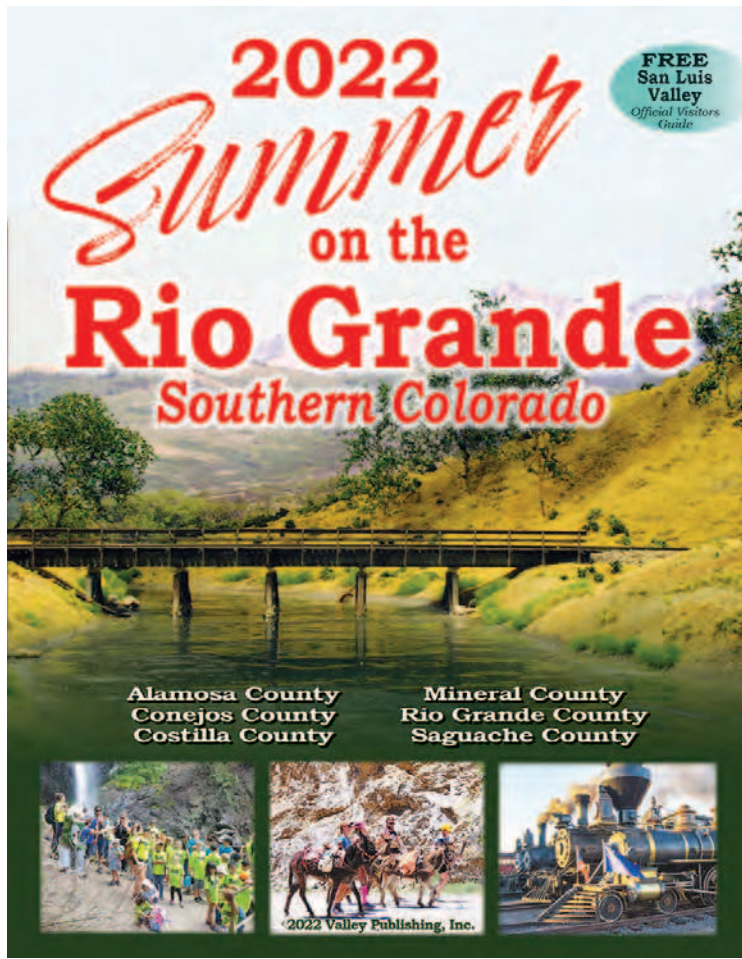
K - 8th Grade Music Teacher needed at the Upper Rio Grande School District for the 2023-2024 school year. We are seeking an experienced, hardworking and enthusiastic teaching professional to join our dynamic, vibrant and fun-loving team. Applicants must have a bachelor's degree or higher and possess or be able to obtain a Colorado Teaching License. Please submit your application, resume and cover letter to: Amy Duda, Elementary Principal at aduda@urtigers.co or contact Mrs. Duda at 719-657-4050. Applications can be picked up at the District Office or online at: urtigers.co. (4-26)

Del Norte Elementary School Teacher needed at the URGSD. We are seeking a hardworking and enthusiastic teaching professional to join our dynamic, vibrant and fun-loving team for the 2023-2024 school year. Applicants must have a bachelor's degree or higher and possess or be able to obtain a Colorado Teaching License. Please submit your application, resume and cover letter to: Amy Duda, Principal at aduda@urtigers.co or contact Amy at 719-657-4050. Applications can be picked up at the District Office or online at: urtigers.co. (4-26)

Center School District is now accepting applications for the position of Preschool/Toddler Teacher for the 2023-2024 School Year. Center Consolidated School District 26It is paying years of service and single health insurance benefits. Qualifications; AA in Early Childhood Education preferred or willing to obtain qualifications. Experience working with Preschool/Toddler Age Children in an educational environment, or, such alternative as the Board of Education may find appropriate and acceptable. All candidates must pass background checks. Current or former Head Start or Early Head Start parents encouraged to apply. Applications can be found on the District Website <https://www.center.k12.co.us/>

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Valley Wide Classifieds

page/employment-opportunities or contact the District Office at (719) 754-3442. Application Deadline: Until Position is Filled. EOE (4-26)

Center School District is now accepting applications for the position of BOE Secretary Administrative Office Assistant beginning May 2023. Center Consolidated School District 26It is paying single health insurance benefits, beginning salary \$36,154.00. Qualifications; Post-secondary education preferred, with experience in office management, bilingual, computer use, word processing and bookkeeping, or, such alternative as the Board of Education may find appropriate and acceptable. Applications can be found on the District Website <https://www.center.k12.co.us/page/employment-opportunities> or contact the District Office at (719) 754-3442. Application Deadline: 4/20/23. EOE (4-26)

The Rio Grande County Assessor's Office is seeking a full-time Assessor's Office Clerk. 40 hours per week, starting at \$17.18 per hour. Benefits include health care, retirement and paid holidays. Assists the County Assessor by performing a variety of clerical duties including the maintenance of real estate and/or ownership records and assisting the public by telephone or in person at the Assessor's office. High school diploma or GED and valid driver's license required. Pre-employment drug testing, including marijuana screening, and a background check required. Application and job description available at www.riograndecounty.org or Human Resources, 925 6th Street, Room 200, Del Norte, CO 81132. Application deadline: Until filled. (4-19)

12 Houses for Rent
Beautiful fairly new 3-bedroom 2-bath home on the river partly furnished \$875 plus deposit ready by May 1 719-672-3146 (5-10)

17 Real Estate For Sale
FARM FOR SALE in Waverly Area Sub-district #6, 1 1/2 center pivots in grass and alfalfa, large hay shed, 2 bedroom home, 3 steel grainers, numerous out buildings on 8 Mile Road. Ready to farm 2023 season. Call Bruce at Steffens & Company Realty, Inc 719-580-0770. TFN

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

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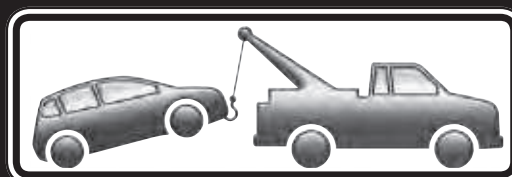
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35-80-plus acres parcels with good grass on County Line Road north of Hwy 160. Fully surveyed and ready to build on. Perfect location between Alamosa and Monte Vista. Call Bruce at Steffens & Company Realty, Inc. 719-580-0770. TFN

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

23 Lawn and Garden

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

Spring is here! Is your Lawn-N-Garden, Equipment up to the challenge? Bring your repairs in early to avoid Longer lead times. County Line Small Engine Repair LLC, 4521 E CRD 12 S, La Jara, Co 81140 719-589-6466 Open Mon - Fri. 8:00 A.M - 5:00 P.M. (4-19)

24 Garage Sales

Estate Sale - Monte Vista, CO - April 19-24, 2023 All Day - Every Day - Everything Must Go! Kitchen Ware - Utensils, dishes, pots, pans, silverware, George Foreman Grill, Rooster Oven · Freezers · Furniture: Master Bedroom Set (power adjustable Tempur-Pedic king bed, tall dresser, and dresser with mirror), couches, breakfast table and dining table (with accompanying table chairs), loveseat, recliner, sofa couch (sleeper), 2 reclining accent chairs, antique buffet, antique roll top desk, antique stereo, jewelry armoire, tv stand, entertainment center, tv trays, end tables · Linens, blankets, sheets, pillows, towels · Home décor, Picture Frames, nick-naks · Window/Portable A/C, Portable Air Cleaner, Vacuum, Small Safe · Clothes, shoes, jackets · Tools (Hand and Power) - compressors, saws, drills, wrenches, sockets, small welders, carpenter tools, drywall professional hopper gun, electric blower, hedge trimmer, reddy heater, extension and A-Frame ladders, pressure washer, hand truck, tool chests · Hardware (nuts, bolts, nails, etc) and Building Materials (wood, bricks, concrete blocks), Paint Brushes and Rollers, · Garden Tools, Battery Powered Lawn Mower, wheel barrel, Screened Canopy Tent, car ramps, · Camping Gear, Outdoor Grill, Coolers, weight bench, Dog Crate, Propane Cylinder · Trailer/Camper 5th wheel · Utility Trailer · AND MUCH MUCH MORE!!! Contacts Henry @ 561-779-0751 or Email Hdr2470@gmail.com Or Jonathan @ 719-510-1663 or Email Jonathan.e.velasquez@gmail.com (4-19)

32 Fuel & Heating

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

33 Building Materials

36x20 Culverts (2) Good Condition \$1,000 Each 719-580-6223 (4-19)

36 Miscellaneous

WANTED: vintage license plates; cash paid based on age, rarity, condition. Call/text Colin: 970-367-7594 (5/24)

Cash for quality non-fiction books and LP records. Jeff 720-315-9145 (4-26)

Propane Refrigerators Sold Here. Call For Options and Prices. We Also Stock Solar Powered Refrigerators and Freezers. Bontrager's Variety Store, 9726 S. County Road 3E, Monte Vista. (719) 852-0500 TFN

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SOLAR PANELS! 355 Watt and Smaller, We Stock Inverters, Charge Controllers, and Batteries in Brand Names of Outback, Magnum, Aims, Rolls, and More. Custom Cables and PV Wire. Bontrager's Variety Store. 9726 S. CR 3E Monte Vista. 719-852-0500. TFN

44 Farm Services

Attention Farmer and Ranches: Seal your leaking livestock tanks, ponds & reservoirs with bentonite Spring Special 10% OFF. Rio Grande Bentonite. 719-580-6652 (5-3)

47 Horses & Cattle

Horses for sale: 10YO gray mare, 15.5H, good horse, needs experienced rider, \$1,200. Older bay gelding. 16.2H, good horse, may be a good packer, \$1,200. Call Ben 605-290-9869 (4-26)

65 Professional Services

RELIABLE CARPENTRY 40-plus years-experience in carpentry, painting, stucco, tile, drywall, roofing, etc. Drug/Alcohol free. Free Estimates 719-496-7630. (5-10)

Squeegee Luigi's Washing Services: Window Washing, Concrete Cleaning, Exterior Washing - FREE ESTIMATE: (719) 490-9047 TFN

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

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

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Cats	\$80.00		Petite - Small vessel needed
0 - 25 lbs.	\$80.00		Petite - Small vessel needed
26 - 50 lbs	\$140.00		Small-Medium Vessel needed
51 - 75 lbs.	\$175.00	\$200.00	Medium-Large Vessel needed
76 - 100 lbs.	\$200.00	\$275.00	Large Vessel needed
101 lbs. & up	Animals over 101 lbs. are ineligible for Group fee	\$300.00	Extra Large Vessel Needed

Payment is required at time the animal is dropped off.
 Animal may be dropped off during business hours only.
 Please allow 7 working days from drop off date for animal's return.
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San Luis Valley Area Real Estate

FOR SALE!



Must See Custom-Built 5,350 sq. ft. Commercial Property in Fabulous South Fork, CO. Great Highway 160 exposure!! This building is extremely well built. The building was built for retail with many amenities.

The environment is warm and welcoming. The 3,000 sq. ft. main floor consist of large receiving office, full kitchen and bath and several large open spaces and two additional design show rooms and large 1,000 sq. ft. heated warehouse with plenty of shelves for storage and 12-foot overhead door. Lovely concrete outdoor patio with new vinyl fencing wired for low voltage lights this property sits on two lots with wiring running outside for lighting off outside signage. 1,350 sq. ft. Spacious upstairs with large open space, several large storage closets two additional offices, New 3/4 custom tile bathroom and large storage over warehouse. This well-built property has radiant floor heating downstairs and upstairs baseboard hot water heat. Property is wired for Cat 5 telephone jack in all offices, design rooms, kitchen bar, receiving office - etc. Cable tv jack, upstairs big room. There are 3 gas fireplaces, 2 wall thermostats with remote control. Wired for speakers though out the building for music. Swamp cooler and wired for electric dryer, set up for washer and has a Propane fired boiler and propane hot water heater. This property is a blank canvas with so much POTENTIAL for the right builder or person. Because there is no existing business at the present time, this makes this building available for a variety of Business opportunities: Professional Work Environment for Professionals, Restaurant, Brew Pub, Events Center, Lodge or Cottage hotel, Retail etc. Come Paint your Canvas and start Your Business Adventure. Call and schedule your personal showing today! **\$1,250,000** MLS #794078

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

FARM REDUCED!



Check out this small diverse farm. The home is a 2bed/2bath, 1703.2 sq foot, historic adobe that has been fully and beautifully restored. Enjoy Colorado from the large (768 sq ft) open porch. This home sits on 126.06 deeded acres of land

situated in the bottoms of the old Culebra River Drainage. The soil is sandy and loamy and has been used for vegetable crop production in the past w/o the use of pesticides or herbicides. It is watered by the San Acacia acequia with an early decree for 1.62 CFS. There is a domestic house well permit number 284703. The property also has a holding pond for irrigation water. The owner is installing a new side roll sprinkler, which will irrigate up to 80+ acres M/L. The new side roll irrigation system will be installed before closing and will increase production. There are several outbuildings useful for storage and/or animals. The farm is located in Costilla County, Colorado just north of the New Mexico state line. It is about one hour to Taos.

The Rio Grande River is about 12 miles away. Red River Ski area and Rio Grande del Norte National Monument are near Questa, New Mexico about 40 minutes away. The Sand Dunes National Park is about 45 minutes north. **\$550,000** MLS #797313

12272 County Road R5 • San Luis
Bernadette Gingrass •Steffens & CO. Realty
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UNDER CONTRACT



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

2951 Bear Creek Circle • South Fork
Bernadette Gingrass •Steffens & CO. Realty
 (719)850-1993 • bernadette@steffenscorealty.com



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

37 Million Court • South Fork
Bernadette Gingrass •Steffens & CO. Realty
 (719)850-1993 • bernadette@steffenscorealty.com

FOR SALE!

Stately 2,818 Sq Ft. Mountain Home with Stunning Natural Light on 3.19 acres. This beautiful 3 bed 4 bath home is your perfect retreat. Open Split floor plan with beautiful cathedral ceiling and fireplace, large windows taking in the breath-taking outdoor sunlight and mountain views. Complete with beautiful furnishing, accessories and decor. The kitchen with eat in counter, gorgeous custom cabinetry, granite countertops and butler pantry is your dream kitchen for entertaining your family and friends. Separate office space off the dining area with patio door leads out to the great outdoors. There are two guest rooms one with private bath could be considered a separate master bedroom. Large master bedroom with large walk-in closet, fireplace gorgeous walk-in shower and access to deck with hot tub. Take in the stunning views from the main floor outdoor balcony. Your perfect place for that hot morning cup of coffee or relaxing evening glass of wine. This is a luxurious home located with private access to the national forest in The Timbers subdivision of South Fork Ranches. All this, just moments from Rio Grande Golf Club, Rio Grande River gold medal fishing and world class skiing at Wolf Creek Ski area. Don't wait call and schedule your private showing today! **\$1,250,000** MLS #798101



497 Timberline Drive • South Fork
Bernadette Gingrass •Steffens & CO. Realty
 (719)850-1993 • bernadette@steffenscorealty.com

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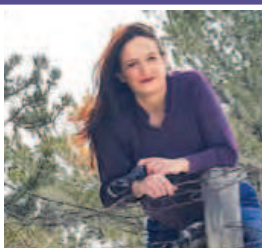
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2023 Farm Bill under discussion

By PATRICK SHEA

SAN LUIS VALLEY — According to an American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) survey, more than half of American adults support reauthorizing the Farm Bill, and 73 percent said failure to pass the bill by the end of December would hurt the U.S. economy (and the national food system).

Every five years, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) evaluates food system conditions and budgets for a wide range of programs. Agricultural Acts passed in 1938 and 1949 are the basis of the Farm Bill. The expansive budget covers nutrition programs and farm programs, both sides of the same coin.

For example, 2022 was the third worst on record for weather-related disasters. AFBF analysts estimate that crop loss from destructive weather added up to more than \$21 billion. Crop insurance, disaster assistance, and other programs fall on the USDA Farm Bill budget, along with the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and three conservation stewardship and easement programs.

The elephant on the balance sheet, however, is the Supplemental Nutrition

Assistance Program (SNAP). SNAP has been in the Farm Bill budget since 1973. It accounts for roughly 80 percent of total outlays.

In Colorado, the annual SNAP benefit payments calculated from the 2018 Farm Bill adds up to almost \$132 million. This program reaches a quarter-million families across the state. Nationwide, almost 12 percent of American families rely on SNAP benefits, roughly 41 million people.

When COVID-19 hit, SNAP participation grew by almost 17 percent coast to coast. To meet unprecedented demand during a pandemic, lawmakers increased SNAP expenditures by 95 percent. At the start of March, SNAP benefits dropped back to pre-pandemic levels. The payments no longer cover the hyper-inflated food prices of 2023. The Thrifty Food Plan, one of four USDA food plans, is designed to compensate for inflation while providing minimally balanced nutrition. The Emergency Food Assistance Program (FEFAP) run by the department's Food and Nutrition Service is another USDA program.

According to Saguache County Department of Social Services Direc-



Photo by Patrick Shea

According to Congressional Representative Lauren Boebert's San Luis Valley liaison Cathy Garcia, the 2023 Farm Bill should be finalized mid-summer and ready for a finalized budget before Oct. 1.

tor Christina Wilson, "The thing that I get concerned about is the food assistance for the elderly. They don't get very much, in terms of SNAP, on their benefit card."

Wilson went on to explain that other retirement payments each month do not include a surplus for buying groceries. Household budgets tighten while the

federal budget adjusts to accommodate food prices today. Calculating sufficient SNAP benefit coverage may be the biggest challenge for Congress.

The 2023 Farm Bill will be the 18th enacted since the 1930s. In addition to giving nutritional support, the bill is designed to provide financial stability for farmers. The subsidized crop

insurance and Whole Farm Revenue protection programs enable farmers to plan long-term.

Looking ahead, increasing broadband service for rural areas provides yet another way to reduce travel and other costs while gaining another tool for weathering economic and natural disasters.

Industrial hemp production is on a sustainable rise

CONTRIBUTED

VALLEY — The CBD market is still reeling from the aftermath of major overplanting of hemp in 2019. Only now is that glut beginning to level off and pricing becoming more stable.

"I don't see cannabinoid, including CBD, farming for hemp becoming a large agricultural crop again in the near future. There just isn't enough demand yet," said Randy Wright, general manager for Formation Ag in Monte Vista. "We can literally grow enough hemp horticulturally in this country to satisfy current demands.

"On the other hand," Wright added, "Industrial hemp is on a steady increase. It could, in fact, actually grow a little faster to handle the needs of those trying to make some really great things, scalable. When that happens, it could grow exponentially.

"It will never be the \$10,000 per acre crop that everybody thought CBD was going to be. But that brought the riff raff and misinformation into the industry that caused so many issues anyway. Industrial hemp is a safer crop to farm and has returns much more like corn and soybeans on a normal year, which makes it more real for actual farmers."

Colorado is still the fourth-largest hemp producing state in the country, even after the black eye caused by CBD, while other states that did not get in early and did not go through those losing years such as South Dakota have picked up the Industrial hemp idea and run with it, offering contracts for 8,000 acres in 2022.

Most crops evolve over time, toward areas where both farming and processing are easiest. The general consensus at Formation Ag is that the industrial hemp market will settle into areas like the fly over states. Areas where humidity does not affect processing as much.

The San Luis Valley is a prime location for hemp farming, just as Phil Warner of Ecofiber Industries in Australia told us when he presented at Adams State University almost 10 years ago. Valley farmers can control the water on the crop as it grows, and humidity does not cause the hurd to stick to the fiber after decortication.

Water consumption is a huge reason for San Luis Valley farmers to look at industrial hemp as a rotational crop. Industrial hemp uses up to two-thirds less water than potatoes and alfalfa, and is anecdotally shown to increase yields of crops in rotation. Hemp makes a lot more sense in rotation than crops such as green manure since hemp can generate revenue while putting organic matter back into the soil, and there is also promising evidence of retardation of nematodes in potatoes here in the valley.

The addition of a processing facility for fiber and hurd in the San Luis Valley makes industrial hemp viable. Global Fiber Processing opened the doors to their new facility with one of Formation Ag's FiberTrack decortication systems in July of 2022. Since that day, their hurd products have been used for builder grade hurd, animal bedding and they are in the process of developing a new structural product for the building industry that shows huge promise internationally. The fiber has

been tested and approved for use in non-woven applications such as face wipes and diapers.

"The orders are coming in," said Corbett Hefner, Executive Partner of Global Fiber Processing and CEO of Formation Ag. "The challenge right now is that we may have more orders than we have product available. And that will likely be a trend for several years to come as those 25,000 uses the hemp advocates talk about, sort themselves out and begin to become viable.

"We are in serious need of more acreage here in the San Luis Valley just to feed our existing processor, not to mention plans for expansion to cover new product demand very soon," Hefner added emphatically.

Global Fiber processing is looking for contracts now for the 2023 planting season. A farmer can be as involved as they want, from leasing land that can be farmed, to handling the crop from beginning to end and anywhere in between. "Most farmers can easily handle the farming part of the crop,"



Courtesy photo

Bales of hemp in a San Luis Valley field are loaded onto a trailer to transport for processing. Large round bales are used to maintain fiber length. A square baler nicks and cuts the stalks, compromising fiber strength.

Hefner said. "But some don't want the hassle of things like harvesting hemp. We can work that into the contract."

While CBD as a large agricultural crop is not likely to return soon, the future of industrial hemp looks very

bright. The good thing is, while it is not a get-rich quick idea, farmers can benefit from hemp by including it in rotation as a cash crop. And if some of the other anecdotal benefits play out, all the better.

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Valley founding families came for mining, stayed for agriculture

By **LYNDSIE FERRELL**

SAN LUIS VALLEY — As early as the mid-to late 1800s, families and explorers ventured into the wild known today as the San Luis Valley and through the years since have created an economy based on the rich agricultural opportunities this unique geological destination offers.

Beginning with the early Hispanic settlers, the San Luis Valley has been home to some of the United States' richest agricultural history for the southwest which included crops of corn, potatoes, lettuce, straw, barley and even at one-point strawberries and sugar beets.

According to history collected at the Rio Grande County Museum, the first ditches for irrigation of the western San Luis Valley in plazas located east of Del Norte. The Del Norte area was first inhabited by the Los Primeros Pobladores or the first settlers. The Atencio, The Silva and The San Jose/Lucero Ditch was dug and adjudicated in 1866, thus beginning the first crops of the San Luis Valley.

During the early days of the upper San Luis Valley, Los Primeros Pobladores brought flocks of sheep to the area and according to an article in the San Juan Prospector from 1875, there was at the time 300,000 pounds of wool shipped from the area for that year alone. As time and the need for other supplies changed along with the area's population, early settlers brought in cattle herds which drove some of the sheep herds further east toward Conejos and other eastern areas of the Valley.

By the time Rio Grande County



was formed in 1874, many eastern Americans, both from the Union and Confederate sides of the Civil War found the area a good place to live. Immigration to the San Luis Valley peaked during this time, bringing in several other ethnic groups including Scandinavian, Europeans, Swiss and German settlers. Manny came for the mining but most stayed due to the agricultural opportunities.

The San Luis Valley has also always been home to barley, the seed having been brought over from Germany with German colonies. One of the most famous and well-known early brewers in Valley history was the Bingle Brewery which was located south of present day Del Norte.

William Bingle and his wife and daughter came to Del Norte in 1872 as one of many founding families then. Bingle purchased 500 acres from the Martinez family and started

a brewery which produced beer. During his time, Bingle was known as an excellent brewer and produced "outstanding" beer according to reports out of the San Luna Prospector.

Bingle story ends in tragedy when after sustaining a severe head injury while using a sawmill Bingle's health declined and so did his business by 1882. Bingle eventually died on April 25, 1891. The brewery changed hands several times in the years after Bingle's death. Later and under ownership of Adolph Bielser when the brewery was in its prime, it produced 2,000 barrels a day and was called Ulmer Beer.

Today, the San Luis Valley produces principal crops of potatoes, alfalfa, native hay, barley, wheat, lettuce, spinach, canola, and agriculture continues to be the main source of income for residents of the Valley and the foundation of the economy.



Lloyd Kernen loading loose timothy hay onto hay fork attached to trolley and rail in center of hayshed circa 1933. Fritz Kernen farm on Pinos Creek.



Is it too good to be true?

By **CALEIGH PAYNE**

Alamosa County Farm Bureau President

What if I told you that there was something out there that protects wildlife habitat, cycles nutrients into the soil, sequesters carbon from the atmosphere, promotes plant biodiversity, can be managed for improved soil health including increased water-holding capacity of soils, lessens erosion, helps prevent catastrophic wildfires, protects open spaces across the country, creates billions of jobs, provides humans with bio-available protein, vitamins, and minerals, and provides over 400 by-products including medical products like insulin, reducing the need for further manufacturing of petroleum and plastic? Sounds too good to be true, right?

Fortunately for us, it is not too good to be true and that something is cattle and the products they provide. Here in the San Luis Valley, cattle production is such a vital and integral part of the economy, culture, and landscape.

Cattle is an incredible tool that is often misunderstood. "Integrating livestock" has been added as one of the five pillars of soil health, according to the National Resources Conservation Service. Cattle can be grazed in a way that regenerates soil and ecosystems and can be utilized to enhance our environment. In a 2015 paper in Agriculture, Ecosystems and Environment, researchers estimated that improved grazing methods could sequester possibly 300 million tons of carbon dioxide a year worldwide.

Something that may not be widely known, is that currently, farmers and ranchers often work in regular partnership with local conservation



Courtesy photo

Cattle production is a vital and integral part of the San Luis Valley economy, culture, and landscape.

districts, soil and water conservation groups, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, The Audubon Society, and more to raise cattle while simultaneously enhancing ecosystems to the best of their abilities.

Farmers and ranchers may not seem to fit the stereotype of conservationists, but I argue that they do. They have a personal stake in protecting our environment. Farmers and ranchers work in harmony with nature to produce one of the safest, most nutrient-dense food products available.

Although beef producers in the United States are already the global leader in sustainable beef production, U.S. cattle farmers and ranchers are committed to furthering their sustainability efforts and improved resource use.

A study conducted in 2018 found that since 1961, the U.S. beef industry has reduced emissions per pound of beef by more than 40% while also

producing over 60% more beef per animal. However, U.S. farmers and ranchers are not done yet!

The cattle industry is devoted to showing they are part of the climate solution. They have committed to the goal of demonstrating the climate neutrality of U.S. cattle production by 2040. This is just one of the exciting endeavors happening in agriculture currently.

This week is National Agriculture Week, and we encourage you to celebrate it with us! If you have questions about food or farming, please ask. If you have children, you can find fun agriculture-related learning games for them to explore at myamericanfarm.org. If you are in Alamosa County, stop by and see the National Agriculture Week display filled with farming books to check out, informational pamphlets, and more.

To the majority of farmers and ranchers, "sustainability" is not a buzzword, it is a way of life.

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Storytelling: the cornerstone of marketing

By PRISCILLA WAGGONER

HOOPER — Although farming has been in existence for thousands of years, farmers continue to be an interesting group of folks. They can sit in a room at an ag conference and listen to sobering news about the scarcity of water or the growing shortage of labor without showing any visible reaction.

But bring up the topic of “marketing” and the response is just shy of a collective groan. Farmers selling what they grow directly to others — versus relying on the commodities exchange — is as uncomfortable and foreign to them as the practice of farming might be to someone who has worked in, say, webcasting.

Sarah Jones, who has worked in webcasting, understands that reluctance. When she and husband, Michael, a fifth-generation native of the San Luis Valley who was working in biotech, chose in August of 2017 to leave highly successful careers behind in Denver and return to Hooper to be part of the Jones family’s farming operation, there was a lot on the line.

The farm could not support two families — Michael’s father, Rob, plus Michael, Sarah and their two little girls. In an industry that is a business of scale, Michael and Sarah would have to make it on about 600 acres with Michael farming alongside his father while Sarah, who grew up in the “burbs and beaches of San Diego” and “didn’t speak ag or even know that much about ag” would handle the marketing.

But Sarah always knew that “moving back was part of the deal.” She and Michael were determined to provide the same “upbringing and childhood” to their little girls that Michael had experienced as a child.

Coming up on six years later, Sarah now has a totally different take on what successful marketing in agriculture can look like. She has the data and, most importantly, the encouraging bottom line to back up what she says. And marketing, she says, is not what most people, including farmers, might expect.

“Fifty percent of farming is marketing,” she says. For that reason, the Jones “don’t plant anything until we have the market.”

Finding that market is a mixture of doing research and then building a relationship.



Jones Organic Farms near Hooper.

Photo courtesy of Jones Organic Farms

Sarah knew that they would need to market their organic produce in the Front Range where there is more of a desire to buy organic produce among people who have the means to pay the extra that organic typically costs.

She researched what specific buyers were selling and what other farmers in the Valley were also providing, which led to her finding a niche for Jones Organic Farms where they could offer products like what was already being sold but also unique.

The next step is developing a market, which she says is about building relationships. For that reason, Sarah does not use contracts. Deals are negotiated in conversations and sealed with a verbal agreement and a handshake.

“Contracts don’t guarantee anything,” she says, citing a number of farmers who suffered losses after investing in hemp and the contract-

ed buyer not being able to follow through. “If you build a relationship of trust and collaboration with the buyer where you know them and they know you and you’re both committed to providing the other with what they need, that partnership builds good working relationships that are successful.”

Another key part to marketing is a mindset of customer service, asking questions to learn what the customer needs and then seeing how her family’s operation can support and help to satisfy what is needed.

Sarah’s approach is also part of the foundation. She “loves being faced with a challenge,” which may sound daunting to some but, as she puts it, taking on a challenge is second nature to farmers who face challenges every day.

But, most of all, Sarah believes the most crucial part of speaking with

potential customers is storytelling.

“People want to hear about our lives, how we live, what’s important to us about being farmers and why we do what we do,” she said. “They have a real passion to know who their money is going to and what kinds of things that money supports.”

“It’s really all about telling the story of the family farm, and people respond to that. They end up feeling like they’re not just buying a product, they’re supporting a way of life that people find very interesting,” she said.

She is quiet for a moment and then adds, “What an honor it is to tell about our lives, our community and our agriculture to people who would never really learn about it otherwise. I think it makes them feel a part of that, and that’s important.”

The real proof comes down to just how many customers Jones Organic

Farms has for their potatoes and other crops they grow. What follows is just a partial list of “amazing customers we’re so blessed to work with” — Whole Foods, Amy’s Organics, Boulder Valley School District, Moxie Mill & Bakery, Barton Springs Mill (Austin, Texas), Dry Storage Mill & Bakery, Family Jones Distillery, Dry Land Distillery, Primitive Brewery, Tumbleweed Bakery (local), Provision Bread & Bakery (Colorado Springs), Fresh Guys, Kilt Farms, Ollin Farms, Valley Roots Food Hub (local), Elephant Cloud Market & Cafe (local), East Denver Food Hub, Boulder County Farmers Market, White Rock Specialties, and The Oil Barn (Safflowers).

Sarah is willing to share many other experiences with others if people are interested in learning. Anyone interested can reach her through their website at www.jonesfarmsorganics.com.



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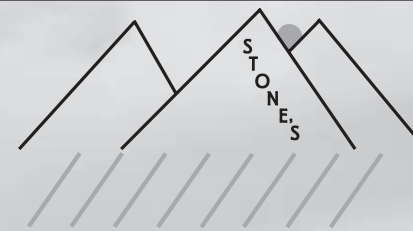



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Potato growers prepare to play their best hand

By JIM EHRLICH

Potato growers are preparing for the 2023 planting season, marketing and shipping their 2022 crop, and contemplating what cards Mother Nature is going to deal them this season. Last year SLV potato growers planted 50,000 acres of potatoes which produced over 20 million cwt. of quality potatoes for potato consumers across the nation.

Farmers are eternal optimists, always believing next year will be better. This coming season promises to have several opportunities-challenges for them. Key factors will be irrigation water supplies, availability of disease-free potato seed, and rising input costs.

Despite an improved snowpack in the Rio Grande Basin growers have to wonder if they will have enough irrigation water to finish out a crop this year. The groundwater aquifer is beginning 2023 at its lowest point in many years and the cost of irrigation continues to increase annually.

While 2022 potato prices have been very good there is no promise that the 2023 market will be profitable. Market signals this spring indicate that the potential for another good year is probable, but Mother Nature is dealing the cards, and the dealer usually has the best hand.

The local certified potato seed industry is under extreme pressure from elevated levels of Potato Virus Y (PVY). Approximately 8,000 acres

of our 50,000 acres of potatoes are dedicated to producing disease-free seed to plant the rest of our production. It has become extremely difficult to keep PVY levels below the limits required for seed to be classified as certified.

It is critical to start any crop with the best seed possible and potatoes are no different. Inferior seed leads to reduced yield and a higher risk for disease issues that require increased costs for growers. These costs reduce a grower's potential profit.

Having the best certified seed is extremely important and there is a shortage in 2023. How will this affect our crop this season? Deal the cards and play your hand.

Input costs for growers increased by nearly 30 percent in 2022. Fuel, fertilizer, chemicals, transportation, labor, etc. all cost more last year. While some of these costs have moderated recently, none of them are under a grower's control. I did not mention equipment expenses, did I?

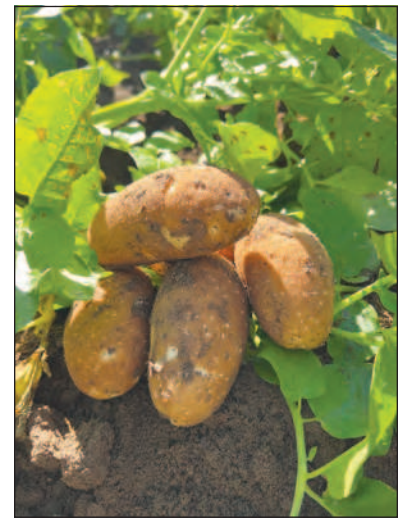
As you travel around our beautiful Valley this summer and observe the farm fields, please take some time to appreciate what our farmers here and across our great nation do to produce the safe, abundant, and affordable food we eat daily. Especially our nutritious potatoes, America's favorite vegetable.

— Jim Ehrlich is executive director of the Colorado Potato Administrative Committee that is based in Monte Vista.



Potato field in bloom with sprinkler.

Courtesy photos



Midseason russets from the 2022-23 crop year.



Potato field in bloom.

CSU Extension expands to better serve San Luis Valley

CONTRIBUTED

MONTE VISTA — Colorado State University Extension in the San Luis Valley has been strengthened by county and university investment and community support, expanding its capacity to serve residents in the area.

Rallying behind Extension's land-grant mission in the Valley is a dedicated staff led by Larry Brown.

Brown first came to the San Luis Valley as an Extension livestock agent in 1986. He returned to Extension in May 2021, after running his own business for 26 years.

Brown knew he would have his work cut out for him when he applied to be the Extension director for the six-county San Luis Valley area. When he was first hired by Extension in 1986, the region had eight agents and a substantial support staff; when he returned there was one agent and one office manager.

Brown did not want his grandkids to grow up in a community without

the positive influence of a strong Extension educational program. He has worked to rebuild the Extension team by piecing together funding from wherever he can find it, which has been no easy feat considering two of the six counties are among the lowest-income counties in Colorado, and all of them are under financial strain.

CSU and the counties provided funding to hire three more Extension professionals, and all six counties have pitched in funds to hire part-time program coordinators. Brown could not be happier with the team the counties and CSU have helped him assemble.

"They're everywhere, and they're doing everything," Brown said. "They're an amazing team, and as long as I can hopefully clear the path for them and then stay out of their way, they'll continue doing amazing things."

Brown hopes to inspire continued support through the work he and his

team are doing and their investment in the community.

"The bottom line is we're building capacity here, we're building trust, we're showing value, we're showing service," he said.

"In CSU Extension, our belief is that everybody will be better if we continue learning through our entire lives," Brown said. "In San Luis Valley Area Extension, everything we do is designed to foster healthy youth and families; prosperous farms, ranches and businesses; and strong, resilient, proud communities."

Though most of his staff were hired in the past six to 18 months, they already have made great strides.

The six-county 4-H program gained 150 youth participants last year, for a total enrollment of more than 400. By expanding youth programming beyond 4-H, the agents and coordinators reached an additional 1,400 young people in 2022.

Extension youth development

programs take many forms, from 4-H clubs whose members complete projects to one-time programs in school and after school. An example of an after-school program might be a seed activity, where participants learn about how seeds germinate and then plant an herb garden to take home. All Extension youth programming is focused on hands-on activities and developing leadership and life skills.

Extension staff hosted Ag Fest for the second year Feb. 13-15. This year's Ag Fest taught more than 400 fifth-graders from 12 schools about agriculture and where their food comes from. Students rotated through 15 stations, where they got to milk a fake cow, make butter, play with worms, and handle baby chicks, among other activities.

New to the Valley, Juntos 4-H allows Extension to reach more diverse families by inviting the whole family to participate in activities. Juntos means "together" in Spanish, and the

program aims to improve high school graduation rates and help students access post-high school education or career training.

"We want to bridge the gap with high school students between graduating and higher education, whatever that might look like, and help them make their dream a reality," said Carol Gurule, the Juntos 4-H youth development instructor. "Right now, Juntos is focused on Latino families, although the doors are open to all families."

For adults, Extension offers classes on food, health, and finances, from food safety and preservation to aging mastery. Family consumer science master instructor Janae Naranjo can teach you how to live a longer, healthier life, budget for that extended future and make delicious "strawberry leather" — a healthier alternative to convenience snacks.

Agriculture is an economic foundation of the Valley, and Extension

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Gallegos family talks shop about farm and trucking business

By MARIE MCCOLM

MONTE VISTA — Zeke and Victoria Gallegos are no strangers to the farming in the San Luis Valley. They have been farming for quite a few years. Their business Hot Creek Trucking and farm has been growing steadily.

They are also no strangers to the changing weather months in the San Luis Valley. Growing alfalfa, sharecropping with other farmers, and driving an 18-wheeler and selling hay and Alfalfa here in the Valley and New Mexico, both Zeke and Victoria have the ups and downs in the Valley.

When asked if they feel the recent snowfall will help this year Zeke said, “We have had more of a snowpack this year than we have had in a while so this should really help. yes. I think we will probably see a couple of more snows before it’s all said and done though.”

Victoria agreed with her husband adding, “The moisture really helps a lot, for irrigating and just everything on the farm.”

The couple works hard every year raising alfalfa and baling and selling hay. Their son Ezekiel Jr. is working with them on the farm as well.

“We are going to have him start helping more this season, too,” said Zeke. “He likes the tractor, and he enjoys driving that and baling the hay. We are going to start having him help with the irrigating more, pulling the tubes and moving siphons. We are currently working on cleaning and burning ditches, harrowing, getting ready to either start planting or getting the hay fields ready for irrigation. We are prepping our sprinklers for the season. It’s coming for sure.”

Zeke stated that there are usually three cuts that they do during the season on the alfalfa.

“We usually start cutting the alfalfa the first of June, the second cut usually happens the first of July, this is when we always get rained on too, we call it the ‘monsoon season.’ The last cut we do on the alfalfa is usually the last of August, so about three cuts total,” he said. There’s

a lot of hard work involved in the farming process. Many people aren’t aware of how much work, but it is a lot. We flood irrigate around 100 acres. Flood irrigating is an all-night job. We have to take the siphons out to the field. When the water is there, you irrigate all night. You have to constantly change the siphons, even if it’s 3 in the morning, you have to change the siphons. It is fun, but it’s a lot of work.”

Victoria said that her husband usually does the harder work, and she does the easier work.

“I do the harrowing; I drag the ditch; he usually does all the irrigating,” she said. “Our kids have enjoyed growing up on a farm. We enjoy it as well. If we could send out a message to anyone younger thinking of farming, we would say do it. It’s a lot of hard work but I think that everyone should experience being a farmer once in their lifetime. People don’t realize it, but without farmers, well it’s a cycle, chickens, eggs, crops, if you think about it without farmers, there’s no food.”



Zeke and his son Ezekiel Jr. stand next to the family truck. Zeke Jr. is doing more and more on the ranch.



Courtesy photos

Zeke and Victoria Gallegos grow and haul alfalfa on their ranch outside of Monte Vista. They said they usually get three cuts of alfalfa each season.



Photo by Diane Drekman

Cactus Hill Farm of Capulin has more than 250 sheep.

Cactus Hill Farm keeps sheepherding tradition alive

By DIAN DREKMAN

CAPULIN — Elena Miller-ter Kuile, owner of Cactus Hill Farm, comes from a lengthy line of sheep herders.

Originally from Espinola, N.M., through six generations, the family settled in Capulin. At one time, her great-great-grandfather had thousands of sheep and was considered a wealthy man.

Kuile also has strong family ties to Holland. When growing up, her father had to sell the sheep due to challenging times.

Kuile always retained her love of farming and for sheep. After going to college to study soil and agricultural development, she returned to the family farm and started Cactus Hill Farm with her father 10 years ago.

“I started with eight sheep from Northern Colorado and some from my neighbor,” she said.

Cactus Hill Farm has 400 acres and about 250 sheep-different breeds all which have different types of wool.

“Wensleydale sheep have curly hair,” Kuile said. “LBDs have long hair. Merino sheep are very popular

because the wool quality is fine and soft, and not scratchy, which makes Merino sheep wool very wearable. Churro sheep have a very coarse fleece. Their wool is used more for rugs, as well as for colcha embroidery.”

Kuile breeds sheep whose wool works well for clothing. She specializes in custom yarns and clothing.

Sheep come in assorted colors, which affects the color of the wool. Some wool is dyed with natural pigments. For example, a local yellow bush called rabbitbrush is used to cre-

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Agriculture Commissioner celebrates Colorado farmers and ranchers

By JOHN WATERS

COLORADO — Kate Greenberg was appointed to serve as Colorado’s Commissioner of Agriculture by Governor Jared Polis in December 2018. As Commissioner, Greenberg provides leadership and direction to the Colorado Department of Agriculture and its 300 employees. Commissioner Greenberg has worked in agriculture for over 12 twelve years, from boots-on-the-ground experience to advocating for family farmers through two federal Farm Bills.

The Valley Courier recently interviewed Greenberg as part of our recognition of National Agriculture Day and asked for her perspective on agriculture in Colorado and the San Luis Valley.

WATERS: Can you give our readers an overview of the state of agriculture?

GREENBERG: In ag, as in many sectors, we’ve got a lot of challenges. When it comes to environmental challenges, farmers and ranchers are on the frontlines; they are dealing with drought, an incredible snowpack, wind, and floods; all those environmental challenges that we deal with year in, and year out are now exacerbated by climate change. When you think about climate, farmers, and ranchers are the first to feel the impact in many ways.

We’ve got challenges with global supply change issues, inflation, the cost of doing business overall, challenges with labor, finding enough labor, and of course, making sure we are supporting our workers in agriculture and provid-

ing resources to support everyone who works in agriculture.”

Despite that, I think we are in a moment of incredible opportunity. Our farmers and ranchers here in Colorado are doing things that are on the leading edge of what is happening nationwide.

Recently, I had the opportunity to meet with USDA [United States Department of Agriculture] Secretary Vilsack. When I heard him talk about his vision for the future of American agriculture, Colorado is part of that leading edge and vision.

Let me talk about what that looks like. From our vantage point, economic opportunity and economic resilience is foundational, which means building diverse market opportunities for Colorado farmers and ranchers. That is everything from strengthening our local and regional food system, investing in local and regional processing, expanding direct business to consumer opportunities, and expanding our Colorado Proud brand. We do lots of work with our international trading partners. We make lots of business-to-business sales where we take Colorado food and ag companies abroad, support them in doing business and help them do new business in foreign markets.

I mentioned climate; voluntary stewardship is essential, and farmers and ranchers are always thinking about how they can take care of the environment and address our needs as a society in new and innovative ways. We are working on that at the depart-

ment through soil, water, and climate. We built our soil health program that is all farmer and rancher-led.

Colorado Department of Agriculture is the country’s only state department of ag. to be a project lead on a USDA Climate-Smart Commodities grant. That means we are bringing in \$25 million to Colorado ag and six other Intermountain Western states for farmer and rancher-led solutions to climate change, building climate resilience and mitigation. It is happening not just here in Colorado, but we are leading an approach in the Intermountain West region.

That is infinitely tied to water. Lots going on with water across Colorado and all of our river basins.

At the department, we just passed through the joint budget committee two key position requests; one is for an ag-water advisor, something we actually don’t have, and the other is for a climate marketing specialist to combine that market opportunity with our stewardship goals so climate-smart ag can find new business opportunities.

All of this wouldn’t matter too much if we weren’t thinking about future generations. In Colorado, we find all these ways in which our ag community is investing in future generations. We think and plan for succession, and we provide succession planning and support through the department.

WATERS: Last year, Mexico opened up the country to American exports of potatoes from a previous 26-kilometer



Kate Greenberg

band near the international border to the rest of the country. How is that working? Have American exports of potatoes increased?

GREENBERG: U.S. producers are now able to export to the entire country. Our team in the Valley, our fruit and vegetable inspection team is fantastic; we couldn’t do business without them, and they are integral to our ability to export. They have done everything to a “T” to make sure our inspections are in line with the requirements of the country of Mexico for our producers to export.

WATERS: Can you address the potential implementation of agrivoltaics in the Valley?

GREENBERG: Agrivoltaics is something we have been working on for some time now. A \$3 million bill was passed as part of our \$76 million recovery package. That \$3 million went to support farmers and ranch-

ers that were interested in investing in agrivoltaics. The basic concept of agrivoltaics is stacking solar production on top of productive agricultural land. Agrivoltaics has made us look at how we do both, produce energy and agriculture. We see a number of operations try this out. With livestock, this is a little bit trickier but if the solar panels are high enough, they can graze underneath them. Farmers produce crops under the panels. The goal is stacking revenue streams on the same acreage.

The water challenges the Valley is facing are no light matter. From a statewide perspective, we often look to the leadership in the Valley because you all have been through things that other basins are just starting to go through. The question for me is how we ensure agriculture is a driver of our economy and community of our cultures here in Colorado in a dryer future.



Spring time in the San Luis Valley

Photo by Brian Williams

Spring in ag country is time to prepare fields to plant crops.

TRADITION

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ate a beautiful yellow color.

Kuile also uses a company in Craig called Yampa Valley Fiber Works which takes the raw fleece that has been sheared and spins it into yarn. Kuile uses acid dyes to create brilliant colors like lime green and bright orange.

Kuile recently converted an unused shed into her yarn shop where she makes her creations. She sells her yarn online and at wool markets in Salida and Santa Fe.

Kuile also talked about the business about shepherding. She shared some facts about sheep. Sheep love cold weather and are well suited for the extreme Colorado climate. Their hair grows faster.

Unlike cows that can roam open

range without supervision, sheep need people to keep the herd together and dogs to protect the sheep. Sheep can be used for wool or meat.

Kuile lets her sheep graze in the pasture during the day. At night, dogs herd the sheep into corrals to protect them from predators.

Once a year, usually in April, all the sheep go into the barn for lambing season.

“Sheep, like everything, is subject to what is most profitable in the industry,” Kuile said. “White wool is more desirable than black wool. Merino sheep are the most popular. There are hundreds of kinds of sheep, yet alternative types, or heritage breeds, don’t gain attention because they don’t make a profit in the industry.”

They are called hair sheep and are only used for wool.

Sheep are not the only source of income on Cactus Hill Farm. They are blessed to have some of the oldest water rights in Conejos County. Therefore, they can sustain their large herd of sheep.

Elena and her father also sell hay and grow an ancient grain called emmer, similar to wheat. Jessica Larriva of Tumbleweed Bakery in Monte Vista uses the organic products of Cactus Hill Farm.

Cactus Hill Farm is on Facebook. Their email is emillerterkuile@gmail.com. The website is www.cactushillfarm.com. To order custom yarn, clothing, or other organic products, call Kuile at 719-849-9164.

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Camels in the San Luis Valley

BY DIANE DREMANN

CAPULIN — Nestled in a valley between Capulin and La Jara, is a unique farm featuring camels.

Matt and Meghan Stalzer own The Camel Farm. Meghan, aka the Camel Chick, spins camel and sheep wool, teaches spinning wool classes in nearby Alamosa, and makes fudge treats, using camel milk and other organic ingredients.

Pronounced foodge because of its smoothness, the Stalzer's camel fudge is so good people have said it is the best fudge they have ever eaten.

Meghan also makes soap out of camel milk.

In addition to the farm, the Stalzers have an unusual bed and breakfast, Camels and a Yurt, which provide visitors the chance to experience these animals and a slice of farm life with spectacular views of the San Juan Mountains and of the San Luis Valley.

They have a hard-sided yurt with a propane heater, wood stove, bed, futon, and coffee service, with enough room to sleep four people. The bed and breakfast is open year-round.

Why camels? It turns out camels are ideally suited for the harsh climate of the San Luis Valley.

“They tolerate temperatures from 140 to -40 below zero,” Meghan said. “Camels love eating cactus and sagebrush. Their mouth has tentacles to help move the food into their mouth. Camels can change the pressure in their feet, like a car tire, for going on a hard or soft surface. They have three eyelids and furry ears.”

Matt and Meghan Stalzer have always been interested in homesteading.

One day, in the homesteading magazine “Grit,” they saw an article about camels. The Stalzers went to a camel seminar in California in 2012,

met other camel farmers, and the rest, as they say, is history.

In 2014, Matt found a piece of property near Moffat. The Stalzers started Mudita Camel Dairy with Big Momma Maya and her son, Niam.

Mudita is a Sanskrit word meaning “our happiness comes from your happiness.”

Meghan shared the benefits of camel milk.

“It is naturally homogenized, like goat’s milk,” she said. “It has lower fat than cow’s milk. Camel milk is good for lactose-intolerant people and is the closest to breast milk.”

In 2018, the Stalzers found their dream property, 35 acres near Capulin with endless views of the San Juan Mountains and plenty of room for the camels. The property has a couple of centuries-old cabins left by the Martinez homesteaders long ago.

Currently, the Stalzers are not selling milk. But Big Momma is pregnant and they hope to sell camel milk again in the future. They plan to sell food from their garden at farmer’s

markets this summer.

The Stalzers have four female camels. Niam, the male is full grown. They also have four donkeys.

There are predators around but Meghan explains, “Donkeys are also known as guardian livestock. (Also) ...the unique smell of the camels is off putting to the coyotes.”

Along with camels and donkeys, there are ducks, chickens, and a special 5-year-old boy who embraces his parents’ lifestyle.

To find out more about The Camel Farm, the fudge, soap, or the bed and breakfast, Camels and a Yurt, go to www.camelbnb.com or go to Facebook and look for The Camel Chick.



Photos by Diane Drekman

Niam is the lone male camel of the Camel Farm.



The Camel Farm features four female camels. Pictured are Big Momma and daughters Myra and Kristine.



Matt and Meghan Stalzer own The Camel Farm that is located between Capulin and La Jara. They have a bed and breakfast on the property – a hard-sided yurt.

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works to serve farmers and ranchers through research and educational programming tailored to their needs, with courses on soil health, production management and succession planning, to name a few.

In February, SLV Extension graduated its first group of Annie’s Project participants. Annie’s Project is a certificate program that empowers women in agriculture through farm and risk management education, networks, and resources. Farm Credit of Southern Colorado, officed in Monte Vista, funded the entire expense of this first Annie’s Project class, and two of their staff, Leah Weyers and Katy Francis, were co-facilitators of the class.

“It’s one of those heart projects to be involved in Annie’s Project,” said 4-H youth development instructor Morgan Young-Gilmore, who is a sixth-generation cattle rancher and led the program along with Alamosa County program coordinator Caleigh

Payne.

It is obvious in talking to the entire SLV Extension staff that there is a lot of heart in everything they do.

Extension attracts a certain type of person, Brown said.

“If you take a look at most Extension people, you find the heart of a teacher, the soul of a servant, the loyalty of a Labrador, and the work ethic of your favorite stock dog – mine’s a border collie,” he said.

When Brown returned to San Luis Valley Area Extension, he saw what it could be, and he brought the energy and determination to drive that vision. He hopes Extension’s partners in the Valley will take the long view and continue to support growth and positive outcomes that might not be immediate.

Education is a long-term game, he said.

“Never accept victory or admit defeat because we haven’t crossed a finish line — education is like that.”



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