



Sunday, March 12

Shorts



Monte Vista Crane Festival schedule

Friday, March 10

9 a.m.-5 p.m. — Craft and Nature Fair — Free

5:30 a.m.-7 p.m. — Photography Workshop — \$150

7-9 a.m. — Sunrise Crane Tour — \$10

10 a.m.-2 p.m. — Special Tour Blanca Wetlands — \$20

10:30 a.m.-12 p.m. — Special Tour Home Lake Birding — \$5

10:30 a.m.-2 p.m. — Special Tour Trinchera Tour and Lunch — \$55

1:30-2:30 p.m. — On Site Training Crane Basics — \$15

4-6 p.m. — Sunset Crane Tour — \$10

7 p.m. — 'Wings Over Water' movie at Vali 3 — Free

Saturday, March 11

9 a.m.-5 p.m. — Craft and Nature Fair — Free

6-10 a.m. — Birders' Breakfast

7-9 a.m. — Sunrise Crane Tour — \$10

10 a.m.-12 p.m. — Fly the Coop 5k Run/Walk — \$25

10 a.m.-1 p.m. — Special Raptor Tour — \$20

10 a.m.-1 p.m. — Special Tour BLM Elephant Rocks — \$20

10 a.m.-1 p.m. — Special Tour Homelake Birding — \$5

Noon — 'Wings Over Water' movie at Vali 3 — Free

1:30-2:30 p.m. — On-Site Training Crane Basics — \$15

4-6 p.m. — Sunset Crane Tour — \$10

Talks are \$5 at the door per talk or \$20 for Keynote and all talks

11 a.m.-12 p.m. — Talk: Habitat Selection and movement patterns of Cranes — \$5

1-2 p.m. — Talk: Elk on the SLV Refuge Complex: What's going on out there. — \$5

3-4 p.m. — Talk: The Secret Lives of Nesting Sandhill Cranes — \$5

7-10 p.m. — Film Premier and Keynote Address: George Archibald - Lessons learned from 50 years of Crane conservation — \$10

Sunday, March 12

9 a.m.-12 p.m. — Craft and Nature Fair — Free

5:30 a.m.-7 p.m. — Photography Workshop — \$150

8-10 a.m. — Sunrise Crane Tour — \$10

10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. — Special Raptor Tour — \$20

5 p.m. — 'Wings Over Water' movie at Vali 3 — Free

Student-run business project opens in Center

BY PATRICK SHEA

CENTER — In late 2019, Katrina Ruggles began the search for grant money to fund capstone projects at Center High School so students could learn how to start and run a business.

Three years later on Feb. 28, students held the grand opening of the Blue Loft at 371 Worth St., a space for playing games, having meetings, and relaxing.

"I think we called it the business club when we started back then," Ruggles recalled. "We shared ideas and decided to start a youth-run business that students would run as a coop."

Ruggles said they created a 501c3,

but making money is secondary to the primary goal of giving students business experience.

A year after securing the first grants, Ruggles worked with Lawrence Trujillo at the Viking Youth Club to advance the program. In the meantime, the building owner at 371 Worth St. arranged for the program to rent the space. After gaining access in January 2022, students scrubbed

Please see LOFT on Page 2A

The Blue Loft at 371 Worth St. in the heart of Center opened Feb. 28 to introduce Center students to the world of business.

Photo by Patrick Shea



Saguache eatery is hyper-local

BY PATRICK SHEA

SAGUACHE — If you want to eat locally grown food at a restaurant, you cannot get any more local than Breads and Botanicals in Saguache. Taking the "farm-to-table" concept one step closer to home, co-owner Tylor Berreth cultivates Lion's Mane mushrooms on-site — "tent-to-table."

Danielle and Tylor Berreth opened Breads and Botanicals in the summer of 2021. Almost two years later, the couple echoed the message from the opening post on their Facebook page. "We believe food is our medicine. We also believe in supporting community-based agriculture."

The Breads and Botanicals menu includes plant-based, vegan options that feature local ingredients. Their offerings have evolved and expanded while keeping sources local. Before opening, the couple had experience working in the food industry (Tylor for Whole Foods and Danielle with Natural Grocers). But growing, cooking, and sharing food is next-level performance in the industry.

"Danielle has a baking



Photo by Patrick Shea

Tylor Berreth flashes fresh Lion's Mane mushrooms at Breads and Botanicals, a short walk from the Alpine Valley Mushrooms cultivation room behind him.

background," Tylor explained. "She's definitely a natural baker. They have generations of bakers in her family."

Cookies, cinnamon rolls, and biscuits are a few of Danielle's featured items at Breads and Botanicals.

"And I enjoy cooking," Tylor

elaborated. "We kind of fell into this spot. We didn't really plan for this to happen. It was just a bunch of synchronicities that allowed us to be here, and we've expanded on those synchronicities."

Although Breads and Botanicals does not fill a huge

Please see EATERY on Page 4A



William Brian Crowther

Former school district superintendent arrested

Records indicate he resigned from Sargent Schools

STAFF REPORT

SANFORD — Former school superintendent William Brian Crowther, 61, of Sanford was arrested Monday, March 6, on charges he allegedly committed sexual assault on a child by

Please see CROWTHER on Page 2A

Moffat archers capture state titles

SUBMITTED BY JACK SCIACCA

Moffat Pk-12 Archery Coach

MOFFAT — Moffat PK-12 Schools recently competed in the Colorado State National Archery in the Schools Program 2023 Virtual Tournament. For the second time in four seasons, the Moffat Middle School Team captured the Colorado State Championship title.

Moffat's Middle School, 12-person team, bested Renaissance Magnet School from Castle Rock by 53 total points. Olathe Middle School rounded out the top teams with a third-place finish. Moffat's coed team effort was made possible by the performances of the following archers: Shelby Morley, Chase Shellabarger, Tanner Shellabarger, Caiden Cross, Javad Taylor, Madison Payne, Daniel Hollenbeck, Kolina Skoglund,

Kandra Pollard, Xander Schwartz, Wyatt Payne, and Ella Goizueta.

Shelby Morley, eighth grade, turned in the highest score across all divisions in the tournament to be named the 2023 Middle School Colorado State Champion Girl. Shelby scored 285 out of a possible 300 points. This is Shelby's third time representing Moffat at the podium but the first time capturing the title.

Chase Shellabarger, eighth grade, was named the Middle School Colorado State Champion Boy for the second time in his Moffat career. Tanner Shellabarger, sixth grade, placed second.

Lacey Sheffield represented Moffat Elementary by edging out Chloe Fanning, Granby Elementary, to become the Colorado Elementary

Please see ARCHERS on Page 2A



Photo courtesy of Amber Manchester

Moffat Elementary Archers prepare to compete in the 2023 National Archery in the Schools Program Colorado State Tournament. Left to right: Kyren Plumley, Marcus Potter, Raina Chatterton, Lacey Sheffield, and Rory Grover.

Saguache County Landfill provides options

By PATRICK SHEA

SAGUACHE — For residents, the Saguache County Landfill provides options unavailable in other counties, and the rates compare reasonably.

The minimum trash charge for less than 200 pounds is \$6, with an additional \$2 fee for every 100 pounds over 200. If a load is uncovered, customers pay a \$10 charge. Construction debris runs \$2, and burnable trash is \$1.20.

Like most facilities, the Saguache County Landfill does not accept electronics, wet or dry paint, and smoldering hot trash. Hazardous material is also forbidden, carrying legal consequence for customers who get caught dumping needles, batteries, light bulbs, and human waste. However, the landfill accepts certain “white goods” like

dishwashers, stoves, hot water heaters, and furnaces.

The Saguache landfill no longer accepts non-friable asbestos. The fee for dumping a freon unit is \$37 and requires a certificate of freon removal. A mobile home from Saguache County costs \$500 to drop off, but the fee for mobile homes from another county is \$1,000. Not all Colorado landfills accept mobile homes and other waste. For counties like Saguache, customers pay different rates according to residency, and not all options are available. At the Chaffee County Landfill, for example, non-county residents pay a premium to dump items from only six of the 19 waste categories.

At the Saguache landfill, rates for tires vary for six categories. These include tractors, trucks, and cars — with and

without rims. Tire rates range from \$5 to \$27. Carcasses cost \$10 for animals under 400 pounds and \$19 for 401 or more pounds.

Customers with a junk vehicle and title pay nothing, and metal is also free of charge. Recyclables mirror trash rates. The recycling details on the Saguache County website scrolls for more than 600 words of detailed restrictions and definitions.

As the windy season blows through, hours of operation at the Saguache County Landfill vary with the weather. Customers should call the direct line — 719-221-1956 — to confirm that the facility is open before driving to its location at 25125 Kelly Rd. and CR 55. The Saguache County website also includes information about what is and is not acceptable.

New Loan Officer hired at SLV Federal Bank

CONTRIBUTED

ALAMOSA — San Luis Valley Federal Bank recently hired Jesus Gonzalez as a Loan Officer, and he will assist bank members with their mortgage and consumer loan needs. Gonzalez is bilingual and will help the community’s Spanish-speaking members with their banking needs. He will be located at the bank’s West

Alamosa branch. He is originally from Michoacan, Mexico, and moved to Alamosa at a young age. He graduated from Alamosa High School and attended Adams State University, working toward a Human Performance and Physical Education degree.

Mark Bechaver, CEO of SLVFB, said, “We are excited to have Jesus

on our team. He understands our community and will provide valuable service to our members. We look forward to the excellent service that he will provide for our members.”

LOFT Continued from Page 1A

the floors, renovated, and painted the walls. They also learned the process for submitting bids to do the work.

Mikela Tarlow from ActionLab 360 has helped guide capstone students, and Trujillo has also supported Ruggles and others opening the Blue Loft. Now that the doors are open, Ruggles recently hired Walter Martinez to run the program.

In the future, Ruggles anticipates using the space for scheduled events before settling on fixed hours. For example, students could host a gaming tournament. They have discussed a painting event for adults in the future, although initial events will cater to Viking students. The entrance fee will be factored into the business equation. While entrepreneurs need to make money, many of their fellow students have

limited finances. They will need to find the right price point.

Opening the Blue Loft shows another benefit of coordination between town officials, local business owners, and the school district.

When a couple bought four buildings in Center, Town Manager Brian Lujan explained, they wanted to avoid having one of them stand vacant.

“They reached out and said they wanted to be a part of this,” Lujan said. “How can we help out? We started looking at a youth-run business.”

With the Blue Loft up and running, “They can learn business skills and run a business. You gotta crawl before you walk,” he added.

As Center progresses toward Urban Renewal Authority organization, the potential tax



OBITUARY

Ronald (Ron) D. Golden

Ronald (Ron) D. Golden, 81, Passed away on March 3, 2023, in Del Norte, Colo.

Ron was born May 2, 1942, in Wichita Falls, Texas, to Herbert and Edith Golden. Ron graduated from Wichita Falls High School. He soon enlisted in the Army after high school where he had basic training in Fort Polk, La.

After Ron got out of the Army, he moved to the San Luis Valley where Ron continued his education at Trinidad State Jr. College for aquaculture. After college, Ron worked at the Monte Vista Wildlife Refuge doing landscape work.

Ron enjoyed fishing, he often fished at Home Lake. He enjoyed cruising with his family. In Ron’s recent years, he enjoyed watching the Dallas Cowboys, coloring many sorts of animals in his coloring books and spending time with his family.

He was preceded in death by his mother Edith and father Herbert; his grandparents James E and Vera Vaught, and JM and Joyce Golden; his sister Anne Hammonds and his

ex-wife Matilda Valdez.

Ron is survived by his children Heather (Venancio) Rodelas, Penelope (Samuel) Viera, Tamara Lynn Golden-Burris; his grandchildren Fabian and Julissa Rodelas, Emily Rhineheart, Amanda Bailey, Jessica Eppinette, Aaron Burris, Nicholas Greddes, Sera Riley, Jacob Golden, Brady Golden, and Amber Vibbard; along with many great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren.

Cremation was chosen and a memorial service will be held at a later date.

SAGUACHE COUNTY SHERIFF’S REPORT

SAGUACHE COUNTY — The following information was provided by the Saguache County Sheriff’s Office for the period between Feb. 27 and March 4, 2023.

Sheriff’s office staff conducted welfare checks in Saguache and Center, arranged three ambulance rides, responded to a medical alarm in Saguache, and attended to a deceased person in Crestone. They made 12 traffic stops, assisted a motorist, responded to reports of stolen vehicles in Center and Saguache, issued two citations (\$405), and addressed a crash in Crestone.

Deputies also patrolled Saguache seven times and Crestone once. They responded to reports of stolen property and noise complaints in Saguache and

two reports of suspicious activity in Crestone. In Moffat, staff handled a civil dispute, assault, and suspicious activity. They also monitored three controlled burns throughout the county.

ARRESTS

A 30-year-old Monte Vista man was arrested and held on \$750 bail for failing to appear in Saguache County Court.

A 45-year-old Buena Vista man was arrested and held on \$2,000 bail for failing to appear in Saguache County Court.

A 57-year-old Center man was arrested and held on \$250 bail for failing to appear in Saguache County Court.

A 46-year-old Center man was arrested and held on \$1,000 bail for violating a protection order.

CROWTHER

Continued from Page 1A — one in a position of trust (class 3 felony) and child abuse.

The Conejos County Sheriff’s office received a report of a possible sexual assault on Feb. 8, involving Crowther. County investigators were immediately assigned to the case according to a press release from the sheriff’s office on Monday.

After an extensive investigation, the case was filed with the 12th Judicial District Attorney’s Office. An arrest

warrant was issued for Crowther’s arrest.

Most recently, Crowther was the superintendent of the Sargent School District. He resigned from Sargent last month citing “personal reasons.” The school district named Shelley David as interim superintendent last month. He was also at Centennial School District during his career in education.

This is still an active investigation, and no further information will be released at this time.

ARCHERS

State Champion Girl.

Moffat archers posted six additional top-10 division finishes as follows: Austin Gardner, fourth place, High School Boys; Cairn Pike, eighth place, High School Boys; Caiden Cross, sixth place, Middle School Boys; Javad Taylor, tenth place, Middle School Boys; Madison Payne, fifth place, Middle School Girls; and Kyren Plumley, tenth place, Elementary Girls.

Moffat coaches, Jack Sciacca and Megan Shellabarger plan to

Continued from Page 1A —

take Moffat’s top contenders to the 2023 NASP Western National Tournament in Sandy, Utah, in late April. Donations to offset travel expenses are being accepted. Contact Jack Sciacca, jacksciacca@moffatschools.org, to contribute.

The National Archery in the Schools Program has grown to 1.3 million competitors nationwide. If you are interested in bringing NASP to your Colorado School, Contact Heather Hubbard, heather.hubbard@state.co.us.

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OPINION & EDITORIAL

Out of the mouth of babes

This past week still saw Miss Trixie stuck in scenic Amarillo, Texas helping her father who suffered some real physical issues. Which means Ol' Dutch has had to pull out some of the old Bachelor tricks to survive with her gone. What with shopping and cooking and cleaning and laundry already having to be done by yours truly, Miss Trixie is walking on thin ice as far as being needed around the homeplace. It's not that I do not miss her as I truly do but I found out if you stay away too long pretty soon you are not seen as needed near as much.

That's probably why my hunting trips don't last all that long as I don't want Miss Trixie to forget my handsome face and sparkling personality from lack of contact with the same.

Some poet by the name of Sextus Aurelius Propertius came up with the famous phrase, "Absence makes the heart grow fonder" as "Always toward absent lovers love's tide stronger flows" in about 15 B.C. But from the look of his first name, he may have meant "abstinence makes the heart grow fonder" instead. For it is the lack of human touch that I think people miss the very most when a partner is gone and Ol' Dutch is no stranger to those feelings for sure.

This past Sunday my son Bub's was out of town for business and his wife the wonderful Tinkerbell invited me to go along with them to church. I had been attending of late with them and most of you know that any invite to be with Grand #1 and Grand #2 is going to be accepted.

So off I went come Sunday morning and met them there. Their church has coffee for free and donuts for purchase and Grand #2 had brought along her own dollar for some donuts. Normally, she is able to have one if her dad is there, but momma decided on a no sugar day and the tears flowed.

Church ended and we all went to the local Walmart for some supplies and Grand #2 looked and looked for something to spend her dollar on. She finally settled on some gum but didn't have enough money to cover the cost. Good Grandpa told her and Grand #1 that I would buy their choice and so at \$1.40 per item they each got something sweet.

So, the dollar went back in the pocket, and we headed out the door



Trout Republic
by Kevin Kirkpatrick

happy as can be. Now it just so happens it was Grand #2 turn to ride with Grandpa and so we started for home. At the exit to the parking lot, we saw a beggar and my little soft-hearted angel gave her only dollar to the man on the corner.

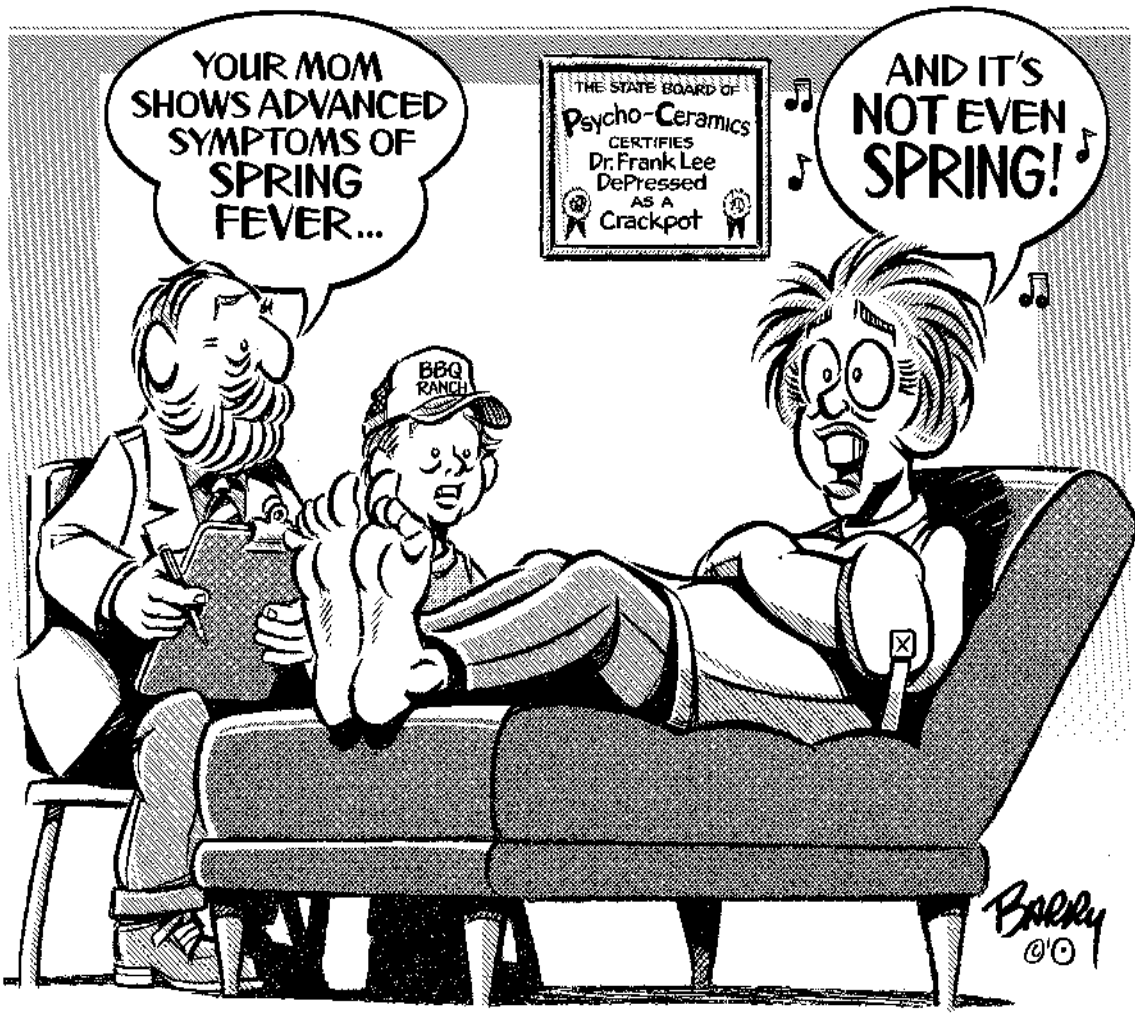
Now the lesson here is not to give money to everyone you encounter on the corner but more about obedience to her mother in not getting a donut got her more gum than she could afford and the ability to help someone else at the same time.

We talked about that at length and how many things had to line up for that to all happen, starting with Miss Tinkerbell asking me to go to church the day before. That and missing out on a donut, Grandpa going to Walmart with them, Grandpa buying their treat and her riding with me on this occasion. If we all only knew to trust God that much with all our lives how much happier we all would be.

Sitting in line for a taco at a local joint, Ol' Dutch prayed aloud, "Dear Lord help me to get a house." Grand #2 seeing a teachable moment with her Grandpa told me that I am not to pray for my own things but to pray for others. So, I asked her to pray for a house for me, but she then said that since she was going to stay there a lot then she can't do that either.

Man, I cannot win. But God is good and if we only look, He can be seen around us every day in everything we do.

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.



LETTERS

Big thank you to everyone who took part in RERC workshop

Editor,

I am sending out a big thank you to San Luis Valley Great Outdoors (SLV GO!), our state and federal partners, city council and city staff, and the community for supporting the Recreation Economy for Rural Communities. The several-hour event over 3 days was enlightening and helpful as Monte Vista moves

forward with plans to make our community better. I am very grateful for those who participated and made the time to have their voice heard.

The RERC was a nationally competitive grant that came through the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), to help communities identify strategies to grow their outdoor economy

and revitalize their Main Streets. The EPA has a dedicated staff to help rural communities with smart growth initiatives. It was rewarding to see those who partook in the weekend exercises engaged and enthusiastic. Looking forward to how we move forward.

*Gigi Dennis
Monte Vista City Manager*

Regarding News Literacy Project, think for yourself it is free

Editor,

I recently read a column in the opinion section from "News Literacy Project." After doing some research on the organization I found its overall mission well-intentioned but perhaps a bit misleading in today's media environment. Two examples for instance are that both the NY Times and Washington Post both endorse and donate to the NLP which is fine.

However, you must question the NLP's mission up front with these two corporate media giants who are well-known to publish lies routinely. Probably the best way to fight "disinformation or misleading information" to use our own God given right to exercise our brains and using the 1st amendment. Treat citizens as adults so they can make up their own minds. Social media and corporate media are a huge

problem. However, the biggest problem in our country is more than likely the ability to think critically as opposed to following the herd. Or listening to a nonprofit backed by corporate media from Washington, D.C., or Boulder to tell you they have the magic website to find the truth.

Think for yourself, it is free.

*Brian Tobler
South Fork*

LETTERS POLICY

Letters are welcome and encouraged. They should be fewer than 300 words, unless arranged beforehand with the editor, and they are subject to editing for length and clarity.

All letters must be signed by the author and include a phone number and address where the author can be reached (these are not for publication). Letters forwarded from other organizations or sent

to staff and not for print must be designated as such. Letters over 300 words and without contact information will be returned to the sender or discarded.

We will accept one letter per

person, per subject, per four issues. We reserve the right to reject letters for reasons we believe are appropriate. Please send letters to Letter to the Editor c/o Valley Publishing, PO Box 607, Monte

Vista, CO 81144 or e-mail to bwilliams@valleypublishinginc.com (Attention: Letter to the Editor). Deadline for letters is 5 p.m. Friday.

Political letters may be limited due to space constraints.

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Property tax exemption available to senior citizens, disabled veterans

CONTRIBUTED SAGUACHE COUNTY — A property tax exemption is available to senior citizens, qualifying disabled veterans, the surviving spouses of Gold Star veterans, and the surviving spouses of senior citizens or disabled veterans who were previously granted the exemption.

For people who qualify, 50 percent of the first \$200,000 in actual value of their primary residence is exempted. The state pays the exempted portion of the property tax. Once approved, the exemption remains in effect for future years, and the applicant need not reapply. The General Assembly may eliminate the funding for the

Senior Citizen Exemption or Disabled Veteran Exemption at their discretion in any year that the budget does not allow for the reimbursement.

Application requirements are as follows:

SENIOR CITIZEN EXEMPTION

The exemption is available to applicants who: a) are at least 65 years of age as of Jan. 1 of the year of application, b) owned their home for at least 10 consecutive years as of Jan. 1, and c) occupy it as their primary residence and have done so for at least 10 consecutive years as of Jan. 1.

Limited exceptions to the ownership and occupancy requirements are detailed in the qualifications section of the application. The exemption is also available to surviving spouses of senior citizens who previously met the requirements. The application deadline for 2023 is July 15. The application form is available from the website of the Colorado Division of Property Taxation or the county assessor of the county in which the property is located. The application must be submitted to the county assessor at the following address: Saguache County, PO Box 38, 501 4th Street, Saguache, CO 81149, 719-655-2521, mstephens@saguachecounty.net.

saguachecounty.net.

DISABLED VETERAN EXEMPTION

The exemption is available to applicants who: a) sustained a service connected disability while serving on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States, b) were honorably discharged, and c) were rated by the federal Department of Veterans Affairs as one hundred percent permanent disability through disability retirement benefits. Disabilities rated at less than 100 percent and VA unemployability awards do not meet the requirement. The applicant must have owned and occupied the home as his or her primary residence since Jan. 1 of the year of application; however, limited exceptions to the ownership and occupancy requirements are detailed in the eligibility requirements section of the application. The application deadline for 2023 is July 1.

Applications are available from the Colorado Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, from the website of the Colorado Division of Property Taxation or the county assessor of the county in which the property is located. Completed applications must be submitted to the Colorado Department of Military and Veterans Affairs at the address listed below.

DISABLED VETERAN SURVIVING SPOUSE EXEMPTION

The exemption is available to surviving spouses of disabled veterans who had the disabled veteran exemption and who passed away prior to Jan. 1 of the current year. The property must be owner-

occupied and used as the primary residence of an owner-occupier who is the surviving spouse of a qualifying disabled veteran. The application deadline for 2023 is July 1.

Applications are available from the Colorado Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, from the website of the Colorado Division of Property Taxation or the county assessor of the county in which the property is located. Completed applications must be submitted to the Colorado Department of Military and Veterans Affairs at the address listed below.

DISABLED VETERAN GOLD STAR SPOUSES

Beginning in January 2023, this exemption is available to surviving spouses of "Gold Star" veterans. The property must be owner-occupied and used as the primary residence of an owner-occupier who is the surviving spouse of a qualifying Gold Star veteran. The application deadline for 2023 is July 1.

In early January 2023 applications were available on the Colorado Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, from the website of the Colorado Division of Property Taxation or the county assessor of the county in which the property is located. Completed applications must be submitted to the Colorado Department of Military and Veterans Affairs at the following address: Colorado Department of Military and Veterans Affairs Division of Veterans Affairs, 155 Van Gordon St., Suite 201, Lakewood, CO 80228. Call 303-914-5832, fax 303-914-5835 or visit online vets.colorado.gov, for more information.



Breads and Botanicals offers seating for dining and a couch for relaxing. Skate videos roll in the background. Indian prayer flags dangle above the cash register. Art adorns the walls, and they sell a variety of products.



Photos by Patrick Shea

Danielle and Tylor Berreth watch their son Bo open an early first birthday gift before the official celebration on March 9 when Breads and Botanicals visitors can enjoy a complimentary slice of cake.



EATERY

Continued from Page 1A

space, it offers seating for dining and a couch for relaxing. Skate videos roll in the background. Indian prayer flags dangle above the cash register. Art adorns the walls, and they sell a variety of products. Tumbleweed Bread in Monte Vista attracts regular customers who clear the shelves.

The Berreths source as many local products as possible. For mushroom cultivation, Tylor said, "The only thing that's not local is the oak. But the oysters [oyster mushrooms] I can grow on a totally local substrate."

Tylor shared his dream of cultivating wild species. "I have a wild clone from my hometown in Colorado [Hudson, northeast of Denver]," Tylor said. "That's really where my passion is, finding local species and cultivating them on local substrate."

With their 1-year-old son Bo and an increase in customer traffic, the Berreths sought help recently. Joey Yonkoff from Del Norte comes in on Sundays to cook. He also coaches track in Alamosa and runs his own "pop-up restaurant."

Like many downtown Saguache establishments, Breads and Botanicals is open Thursday through Sunday. "All the businesses are kind of synched up," Tylor explained. Hours are 10 to 2, but Tylor added, "With

Joey along with us, we hope to expand into dinners and bigger things like community dinners."

Bo turns one on March 9. Everyone who visits can receive a free slice of

birthday cake. The menu of the day will feature a variety of dishes with Porcini mushrooms. In a nod to a local species — Boletus rubriceps — Bo's parents named him Boletus.

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San Luis Valley Scoreboard Basketball 2022-2023

BOYS

Class 1A Regionals

Sierra Grande 55	Peetz 50
Granada 61	Sangre de Cristo 27
Cheyenne Wells 36	Centennial 33
Cheyenne Wells 46	Sierra Grande 35

Class 2A Regionals

Sanford 62	Hartun 34
Merino 60	Monte Vista 57
Denver Christian 57	Del Norte 40
Sanford 59	Merino 40

March 9th @ 5:30 pm @ Budweiser Events Center #2 Simla vs #7 Sanford—Great-8

Class 3A Regionals

Centauri 51	Rye 29
Centauri 53	Prospect Ridge 35

March 9th @ 8:30 pm @ Denver University #3 Centauri vs #6 Windsor Academy—Great-8

Class 4A—Great-8

#6 Lutheran 65	#3 Alamosa 56 OT
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GIRLS

Class 1A Regionals

Kit Carson 64	Sierra Grande 24
North Park 49	Sangre de Cristo 44

Class 2A Regionals

Del Norte 38	West Grand 20
Burlington 57	Sargent 16
Wiggins 45	Center 18
Sanford 49	Hayden 38
Wray 54	Monte Vista 43
Burlington 52	Sanford 32
Del Norte 42	Simla 38

March 9th @ 11:45 am @ Budweiser Events Center #3 Burlington vs #6 Del Norte—Great-8

Class 3A Regionals

Centauri 55	Cedaredge 13
Centauri 42	Olathe 34

March 9th @ 7 pm @ Denver University #2 Centauri vs #7 St. Mary's—Great-8

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Ongoing drought leaves Colorado's forests vulnerable to pests, other health issues

CONTRIBUTED

FORT COLLINS — The annual forest health report, released Tuesday, Feb. 28, by the Colorado State Forest Service, details how ongoing warm temperatures and below-average precipitation create challenges for Colorado's forests. Even though monsoonal rains came in 2022 to parts of Colorado, relieving some of the drought, it will take several years of adequate precipitation for trees to recover their natural defenses to bark beetle attacks. And these forest pests continue to expand into new areas with vulnerable, drought-stressed trees.

Large swaths of forests affected by forest pests and diseases increase the potential for large, uncharacteristic wildfire, making living with wildfire and watershed protection top priorities for forest management across the state. Additionally, having sufficient tree seedlings to reforest areas affected by wildfire and floods is another top concern for the future of Colorado.

"Challenges persist for Colorado's forests," said Matt McCombs, state forester and director of the CSFS. "This report highlights how ongoing drought, an indicator of a warming climate, continues to stress our forests, setting the stage for insect and disease outbreaks and large, destructive wildfires. We know people continue to move into wildfire-prone areas as Colorado's population grows and more homes are built in the wildland-urban interface. These challenges are enormous, but the state is on the right path to bringing about fundamental changes in the landscape that protect water quality, reduce fuels and sustain our outdoor recreation economy."

Through collaborative, cross-boundary forest management, grants, and education and outreach, the CSFS addresses these multiple challenges. Healthy trees and forests are fundamental to the Colorado way of life, and this report acknowledges the stressors on forests and the myriad actions taken to protect our forested landscapes.

2022 Key Forest Takeaways
The 2022 Report on the Health of Colorado's Forests focuses on three top priorities for the CSFS and its partners for forest management in Colorado:

- **Insects and Diseases:** Aerial survey data show Colorado has a new top bark beetle: the western balsam bark beetle affected more acres last year statewide than spruce beetle, which had held that title for a decade. Scientists from the CSFS and the U.S. Forest Service flew over 29.9 million acres of forests to spot insect damage and followed up with observations on the ground. Throughout the state, bark beetles and other pests continue to move into areas of Colorado's forests with drought-stressed trees susceptible to attack.
- **Living with Wildfire:** The number and intensity of wildfires in Colorado in 2022 was less than in previous years, but communities and homeowners must continue to take steps to reduce their risk of loss from wildfire. Community Wildfire Protection Plans are an important way for people to work together to prepare for wildfire, and the CSFS updated the guidelines for these in 2022. Funding from the legislature in 2022 will support a wildfire awareness campaign in 2023 that will target individual homeowners with tips on how they can reduce risk to their homes and properties.
- **Watershed Protection:** Colorado is a headwaters state, and residents of Colorado and 18 other states rely on water from our forested watersheds. Reducing the risk to infrastructure and

water quality from uncharacteristic wildfire is critically important, and the CSFS leads projects with partners across the state to safeguard this precious resource.

Regional Forest Health Issues

- **Northeast Colorado:** Long-term drought conditions continue to influence forest health in this part of the state. Foresters are monitoring a potential outbreak of mountain pine beetle in the Interstate 70 corridor near Black Hawk, and western spruce budworm is active in Jefferson and Park counties, affecting Douglas-fir, true fir and spruce trees.
- **Southeast Colorado:** Dense forests and ongoing drought allow the spread of piñon Ips beetles; outbreaks can kill wide swaths of trees, altering the composition of piñon-juniper and ponderosa pine forests. Severe winds in April and May 2022 caused about 1,260 acres of windthrow in different areas, leaving downed trees vulnerable to bark beetles.
- **Southwest Colorado:** Spruce beetle, mountain pine beetle, roundheaded pine beetle and western spruce budworm are the major causes of forest mortality in this region of Colorado.
- **Northwest Colorado:** The risk of uncharacteristic wildfire remains high in this area due to the mountain pine beetle epidemic in the early to mid-2000s that left forests thick with dead trees, resulting in a large amount of fuel. Also, high-elevation forests in this area are losing stands of subalpine fir trees to a combination of the western balsam bark beetle and fungi that cause root decay.



Courtesy photos

Flying over forests allows managers to detect disturbances from insects and diseases, such as this roundheaded pine beetle infestation in a ponderosa pine forest in the San Juan National Forest in Dolores County.

Each year, the forest health report provides information to the Colorado General Assembly and residents of Colorado about the health and condition of forests across the state. Information for the report comes from an annual aerial forest health survey by the CSFS and USFS, Rocky Mountain Region, as well as field inspections, CSFS contacts with forest landowners and special surveys.

For the first time, the report is exclusively online. Read the report and explore interactive maps of insect and disease activity at bit.ly/ForestHealthReport.



Landowners can reduce their risk of wildfire by removing flammable materials, such as dead and dying trees or dense woody material, near their homes and other structures.

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DA releases arrest affidavit in death of 23-month-old girl in Conejos County

BY PRISCILLA WAGGONER

ALAMOSA — Details are emerging in the Feb. 3 death of a 23-month-old girl in Conejos County. Following an investigation conducted by the Conejos County Sheriff's Office (CCSO) with assistance from the Colorado Bureau of Investigation (CBI), the girl's babysitter, Denise Cordova, was taken into custody on Friday, Feb. 24, by CCSO. Cordova, 47, is facing charges of murder in the first degree and abuse of a child.

According to court documents released by the 12th Judicial District Attorney's Office to the Valley Courier, at 3:03 p.m. on the afternoon of Jan. 31, Lt. Antonio Galvez with the Conejos County Sheriff's Office responded to 16625 County Road W.5 in Conejos County in response to a 911 call from a woman who said her little girl was not breathing.

When Galvez arrived at the house, EMS was already on the scene. The child's mother, whose name is not being released, and Cordova were in the house. Galvez assisted with loading the little girl into the ambulance, noting that he could see "swelling and bruises" on the child's face.

Galvez also noted that Cordova was "yelling and trying to explain what happened," stating the toddler had "stood up in the stroller and fallen face-first on the ground."

Galvez further reports that, while he was in the ambulance, Cordova came to the window and said that the girl "kept losing consciousness" after the fall, so she "kept hitting

her on the back" and "if there were any marks, that's where they had come from."

Galvez and the child's mother went with the girl in the ambulance that transported her to Conejos County Hospital. Once there, the child's mother told hospital staff she had been at work when she got a call from Cordova that something had happened. When she got to her house, she found her daughter being "held up" by Cordova who was on the couch. She said her daughter was not breathing, and she immediately called 911. That call was received at 3:03 p.m. Cordova had told the girl's mother that the incident had happened at 2:53 p.m.

Meanwhile, a CCSOP deputy and sergeant stayed on the scene with Cordova. The sergeant later reported that Cordova smelled of alcohol and had become "difficult to speak with."

Due to the toddler's critical condition, she was then flown to Children's Hospital in Colorado Springs where medical staff told Galvez that the child's injuries were not consistent with a fall from a stroller, an assessment that was supported by one of the surgeons at the hospital.

At that point, Sheriff Garth Crowther was contacted and, with assistance from CBI, CCSO launched an investigation into the incident.

That investigation, conducted over days, revealed significant contradictions and inconsistencies in Cordova's account of what happened.

A deputy reported that Cordova said she had taken the little girl in her stroller for a walk down County Road W.5 toward County Road 16.9 in Conejos County. They were on County Road 16.9 when, Cordova said, the little girl got excited at seeing sheep in a nearby pasture, tried to stand up on the footrest of the stroller and then fell from the stroller landing face first on the ground. Cordova drew a map for the deputies, showing the route she had taken with the child.

Back on the scene several hours later, Lt. Galvez drove the route Cordova said she travelled to where he noticed a house located right next to where the incident allegedly occurred. The house had a clear view from its front door of County Road W.5 and "windows all around the house."

Galvez learned the resident of the house had a motion-activated "camera in the window facing County Road W.5 that would catch any traffic on the road." Upon reviewing footage captured by the camera from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. — the timeframe during which Cordova said the incident took place — Galvez says there was no footage of Cordova with a little girl in a stroller on the road. The camera picked up all the traffic that was on the road, Galvez wrote, but no footage of where Cordova claimed she and the little girl in the stroller were walking.

There were also other inconsistencies in Cordova's account. In text messages retrieved by CCSO on Cordova's phone, she

writes that the straps on the stroller "broke," which accounted for her falling from the stroller.

When it was learned that the stroller was at Cordova's house, a deputy recovered the stroller and brought it to CCSO where it was examined. Galvez writes the straps were not "frayed" but seemed to be cut with a sharp object. "I was unable to see any other evidence on the stroller consistent with the account."

Text messages on Cordova's phone also show inconsistencies in both timing and her talking about events sometimes in the past tense and other times in the present.

On Feb. 2, a team comprised of CCSO, DSS, CBI and the Conejos County prosecutor for the DA's office had a Zoom call with Children's Hospital staff. At that time, they were informed that the little girl's condition was extremely

critical and due to the extent of trauma to her head, it was not likely she would survive.

That proved true as, at 6:15 a.m. on Feb. 3, the 23-month-old girl was pronounced deceased.

Of all the information in the document released by the DA's office, the statements noted by the CBI agent reviewing the medical chart are the most conclusive. Among those notations in the medical chart are 12 different statements from a total of six doctors involved in the little girl's medical care, referencing child abuse or "non-accidental trauma."

"The patient's severity of injury does not match the reported story of the mechanism of injury, concern for abusive head trauma," wrote Dr. Miya.

Cordova is currently being held in the Conejos County Jail with a \$1 million bond.

Monte Vista man arrested on various charges

STAFF REPORT

MONTE VISTA— Terrance Carter, 33, of Monte Vista was arrested on various charges last week after the Monte Vista Police Department served a search warrant in the 600 block of Jefferson Street, looking for stolen property from several thefts.

During the search of the residence, officers and agents with the Colorado Bureau of Investigation located several stolen items, a stolen handgun with the serial number partially ground off and heroin. Officers also located a marijuana grow within the residence.

The handgun and marijuana were accessible to three young children who reside in the residence.

Carter was arrested and booked into the Rio Grande County jail on the following charges: possession of a defaced firearm, possession of a weapon by a previous offender (Carter is a convicted felon), secure firearm storage required, theft, unlawful possession of a controlled substance and child abuse.

A news release from the MVPD said this is an ongoing investigation and no further information will be released as this time.

Colorado is facing a critical blood shortage

CONTRIBUTED

Donations of blood see a sharp decline during the winter months, but this doesn't stop the need. According to Vitalant every two seconds, someone in the U.S. needs blood. Whether an ongoing health condition like cancer or the need for a blood transfusion from a traumatic injury like a motor vehicle crash, the need for donations is still there.

The Colorado State Patrol is partnering with Vitalant for the third year to advance its shared mission of saving lives. Registration is now open to donate blood during the month of March 2023 for the Colorado State Patrol blood drive.

Sign up to receive an email

invitation to donate by visiting <https://northeast.vitalant.org>.

When your email arrives click "Schedule Now" and pick the location and time that works best for you. There are 10 permanent locations, including Grand Junction, Colorado Springs, Greeley, and Denver, to choose from. Plus, there are regularly occurring mobile locations such as North Colorado Medical Center and Pueblo Park West. Remember your photo ID and eat a healthy meal before donating.

By participating using this special link, the donation records you as part of the Colorado State Patrol blood drive team. Blood and platelets cannot be manufactured, they can only come from volunteer

donors like you. Your single donation has the ability to save up to three lives.

The Gift That Brings the Greatest Joy

Of all the gifts we could ever receive, God's gift of salvation is by far the most amazing and important one. Ephesians 2:8-9 says, "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast" (NIV).

We are saved by the grace of God through our faith in Him; our faith does not *buy* our salvation—it merely *receives* it. As Ephesians 2:8 says, salvation "is the gift of God." It is impossible to buy a free gift, and this can be hard for us to understand. Our fleshly pride wants to earn and deserve this free gift and take credit for being worthy of it.

But salvation is given to us freely, by God's grace, and the same way we receive Christ's salvation, is the same way we have to live—by grace. God gives us His forgiveness and grace daily; we just have to believe and receive it.

How God Sees You

When God forgives your sins, it means *all* of your sins: past, present and future. You do not have to be afraid of sin because God has taken care of the problem. This is why the Gospel is such good news!

Some may worry that if we don't fear sin, we will keep sinning on purpose, but that's not true. If you are truly born again and really have a relationship with God, there is a new nature inside of you.

Second Corinthians 5:17 says, "If anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come. The old has gone, the new is here!"

Now, no one is perfect, and we all make mistakes sometimes. But if the Holy Spirit is living in your spirit through salvation, you won't be comfortable with those mistakes because God's nature is at work in you.

The devil would love for us to feel like God is mad at us for our mistakes, but the truth is, God is love and we need to humbly accept His love and grace.

Changed by Grace

In John 15:5, Jesus says, "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." I love this scripture because it reminds me that God doesn't expect me to change on my own. He is the power source and gives us the grace and strength we need to do what's right and make changes in our lives.

Here's how we cooperate with Him, doing what we can do to bring about change:

We hear the truth in God's Word and we're convicted by it. It's the Word that shows us who we are and reveals the sin in our lives. We have to realize what we're doing wrong before we can know what needs to change and how.

Then we repent of our sin. Being repentant means we're sincerely sorry and willing to turn away from it. (See 1 John 1:9.)

The next step is to study the Word in the area we need change. For example, if I have a problem with anger, I need to study scriptures about anger and forgiveness. Use the Word like medicine and take it into your heart and mind. James 1:21 says when God's Word is rooted in our hearts, it "is able to save [our] souls" (NIV). There is power in God's Word to bring change to our souls!

Receive All God Has for You and Enjoy Your Life

To experience God's blessings and enjoy everyday life, we simply need to make the decision to believe Him and His Word more than our thoughts and



feelings. The Bible is our instruction manual on how to grow into the new nature He's given us and become who He wants us to be. So take some time each day to read and meditate on scriptures that tell you about God's love for you, who you are and what you have in Christ.

Ephesians 3:17 is a prayer for believers in Christ to be "rooted and established in love" (NIV). God loves you; His will is for you to be His child and receive every blessing He has for you—righteousness, peace, joy, provision of your needs, healing and restoration. In Christ, you have a personal relationship with your Father God, and you can hear from God and be led by the Holy Spirit, who lives in your spirit. In Christ, you have access to God's grace and strength to do whatever you need to do. Because of God's grace, you can enjoy your life!

For more on this topic, order Joyce's four-teaching resource *The Gift of Everyday Joy*. 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 *LOVING PEOPLE WHO ARE HARD TO LOVE* (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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Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area 2024 grant cycle opens

CONTRIBUTED

ALAMOSA — The Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area (SdCNHA) recently announced its 2024 grant application cycle is open, as of March 1.

Grants awarded from SdCNHA are intended to encourage local cultural and historic heritage preservation activities, educational programs and support Heritage Tourism within the heritage area.

“Our past grantees have used grant funds to restore historic buildings; provide historical and cultural interpretation; restore or promote scenic, artistic and recreational resources; and to document culturally significant components of the way of life in the heritage area,” SdCNHA officials stated.

Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area is administered by a non-profit board of volunteers who represent Alamosa, Conejos and Costilla counties. Heritage area grants are available to local schools, municipalities, and non-profits annually. For more information about SdCNHA’s mission, vision, and a list of past grants, visit www.sangreheritage.org.

The selection process is competitive, and applicants are encouraged to develop proposals carefully utilizing SdCNHA’s Management Plan Goals and Objectives. These resources are on the management plan page at www.sangreheritage.org/mangement-plan/. Funding is available up to \$25,000. Applications and guidelines can be found at www.sangreheritage.org/collaborate/. SdCNHA funds development projects, archeology projects, survey and planning projects, and education projects.

Development projects involve excavation, preservation, stabilization,

restoration, rehabilitation, or reconstruction of a designated property or site.

Two examples of development projects funded by SdCNHA are the Rehabilitation and Restoration of the Denver and Rio Grande Depot at Antonito and Coach 256. Rehabilitation and Restoration of the Denver and Rio Grande Depot in Antonito was an exterior rehabilitation which included stucco repair and stone repointing. In addition, the historic exterior lighting was restored and new low profile, wood storm windows was fabricated and installed over the restored historic wood windows. The Denver and Rio Grande Depot at Antonito was placed on Colorado’s Most Endangered List in 2007.

Coach 256 is part of the Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad Engine 168 and Historic Car Project, which has been returned to a complete, vintage 19th century passenger train, adding a new heritage tourism attraction to the area. Engine 168 and the four other passenger cars are important elements of this project. This has successfully recreated a passenger travel experience popularly known as “The San Juan” as it was in 1915.

Archaeology Projects involve the identification, documentation, preservation, and interpretation of archaeological resources. This includes prehistoric and historic sites as well as artifact collections. Section 106 compliance-consultation of the National Historic Preservation Act will be required and should be part of your planning efforts. Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area will assist with the completion of a Section 106 application.

The following three projects received

grants from the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area. An example of an archaeology project that was funded by SdCNHA is the Archaeological and Biogeographical Investigations at the La Botica Site. This exceptionally large and complex archaeological site located in the La Jara Canyon; preserves a unique record of American Indian lifeways spanning at least 8000 years. The site is an important locality for the San Luis Valley’s Hispano residents, who have gathered medicinal plants there in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The demonstrated complexity and time depth of the site’s occupation, combined with its unique biological setting, make La Botica one of the most significant sites in the San Luis Valley.

The Paleo-cultural Research Group’s multi-disciplinary project aimed to better understand the site’s place in the regional cultural landscape as well as the factors that have shaped it over time. Their primary goal was to better document the site and its current condition, and to gather the baseline data needed to reconstruct the history of human use and changes in the local plant community.

Education Projects provide historic preservation information or information about historic sites to the public. These projects can include curriculum development, youth training, lectures, interviews, archiving and preservation of cultural information.

Two examples of an education project that were funded by SdCNHA are Congreso de Acequias and the Lifeways of the San Luis Valley Course and Lecture Series. Lifeways of the San Luis Valley Course and Lecture Series is a course and lecture series explored the cultural richness of the

San Luis Valley within the context of the multitude of Southwestern and Rio Grande traditions. The SLV geography, ecology, languages, and literature along with other elements of regional heritage, such as acequia systems, were exemplified in order to better understand local values and spiritual expressions of place.

Congreso de Acequias is a unique event which brings together the acequia community each year to celebrate and strengthen Colorado’s oldest farming communities. Acequias are a critical piece of the Heritage Area’s living history, celebrating the ancestors of those who settled under the Mexican land grants. The 2023 Congreso will give community members an opportunity to participate in the living history of the Acequia Community. It also provides critical water rights information to irrigators, as well as the opportunity to learn, cropping types, estate planning and the protection of an individual acequia through by-laws. The Congreso also showcases Costilla and Conejos County student artwork and writing skills about the Acequias using the annual poetry, coloring and poster contests.

Survey and Planning Projects involve identification, recording, evaluation, designation, and planning for the protection of significant historic buildings, structures, sites, and

districts. This is not for the acquisition of property. Section 106 compliance-consultation of the National Historic Preservation Act may be required for this project type and should be considered for your planning efforts. Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area can help with the completion of a Section 106 application.

An example of a Survey and Planning grant that was funded by SdCNHA is Rainbow Trout Ranch Conservation Project. The historic property is a guest ranch, which has been in operation for over 85 years. Located on the Conejos River, it encompasses 590 acres. Highly visible from Highway 17 (Los Caminos Antiguos Scenic and Historic Byway) it provides substantial wildlife habitat. Rio Grande Headwaters Land Trust worked with the owners to protect the land through a permanent conservation easement.

If you have an idea for a grant or have any questions about the grant process, email SdCNHA at info@sdcnha.org, call 719-580-7366 or visit the office located at 231 State Ave., Alamosa.

Applicants will be notified of status in October of 2023 and funding will be available in 2024.

Deadline to submit an application is 5 p.m. June 1 — postmarked to SdCNHA, P.O. Box 844, Alamosa, CO 81101, or delivered by hand to 231 State Ave., Alamosa.

ATTENTION GRADUATING HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS
The Saguache County Board of County Commissioners are accepting scholarship applications for graduating seniors who will be graduating high school in 2023. Commissioners will be awarding graduating seniors’ college scholarships that will be paid through the Marijuana Excise Tax funds. Scholarships may be used at a trade school, college or university but you must reside in Saguache County to apply and possibly receive scholarship funds. Applications are due by April 14, 2023 and are available through our website at www.saguachecounty.colorado.gov to download the application or by contacting Wendi Maez at 719-655-2231 or by email at wmaez@saguachecounty-co.gov.
No. 1662 published in the Center Post Dispatch, Thursday, February 9, 16, 23, March 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 and April 6, 2023.

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Basketball Playoffs 2023

Falcons come alive in fourth quarter to defeat Miners

BY KEN HAMRICK
LA JARA — The third-ranked Centauri High School boys basketball team scored 22 points in the fourth quarter as it went on to defeat Prospect Ridge Academy 53-35 in the Class 3A Region Tournament Saturday at the CHS gym.
 The Falcons will advance to the Class 3A Elite 8 which will take place this weekend at the University of Denver's Hamilton Gym.
 "These kids have big hearts," said Centauri coach Larry Mortensen. "They played really good defense and I'm very proud of them. That's a very good basketball team we played."
 Max Vacco scored two early baskets for the Miners. Kaleb Anderson put the Falcons on the board with a jumper, but Vacco made two free throws for a 6-2 PRA lead.
 Anderson made two from the line, then Chaz Holman made a pair from the line and then a 3-point basket for a 9-6 Centauri lead at the end of the first quarter.
 Kallon Russell opened the second quarter scoring, but David Agbosse scored for the Miners.
 Holman scored two more baskets before Vacco scored again for the Miners. Holman made two free tosses, and Troy Sowards

made a jumper at the buzzer and the Falcons had a 22-10 lead at halftime.
 Kolton Jonson made one of two free throws to begin the second half, but Ezekiel Bote scored five straight points, and David Agbosse drove for a layup to reduce the Centauri lead to 23-17.
 Troy Sowards gave the Falcons some breathing room with a layup. Vacco scored again, but so did Anderson.
 Bote made another trey, and Vacco scored again to reduce the margin to 27-24. Russell made two free throws, but Stockton Rhodes drove for a layup. Russell made two more free throws for a 31-26 Centauri lead at the end of the period.
 Rhodes began the fourth quarter with a jumper, but Holman scored again. Vacco made one of two from the line, but Holman made his second 3-pointer of the game. Troy Sowards scored a layup, but Vacco scored another basket.
 Holman made two straight baskets to give the Falcons a double-digit lead at 42-31. Travis Agbosse made two free throws but that would be as close as the Miners would come as Centauri made nine out of 12 free throws in the final 2:44.
 Holman led all scorers with 24 points, followed by Troy Sowards with 10.



Photo by Ken Hamrick
Centauri High School's Chaz Holman makes a move to the basket past Prospect Ridge Academy's David Agbosse (24) in Saturday's Class 3A Regional Tournament game at the CHS gym. Holman scored 24 points as the Falcons defeated the Miners 53-35. Centauri advances to the Elite 8 where it will face Windsor Charter Academy Thursday at the University of Denver.

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Lady Falcons defeat Olathe to advance to Elite 8

BY KEN HAMRICK
LA JARA — The second-ranked Centauri High School girls basketball team had a rough time with Olathe in the Class 3A Regional Tournament, but the Lady Falcons were able to defeat the Lady Pirates 42-34 Saturday at the CHS gym.
 With the win, the Lady Falcons will advance to the Elite 8 which will begin Thursday at the University of Denver's Hamilton Gym.
 "The Olathe girls played hard," said Centauri coach Troy Reynolds. "They came to scrap, and we knew they would. Our girls finally got as little composure and had a good run in the third quarter, and we held it from there."
 Amaya Garcia gave Centauri the early lead with a 3-point basket, and Caitlin Creel followed with a short jumper. Braelyn Tucker and Abbey Smith both made one of two from the free throw line to give the Lady Falcons a 7-0 advantage.
 Tyra Gray put the Lady Pirates on the board, and Sienna McCall scored in the paint. Gray scored again to close the deficit to 7-6.
 Lacey Johnson made two free throws for Centauri, and Smith drove for a layup. Delana Mountford scored four straight points, and Gray scored again to give Olathe its first lead of the game at 12-11.

Hannah Curtis made a layup to give the Lady Falcons a 13-12 lead at the end of the first quarter.
 Mountford made a 3-pointer to again put Olathe into the lead, but Garcia answered with a trey at the other end. Mountford again put the Lady Pirates in front, but Creel scored again.
 McCall sank two free throws, but Curtis scored again. McCall accounted for a layup, but Garcia made her third 3-pointer to give Centauri a 23-21 lead.
 McCall made one of two from the line, and Gray hit a jumper and Olathe led 24-23 at halftime.
 Smith tied the score as she made one of two free throws, but Mountford put the Lady Pirates back in front with a layup.
 Garcia and Tucker both scored for a 28-26 Centauri lead. Garcia split at the line to extend the lead to 29-26.
 Dreeana Waterman made a jumper for Olathe, but Smith drove for two layups in the final 1:25 for a 33-28 lead at the end of the period.
 Smith opened the fourth quarter with two free throws, and she later added a three for a double-digit lead at 38-28. Garcia made two free throws, and Johnson scored a layup to give the Lady Falcons their largest lead at 42-31.
 Gray scored three late points, but it was



Photo by Ken Hamrick
Centauri High School's Amaya Garcia (11) goes up for a layup against Olathe in a Class 3A Regional Tournament game at the CHS Gym. Amaya scored 14 points in the Lady Falcons' 42-34 win over the Lady Pirates. Centauri will play St. Mary's in the Elite 8 Thursday at the University of Denver.

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Sanford boys, Del Norte girls advance to 2A Elite 8

BY KEN HAMRICK
ALAMOSA — Two more schools from the San Luis Valley have qualified for the Class 2A State Tournament Elite 8 which will take place this weekend at the Budweiser Event Center in Loveland.
 Sanford High School qualified in the boys tournament with a 59-40 win over Merino on Saturday at the SHS gym. The Mustangs got off to a fast start as they led 16-2 at the end of the first quarter. The Rams closed to within 24-12 at halftime, but Sanford increased their lead to 42-20 after the third quarter.
 McCray Larsen led the Mustangs in scoring with 17 points. Ben Sittler scored 14 and Trason Gartrell scored 12.
 Sanford defeated Haxtun 62-34 on Friday. It will play second-seeded Simla Thursday at 5:30 p.m.
 In other Class 2A boys action, Monte Vista lost to Merino 60-57 at Sanford, and Del Norte lost to Denver Christian 57-40 Friday in Ordway.
 Del Norte High School advanced the Elite 8 in the girls tournament with a 42-38 win over Simla Saturday at the DNHS gym. No other information was

available.
 The Lady Tigers defeated West Grand 38-20 on Friday. They will play third-seeded Burlington in the state quarterfinals on Thursday at 10:45 a.m.
 In other girls action in Class 2A, Sanford defeated Hayden 49-38 on Friday, and it lost at Burlington 52-32 on Saturday. Center lost to Wiggins 45-18 in Fowler, Monte Vista lost to Wray 54-43 in Julesburg, and Sargent lost at Burlington 57-16.
Class 1A
 There will be no SLV team that will compete in the Class 1A Elite 8 this year.

Sierra Grande advanced the furthest in the boys bracket, but it was defeated by Cheyenne Wells 46-35 Saturday at the SGHS gym. The Panthers were victorious over Peetz on Friday by a score of 55-50.
 Centennial also played at Sierra Grande on Friday, but it was defeated by Cheyenne Wells 36-33.
 Sangre de Cristo lost at Granada 61-27 on Friday.
 In the girls bracket, Sangre de Cristo lost to North Park 49-44 at home on Friday. Sierra Grande lost to Kit Carson 64-24 in Springfield on Friday.

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Frees awarded 'Emergency Manager of the Year' for SLV

CONTRIBUTED SAGUACHE — The Saguache County Board of Commissioners, on behalf of the Colorado Emergency Management Association (CEMA), recently presented David Frees with the 2022 "Emergency Manager of the Year Award" for the San Luis Valley region. This award and acknowledgment are important as support came from all of his peers and others that have worked with Frees.

Frees has served as the Saguache County Office of Emergency Management's Deputy Director since 2020. In that time, Frees drastically improved the emergency management program for Saguache County and helped coordinate one of the most robust emergency management programs in the region, officials stated.

The Colorado Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management's Field Manager, David Osborn, said, "Mr. Frees is a team player and robust community advocate. Saguache County was the new host for the Live Nation Multi-day Music Festival which included Headline Music Performers. This event was the single largest pre-planned incident ever experienced within the six-county San Luis Valley Region. Because of Mr. Frees' intimate involvement in the planning and operational response to this event, we enjoyed excellent situational awareness that contributed significantly to the lessons learned and accomplishments. We would like to thank Mr. Frees for his professionalism, leadership, and strong emergency management support."

Last year, Frees was also awarded



Courtesy photo

David Frees (left) accepts the 'Emergency Manager of the Year Award' from Saguache County Board Chair, Tom McCracken, presented on behalf of the Colorado Emergency Management Association.

the Colorado state-wide "Mike Gelski Award for Outstanding Volunteer Achievement" by CEMA.

Frees joined the Villa Grove-Bonanza Volunteer Fire Department in 2009 and currently serves as Captain and Department Training Officer. Frees has been a Team Leader and Technical Rope Rescue Technician with the Saguache County Search and Rescue Team since 2015. He has also been an Emergency Medical Technician, with the Northern Saguache County Ambulance District, since 2016. Frees graduated cum laude from

Regis University of Denver with a bachelor's in Biology/Chemistry. He also holds a master's in Zoology; Lake and Stream Ecology from Arizona State University.

When Frees is not in a helicopter, an ambulance, or a firetruck, you can find him tending to the land at Thirsty Peak Ranch.

Frees' contributions to his community and the field of emergency management have become a model for preparedness, response, and recovery efforts throughout Saguache County and the entire San Luis Valley region, officials stated.



Photo by John Livingston/CPW

Birds such as the white-faced ibis utilize the Russell Lakes State Wildlife Area during nesting season. Colorado Parks and Wildlife closes this State Wildlife Area to the public from Feb. 15 through July 15 to protect such birds.

Closures now in place to support nesting water birds across San Luis Valley

CONTRIBUTED MONTE VISTA — Colorado Parks and Wildlife enacts seasonal closures across various State Wildlife Areas (SWAs) during specific times of the year that are critical for wildlife. To protect water birds during the nesting season, CPW implements such closures at several SWAs across the San Luis Valley.

Higel, Playa Blanca, Rio Grande, Russell Lakes and Sego Springs SWAs are closed to all public access Feb. 15 through July 15. Additionally, the wetlands portion of San Luis Lakes SWA is closed to the public on the same dates.

"These properties serve as important areas for many species, including the federally endangered Southwestern Willow Flycatcher, different species of waterfowl, Sandhill Cranes, herons, etc.," said CPW District

Wildlife Manager Tyler Cerny.

CPW staff does conduct regular work in these areas to manage weeds, water movement and various other projects, so it is possible that the public will see staff on site during these times of closure.

The closures add to two other closures at SWAs currently in place in the San Luis Valley:

Hot Creek SWA is closed to motor vehicles from Jan. 1 through April 30.

La Jara SWA, the property is closed to motor vehicles Jan. 1 until the last Thursday before Memorial Day. This year, that is May 26.

The purpose of those closures is to protect big-game animal winter range during the months elk and deer are most vulnerable.

For more information on seasonal closures, call the Monte Vista office at 719-587-6900.

Migrating sandhill cranes arrive in San Luis Valley

40th year of viewing festival planned in Monte Vista

cranes making their annual spring migration and stopping over in Southern Colorado as they transition from winter habitat to breeding range in the north.

"This is one of the great wildlife migrations. Please see **CRANES** on Page 7

The Monte Vista Crane Festival prepares for its 40th year. The highlight of the three-day festival, to be held this year from March 10-12, is the spectacle of more than 20,000 greater sandhill cranes making their annual spring migration and stopping over in Southern Colorado as they transition from winter habitat to breeding range in the north.

Courtesy photo



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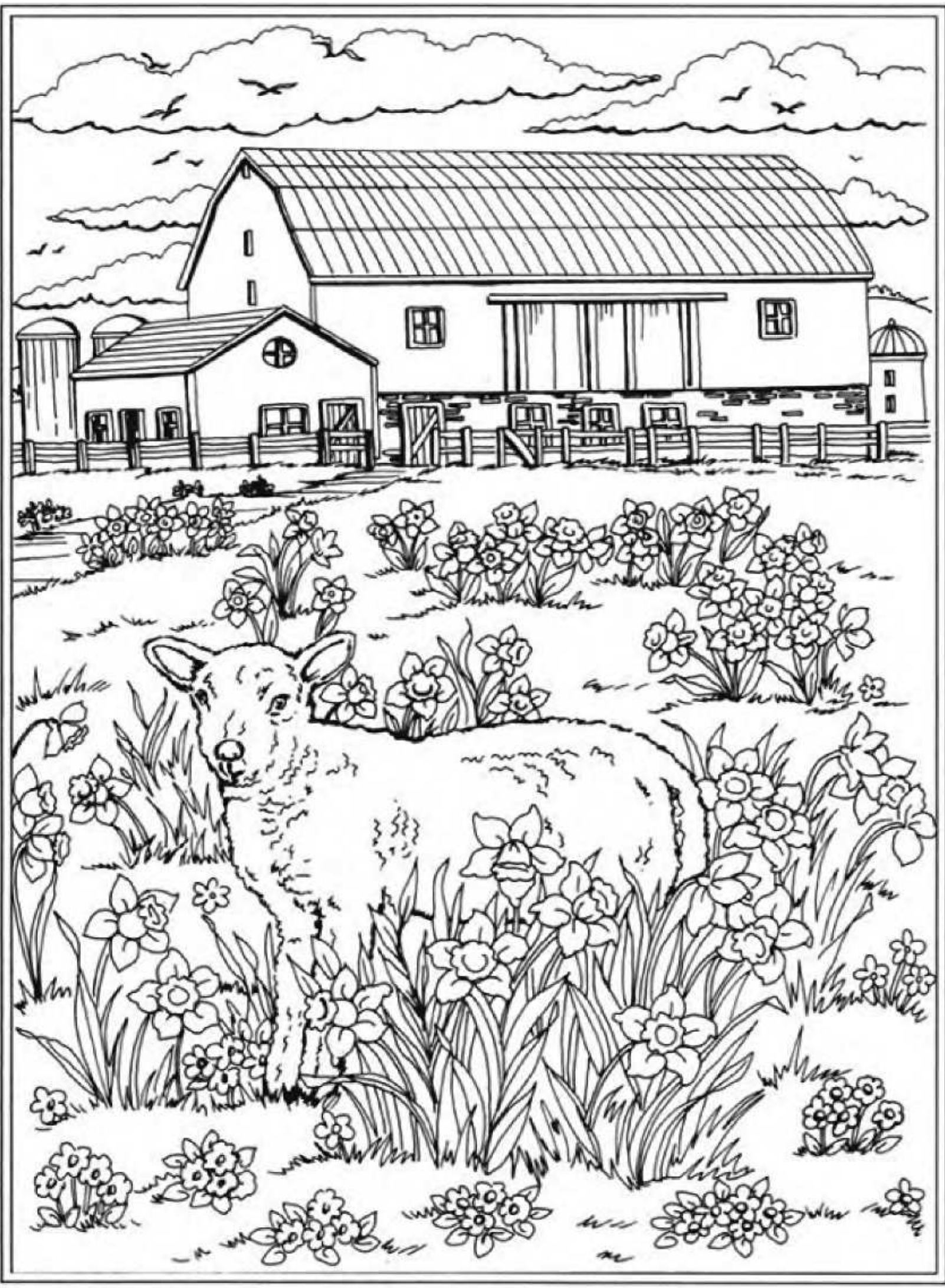
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 -Child must be between the ages of 3-16 years old

COLORING CONTEST GUIDELINES
 -The picture provided by the Monte Vista Coop should be used as the official entry into the coloring contest.
 -Coloring must be the original work of the child submitting the entry.
 -The child's (artist) name, age, address, phone number, and email (opt), parent/guardian name(s) should be written on the entry form.
 -Age categories will include: 7 and under, 8-10, 11-13, 14-16.
 -There will be one winner from each age category.
 -Only one entry per child.

QUESTIONS?
 Stephanie Schaefer, MVC Marketing Director
 Phone: 719-852-5181 Ext. 1054
 Email: mvcads@mvcoop.com

TIMELINE
 -The coloring contest is in correspondence with the Monte Vista Coop National Agriculture Month celebration - March 2023.
 -Deadline to submit entries will be March 20, 2023.
 -Winners will be announced March 24, 2023 on mvcoop.com
 -Entries submitted to the Monte Vista Coop can be submitted in hard copy form via mail, dropped off at the Monte Vista Coop main office, or electronic format (email), and must be received by the March 20, 2023 by 5:00 pm.

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Winter from Home

So often we say, “get out on the forest,” “go explore,” “I took this great trip last weekend,” “check out this peak or trail,” and so on, but it is winter, cold, and snowy. Maybe you just do not want to go outside to face the blowing wind and biting temperatures. Winter is a great time to bundle up and make memories of playing in the snow or taking the quietest hike as everything gets dampened by falling snow. But it is also a good time to curl up in front of the wood stove with a hot cup of tea and enjoy a book.

Our public lands offer much more than just areas to recreate on. They make a great playground or place to relax for many people throughout the seasons, but they also have value in their scenic beauty. From the comfort of your home, you can watch the temperature outside rise from negatives to reach only the teens by mid-day. You can still enjoy the National Forest just by sitting by the woodstove as it radiates heat from logs cut last summer in the forest. It was hot work then - cutting, hauling, and splitting. Now it again provides warmth, this time for a more relaxing activity like reading, knitting, or watching television.

Through a window the mountains look beautiful after fresh snow, crisp white lines split by black cliffs all silhouetted against the clear blue sky. They are easy on the eyes from a couch, wrapped in a blanket with a good book. Others may post pictures and brag about the endless powder they skied or rode on their sleds. But for some it is not just the cold, but the ever-present danger of avalanches which is enough to keep you cozy in your home.

Perhaps, you live near the forest so you can enjoy the sight of the sun setting on the Sangre de Cristo Range, turning the snowy peaks red, orange, and pink in the evening. The changing light on mountain peaks, or the view through the forest of trees dusted with snow out a window is preferred by many to a city skyline full of blinking lights, or the roofs of houses in suburban sprawl.

A few days after a storm and once the plow drivers catch up to mother nature, the highways that wind through the forest make a spectacular drive. Forested can-

Land Water and People

By Hanna Fake

yons with trees laden with snow, mountains with white caps, and wind-swept mesas with cornices of snow hanging off their edges can be seen across the forest. The landscape is covered in a pristine white blanket with deep drifts and banks everywhere. Animal tracks cross the drifts, but a heated car is much more pleasant than post-holing through feet of snow to check them out.

Driving from the San Luis Valley up to Wolf Creek Pass, you can watch the snow accumulate. There is a little in the valley and the grasses and shrubs still show through. On the south facing slopes the snow disappears quickly. As you begin to climb in elevation the blanket of snow becomes smoother and thicker. The snowbanks along the sides of the road grow as you pass through South Fork. Once you leave town, the trees become laden, and the forest becomes a winter wonderland. The parking areas are full of snowmobilers and skiers as you head up the pass. When outdoor winter recreation is not your cup of tea, you are glad you do not have to back a large trailer into a small parking lot in the snow or dig your car back out to the road through a snowbank on a snowy day.

Watching the light change on the mountains, the snow pile up and melt off the trees, and the temperature rise and fall but never get above freezing from the comfort of your warm home is still a great way to spend the winter and enjoy the forest. Public lands are valued for their scenic vistas, habitat, resources, and recreational opportunities. So do not forget when you are looking out to the mountains, marveling at their beauty in the snow, you are enjoying your National Forest.

Hannah Fake is the San Juan Mountains Association Visitor Information Coordinator on the Rio Grande National Forest. She loves to get out and play in the snow, but also likes to read a good book by the woodstove.

LETTER

More information on Saguache Road cuts

Editor,
This letter is in response to the article titled “US Highway 285 Road Cut Questions Answered.” The article includes two nice photos, but unfortunately, there is a fair amount of misinformation.

By the late 1860s, the “old Del Norte Road” led in a fairly straight northeasterly direction from Del Norte to Milton (an early town about a mile southeast of Saguache) passing through La Garita along the way. After reaching Milton, the road turned north and then west reaching Saguache on the east end. This was the main route between Del Norte and Saguache for at least 50 years. Even after the “Gunbarrel” was constructed in the early 1900s and mostly finished by 1919, it stopped three and a half miles south of Saguache. Travelers going to Saguache from the south still had to utilize the old road for those last few miles into town. For many decades, travelers did “go around on flat ground” instead of going over, or

through, the hills.

Many townspeople decided after several years of use of the “new” Gunbarrel (Highway 15 at that time, not Highway 285) that they wanted a straight route from the Gunbarrel directly into town. By then Milton had long been an abandoned ghost town. The blasting of the hills began in October 1931 and the project was completed in 1932, leaving the roller coaster road cuts. The rolling hills remained until 1968 (not 1954) when the road cuts were widened and leveled.

The article statement that this new road gave “a straight shot to the junction of US 285 and Colorado Highway 114 without going through the streets of Saguache” sounds like the new highway bypassed Saguache altogether. The new road followed 8th Street north and south and then turned onto Gunnison Avenue (east-west). This does not avoid going through the town’s streets but divides it in half, east to west.

No matter where a highway route

might be put near Saguache, whether through the cuts or around on another path, there are deer and other wildlife moving through the entire area and crossing the roads. Currently, deer wander into town and surrounding fields from all directions. And if the highway were to go around the hills rather than through the present cuts, there would be a blind corner where drivers could not see oncoming traffic. The current route is the safest.

I am certain that the Saguache townspeople who originally promoted the road cuts would never have dreamed that over 90 years later, anyone would be confused and would question or “criticize” their decision. History matters and knowledge of it is important. Often the history of a location and existing conditions affect the decisions made. There are many similar road cuts on highways throughout Colorado. Take a look.

*Bill Hazard
Saguache*

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Solution to last week’s puzzle

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H	O	P	I			D	E	O	D	O	R	A	N	T			
A	T	E	N			L	F			O	I	L	E	R			
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ANNOUNCEMENTS	11 ROOMS	MERCHANDISE	35 HEAVY EQUIPMENT	45 ANIMAL BREEDING	56 BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY
01 TICKETS	12 HOUSES	23 LAWN & GARDEN	36 MISCELLANEOUS	46 PASTURE FOR RENT	57 INVESTMENTS
02 CARD OF THANKS	13 MOBILE HOMES	24 GARAGE SALES	37 WANTED	47 HORSES & CATTLE	TRANSPORTATION
03 MEMORIALS	14 BUSINESS PROPERTY	25 AUCTIONS	38 MACHINERY, TOOLS & EQUIPMENT	48 PETS & SUPPLIES	58 MOTORCYCLES
04 LOST & FOUND	15 WANTED TO RENT	26 ANTIQUES	39 SPORTING GOODS	49 ANIMAL CARE	59 VEHICLES WANTED
05 NOTICES/BAZAARS	16 VACATION	27 APPLIANCES	40 AUTO PARTS	50 LIVESTOCK	60 CLASSIC CARS
06 PERSONALS	REAL ESTATE	28 HOUSEHOLD GOODS	FARMER MARKET	RECREATIONAL	61 4X4'S
EMPLOYMENT	17 REAL ESTATE	29 MUSICAL ITEMS	41 FARM EQUIPMENT	51 BOATS & EQUIPMENT	62 VANS
07 HELP WANTED	18 LOTS & ACRES	30 ELECTRONICS/COMPUTERS	42 FEED & SEED	52 CAMPING EQUIPMENT	63 TRUCKS
08 WORK WANTED	19 FARM & FARMLAND	31 HEALTH	43 FARM PRODUCTS	53 TRAILERS	64 AUTOS FOR SALE
09 EMPLOYMENT SERVICES	20 BUSINESS PROPERTY	32 FUEL & HEATING	44 FARM SERVICES	54 SNOWMOBILES/ATV'S	SERVICES
FOR RENT	21 MOBILE HOMES	33 BUILDING MATERIALS	45 ANIMALS	55 R.V.'S/CAMPERS	65 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES
10 APARTMENTS	22 PROPERTY WANTED	34 OFFICE EQUIPMENT		56 FINANCIAL	66 CHILD CARE

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07 Help Wanted

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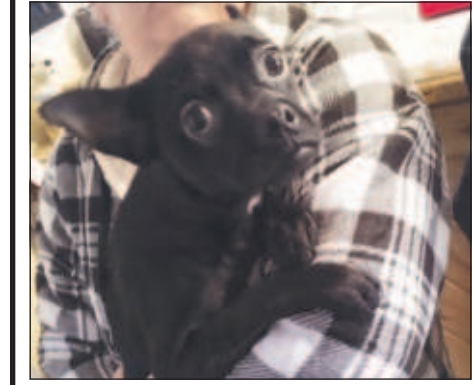
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SLV REC CEO Loren Howard retires

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MONTE VISTA — “Did I do the right thing?” Going home at the end of the day, I ask myself that question. “Did I do the right thing for our cooperative, the employees and 90 percent of our members?” If I can answer yes to that question, then I sleep well at night,” Loren Howard stated when commenting on his 11 years as CEO of San Luis Valley Rural Electric Cooperative (REC). Howard retires in March, and



Eric Ericksen will take over all duties as Chief Executive Officer on March 13. Howard will stay on board to the end of March to help foster a smooth transition for Eriksen and REC employees.

Coming to REC from Holland Board of Public Works (Holland, Mich.) in November 2011, Howard was looking forward to having “many new professional challenges and opportunities.” He had previously served 22 years in the United States Coast Guard and worked at Packaging Corporation of America, Century Boat Company, and Colorado Department of Transportation. He earned a bachelor’s in Mechanical Engineering and a master’s in Business Administration in his many academic pursuits. He is also a registered professional engineer in Colorado.

Howard has seen many industry changes since starting in the business more than 40 years ago. The technical (back-end) of the electric system is completely different, due to wholesale deregulation and the creation of regional transmission organizations (RTO) and independent system operators (ISO). In addition, “renewable energy is transforming the industry; wind and solar are changing where power is from,” he stated.

On a more local level, Howard does not see huge changes coming for the electric cooperative.

“We’re the wires to your house; we’re the end-user provider. I don’t see the fundamentals of our business changing even with solar on your house and someday the implementation of microgrids. No technology will change the wires and poles to your house. I do think demand will change, but the basics will not.”

Throughout Howard’s history of being at REC, one of the accomplishments he is most proud of is summed up in one word: Ciello. His pride for REC’s broadband division is very evident in the way he talks of it. “I’ve been around broadband since 1993. When REC’s Board of Directors wanted to bring it to the Valley, I said, ‘ok, let’s go.’ We brought in someone to do a feasibility study—marketing, engineering and financials, and everything looked okay. Then we did a second round of market and financial studies, and we went for it,” Howard said.

“I would like to think I’ve changed people’s lives here [by bringing fiber broadband Internet to unserved and underserved areas].” He would not have changed a thing along the way. “We didn’t wait for grant money. If we did, we’d never be where we are today. We just went and did it.”

“In the future, maybe grants will help build out fiber in other areas that are difficult to justify financially, but we did what we needed to do to get the job done at the time, and I’m proud of that,” Howard said, “I hope 20 years from now, maybe someone

will think, ‘I remember Loren Howard; he brought fiber to the Valley.’”

“My best memory of working at REC ... every day. There have only been two days since I’ve been here that I didn’t want to come to work. I’ve loved every other day of the last 11 years,” he commented.

Creede Hargraves, REC Board Director commented, “I have only had the pleasure of working with Loren for a short time; but the first thing that struck me in both meeting him and working with him was his high degree of professionalism. I have seen a great deal of respect afforded him, from both other board members and the staff of SLVREC. He has shown a real desire for service of the coop and the communities that are served by it. His service and experience will be missed.”

So, what is next for Howard... “I’m retiring,” he laughed. “I’ve never been good at having fun when I know there’s work to do. Can I just play all the time? I struggle with that concept.” As a new Monte Vista City Councilor, Howard will be able to keep himself somewhat busy. “I’ve thought about being on City Council before, but never could commit the time. With my impending demise here at REC, the time is right,” Howard commented.

Howard also plans to travel with his wife Karen; they are looking forward to a future trip to Scotland. “As of right now, Karen is excited for me to be home more, but we’ll see how that goes. Sometimes you realize you might not want what you asked for,” he laughed.

In addition, his two children have been asking him for years: “when are you going to retire and come visit us more?” That is in his plans too—visiting his daughter Rebecca and her husband James in Denver and his son Micah and his wife Kendra in Washington D.C., as well as his eight grandchildren.

Additionally, he will find more time for his hobbies: rebuilding jeeps, amateur radio, hiking, and rock climbing, and he might even try to finish getting his private pilot license. The San Luis Valley has been the perfect home for Howard and his wife. “Anywhere above tree line is literally my heaven on earth. When we moved here in 2011, we were 228 miles away from my son and his family and 228 miles

from my daughter and her family. It’s the perfect place to be,” Howard said.

According to REC Board Director Carol Lee Dugan, “Loren has been an energizer for the entire SLVREC Board. He encourages every board member to think out of the box productively. It has been exciting to see SLVREC’s progression under his leadership.”

“I am enormously grateful for being

a part of REC. I love working for the members and customers of REC and Ciello. The employees here are the best I have ever had a chance to work with. It’s a great organization with few struggles; this makes it hard to walk away. My heart will always be with REC and Ciello, and I’ve told the board and the employees several times, ‘if you ever need me for any reason, I’ll be there,’” Howard concluded.

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CRANES

Continued from Page 1

tions in the country that people can actually get out and see,” said CPW Education and Volunteer Coordinator Catherine Brons. “The Monte Vista Crane Festival is an exciting event that CPW and our wonderful volunteers take pride in being a part of, and we love this chance to reunite with some volunteers who have assisted with this for decades.”

Those interested in attending official event sites to see the sandhill cranes and other bird species can reserve tickets at <https://mvcranefest.org>. CPW staff and volunteers will support outdoor scope sites and be on hand to help answer questions.

CPW will also host a booth at the Outcall Event and Conference at SLV Ski Hi Complex in Monte Vista throughout the event to provide additional information and learning opportunities.

Attendees may also attend a talk from 1-2 p.m. Saturday, March 11, regarding elk on the San Luis Valley refuge complex. The \$5 presentation will be led by Doug Ouren, the Elk Distribution and Dispersal Coordinator for CPW’s Habitat Partnership Program. Tickets for speaker events at the Monte Vista Crane Festival are available online.

“We are thrilled to see this event return to full in-person activities and are looking forward to engaging with the public to provide educational opportunities along with all of the festival’s partners,” Brons said.

Cranes are migratory birds, and the Rocky Mountain population of greater sandhill cranes is estimated at roughly 20,000. Much of the population spends its winter in nesting grounds south in New Mexico, Arizona and Mexico and will migrate north in the spring to summer breeding grounds in Idaho, Montana and Wyoming.

Cranes are among the oldest living species on the planet, with fossil records dating back 9 million years. The birds that migrate through Colorado are the largest of the North American sandhill crane subspecies standing 4-foot tall with a wingspan of up to 7 feet and weighing in at 11 pounds. Besides their imposing size, the birds issue a continuous and distinctive call.

The Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuge sees thousands of sandhill cranes each day during this time of year. The Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuge will be open one hour before sunrise and one hour after sunrise for crane viewing. Cranes may also be viewed at the Alamosa National Wildlife Refuge southeast of Alamosa and at CPW’s Rio Grande, Higel and Russell Lakes State Wildlife Areas. CPW asks the public to please observe the seasonal closures at the State Wildlife Areas.

Cranes are most active at dusk and dawn when they move from nighttime roosting areas to fields where they feed. People attending the crane festival’s viewing sites may also see eagles, owls, turkeys and a variety of other raptors and waterfowl.

Birdwatchers should be cautious when parking, getting out of vehicles and walking along roads. View birds from a distance with binoculars and spotting scopes and observe trail signs and closure notices.

Those who attend the Monte Vista Crane Festival are encouraged to dress warmly with winter temperatures and wind always expected. For more information on the Mon-

te Vista Crane Festival, go to <https://mvcranefest.org/festival/>; or www.fws.gov/refuge/Monte_Vista. For more information on State Wildlife Areas in the San Luis Valley, go to <https://cpw.state.co.us/placestogo>.



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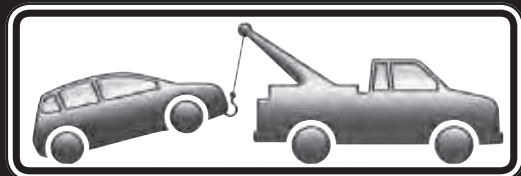
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 703 4th Ave All equipment included - even a smoker! CLEAN and READY TO GO!
 Perfect for a coffee shop or Restaurant
 MLS# 801021

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Rito Hondo Estates - 18 Rural Mountain Lots Available
 West of Antonito in the Conejos Canyon OWNER FINANCING AVAILABLE **\$85,000-\$400,000** 35 acre lots, 17 acre lots, 6 acre lots Power to lot line, great roads, gated community. Email Dee for an interactive document with photos, videos and descriptions of each lot.

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UNDER CONTRACT IN 7 DAYS

701 County Road 20
 3 bedroom 3 bath full log home on 1 acre. Two-car garage with unfinished apartment above. Air B&B OK
 MLS# 800522

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0 Old Homestead Road, Del Norte
 48 acres bordering National Forest. Easy, year-round access, both Forest Service Road AND a county-maintained road to the lot line. Ride out and enjoy without trailering your ATV or snowmobile. **\$425,000** MLS#796222 Text 134434 to 25678 for more info

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271 Birch Street
 3.5 acres of commercial land in South Fork Between the Post office and the Church of Christ **\$375,000** MLS# 800638

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