

Shorts

Flu shot clinic in MV on Oct. 5

MONTE VISTA — Rio Grande Public Health (RGPH) will be offering a flu shot clinic at Tri-County Senior Center in Monte Vista on Wednesday, Oct. 5 between 9 a.m. and noon.

Tri County Senior Center is located at 311 Washington St. in Monte Vista. This clinic will provide both regular and high-dose flu shots. RGPH can bill several insurances including Medicare.

This clinic is providing increased social distancing and disinfection measures to help reduce COVID exposure. Masks are required. Call RGPH for more information, at 719-657-3352.

Kids Crane Festival returns to MV on Oct. 8

MONTE VISTA — Families with children are invited to attend the free Kids Crane Festival, Oct. 8 from noon to 3 p.m. at the Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuge headquarters, 6120 Highway 15.

Come celebrate the return of the migrating Sandhill Cranes to the San Luis Valley. Outdoor activities at the Kids Crane Festival will center around an appreciation of birds and other wildlife. The migration game, crane origami, bird nest identification and owl pine cones are just a few of the activities on tap for the afternoon. A free lunch will be served at noon to children and their adult family members. Activities will begin at 12:30 p.m.

The Kids Crane Festival is hosted by the Friends of the San Luis Valley National Wildlife Refuges. For more information about the festival, call 719-588-7007.

Spanish traditional dance free class is Sept. 30

ALAMOSA — Learn the traditional dances such as the pino, la varsoviana, vales, polka, and the quadrillio from Daniel and Joyce Lopez. Los Baila's de Antas (Spanish Traditional Dance from the Past) is scheduled from 5 until 6:30 p.m. Friday, Sept. 30, in the Adams State University Student Union Building CoRE Center (located on the north end of the building). The class is free for adults 50-years-old and older.

The program is part of the NextFifty Initiative, a private Colorado-based foundation that supports projects benefiting people 50-years-old and older.

For more information, contact Savannah Torres, NextFifty Initiative activity coordinator, at storres@adams.edu or 719-587-7686.

Saguache Sheriff hosts music festival recap

BY PATRICK SHEA

SAGUACHE — During a special meeting with residents on Sept. 27, Saguache County Sheriff Dan Warwick provided details and fielded questions about the Seven Peaks Music Festival held outside of Villa Grove over Labor Day Weekend.

More than 20 people from Villa Grove and throughout the county came to the Saguache Road and Bridge meeting room to share observations and concerns about

Please see RECAP on Page 6A



Photo by Patrick Shea

Residents met with Saguache County commissioners and staff in the Road and Bridge meeting room to discuss the Seven Peaks Music Festival outside of Villa Grove over Labor Day Weekend.

District Attorney highlights Coffee with the Chief

BY PATRICK SHEA

CENTER — Newly appointed 12th Judicial District Attorney Anne Kelly met with a dozen residents in Center for the monthly Coffee with the Chief gathering at Town Hall on Sept. 24. Interim Police Chief Aaron Fresquez deputized fellow officer and twin brother Adam to introduce Kelly and manage the nearly three-hour conversation.

Three days after meeting residents in Center, Kelly joined the Saguache County Commissioners working meeting on Sept. 27 via ZOOM.

Appointed to the 12th Judicial District by Governor Jared Polis on Aug. 29, Kelly was a senior deputy DA in Boulder County for the past three years. After former DA Alonzo Payne resigned from District 12, Kelly and four DAs from other districts filled the void before her appointment.

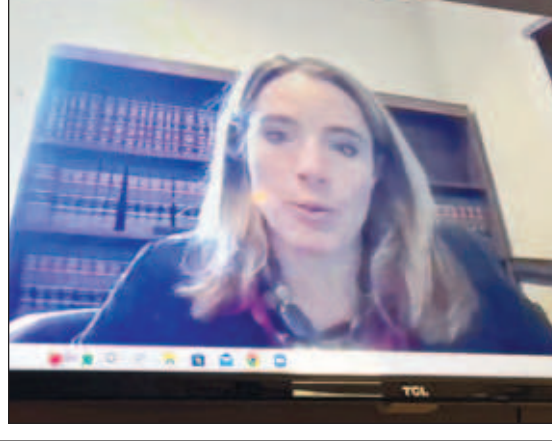
Kelly started her law career in 2002, working privately and then serving the public sector. She worked for DAs who were Republicans and Democrats in the 18th, 19th, and 20th judicial

Please see COFFEE on Page 7A



Photos by Patrick Shea

On Sept. 24, District Attorney Anne Kelly met with a dozen Center residents for the Coffee with the Chief discussion at Town Hall.



Attending via ZOOM, District Attorney Anne Kelly proposed a budget for her office and shared information about herself during the Saguache County Board of County Commissioners meeting on Sept. 27

Martinez, Riggerbach tackle issues in candidate forum

Both are running for Colorado House District 62 seat

BY MARIE MCCOLM

MONTE VISTA — Two Colorado House District 62 candidates both from Monte Vista — Democrat Mathew Martinez and Republican Carol Riggerbach — participated in an hour-long virtual forum Monday night, Sept. 26, hosted by the League of Women Voters of the San Luis Valley and Pueblo.

Martinez was unopposed in the state primary. Riggerbach defeated Ryan Williams with 60.7 percent of the vote in the primary. Democrat Donald Valdez did not run for reelection.

District 62 covers portions of covers portions of Alamosa, Conejos, Costilla, Huerfano, Mineral, Pueblo, Rio Grande and Saguache counties.

The structure of the forum was typical. The candidates were asked the same questions and had one minute to answer. They had two minutes for an opening remark and two minutes for a closing statement. Candidates alternated giving

Please see FORUM on Page 5A

Township effort continues for Baca Grande

BY PATRICK SHEA

BACA GRANDE SUBDIVISIONS — A week after their first meeting with 51 people in attendance via ZOOM and more than 35 in the Baca Grande Property Owners Association Meeting Hall, the volunteer group hosted another discussion on Sept. 26.

They tested new equipment to smooth connections between online and live participants, but it failed. So, they resorted to sharing the microphone and repeating questions. ZOOM participants posed questions and comments in the chat feed while organizers

Please see BACA on Page 2A



Photo by Patrick Shea

A group of volunteers from the Baca Grande Property Owners Association hosted a second gathering on Sept. 26 to discuss the process of creating the Town of Baca Grande.

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OBITUARIES

Stephen Jake Filippi

Stephen Jake Filippi, 19, of South Fork, Colo., passed away on Sept. 18, 2022. He was born on June 2, 2003, to Michael Filippi and Juda Filippi in Denver, Colo.

He was an intelligent, artistic, creative, kind, and loyal individual. Stephen loved being outdoors and would go on many hiking adventures. He was tech savvy and would dabble in computers. As with every young adult experience some type of getaway, music for him was an outlet which he enjoyed playing the electric guitar, piano and drums.

He is survived by his loving parents Michael and Juda of South Fork, Colo., paternal grandparents Brian Anthony and Donna Michelle Filippi, his brother Michael Brian Filippi and sister Jada Marie Filippi.

He was preceded in death by his maternal grandparents.

Celebration of Life will take place on Sept. 30, 2022, at 10 a.m. at South Fork Church of Christ located on 205 Birch St. in South Fork, CO 81154. In Lieu of flowers donations may be made to South Fork Church of Christ in South Fork, CO 81154.

Arrangements are in the care of Strohmayer's Funeral Home.



Robert L. Bressman

November 11, 1939 – September 15, 2022, Aledo Texas

Robert Bressman, born in Omaha, Nebraska, was a resident of Colorado all his life until June of 2022, when he moved to Texas with his daughter and family, while suffering with dementia.

He married Erma Louise Nelson on January 15, 1960.

Robert was an avid outdoors man and anyone that knew him would know where to find him.

He loved fishing, hunting, and reloading. He was an active member of NRA.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Eva and Elmer Bressman, grandson, Aithelind Mikel Bressman at birth, and granddaughter Morgan Lynn Park age 3.

He is survived by his wife, Erma Bressman, Aledo Texas, formerly of Del Norte, Colorado, his daughter Ronda Park and Husband Adrian of

Aledo, Texas, son Mikel and wife Debbie of Craig, Colorado and son Craig and wife, Natalie of South Fork, Colorado.

Grandchildren, Phillip Smith and wife Michelle of Haslet, Texas, Hannaphen Park of Fort Worth, Texas, Lance Bressman and his wife, Krystal of Craig, Colorado. Bob and Erma also are fond of and helped raise Kenneth Adams of Wisconsin and Katherine Adams Hardy of North Dakota.

Great Grandchildren Dominick, Adrian and Arabelle of Haslet Texas, Sterling Knoch of Dallas, Texas, Adelaide, Aiden, Avery, Aaliya and Annalise of Craig, Colorado.

He died peacefully after heart complications on Thursday, September 15th.

Memorial service will be held at Gateway Church, 975 Grand Ave,



Del Norte, Colorado 81132, at 10:30 am. In lieu of flowers, please donate to the Youth Group of Gateway Church.

Cremation arrangements made by Greenwood Funeral Home, Fort Worth, Texas.

Herman Reimer

Herman Reimer, 93, of Golden Valley, Ariz., passed away peacefully on Tuesday, Sept. 6, 2022.

Herman was born Aug. 18, 1929, in Meade County, Kan., and married the love of his life, Lois Marie Reimer, on Dec. 23, 1950, in Keenesburg, Colo. Herman was a wonderful helpmate and caregiver during their nearly 63 years of marriage.

Upon answering God's call to full-time ministry, Herman and Lois pastored churches in Colorado and Arizona. In addition to being very active in their pastorate, the Reimers committed many years to loving and caring for numerous foster children. Herman spent his final working years working in maintenance at the Willow Beach, Ariz., fish hatchery. Herman was known for his love of people and his goats.

Herman is survived by one daughter, Jeannette Faye Reimer, Kingman, Ariz.; two sons, Thomas Raymond



Reimer (Melba), Eagle Point, Ore., and James Douglas Reimer, Golden Valley, Ariz.; nine grandchildren, Dannette Jeaniel Myers (Chuck), Kingman, Ariz.; Justin Quinn Price, Kingman, Ariz.; Christina Marie Price, Kingman, Ariz.; Raymond

Lee Reimer (Kristi), McMinnville, Ore.; Timothy Andrew Reimer, Eagle Point, Ore.; Daniel Christian Reimer (Amy), Eagle Point, Ore.; Yulise Joy Summers (Tyler), Eagle Point, Ore.; Kailla Breanne Benjamin, Kingman, Ariz.; and Matthew Douglas Reimer (Ashley), Dolan Springs, Ariz.; and nine great-grandchildren, Michael Aaron Myers, Hallie Mae Reimer, Gabriel Alexander Myers, Ashton Lee Dreyer, Renaye Ella Benjamin, Noah Ivan Reimer, Andrew Tyler Reimer, Jeremy Isaac Reimer and Isaak Dale Summers.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Lois Marie Reimer, his parents, Isaac and Agnes Reimer; and four brothers, Reuben Reimer, Benjamin Reimer, William Reimer, and Paul Reimer.

A memorial service will be held on Saturday, Oct. 22, 2022, at 2 p.m., with a potluck fellowship following, at Kingman Family Worship Center, 4087 Eagle Dr., Kingman, Ariz.

Alamosa County jury convicts Vargas of drunken driving

CONTRIBUTED

ALAMOSA — A jury in Alamosa County Court convicted Martin Vargas of driving under the influence of alcohol and careless driving shortly after the 12th Judicial District Attorney's Office presented closing arguments this morning.

Vargas hit a vehicle parked at the Loaf n Jug on Highway 160 at approximately 10 p.m. on April 26. The owner of the vehicle the defendant struck called the police and reported that the driver appeared to be drunk.

Vargas refused to provide a breath or blood test to determine his level of intoxication, but officers from the Alamosa Police Department observed several signs of intoxication.

This was Vargas's third conviction for alcohol-related driving offenses. In 1998, the defendant was convicted in New

Mexico for causing a crash that killed another individual while he was intoxicated. The defendant was remanded to the custody of the Alamosa Sheriff's Office where he will await sentencing scheduled on Nov. 17.

The District Attorney's Office recognizes the hard work of the Alamosa Police Department in investigating this case. The District Attorney's Office also thanks Crystal Littrell from the Colorado Attorney General's Office for the outstanding work she did to prepare this case for trial and secure a just conviction.

District Attorney Anne Kelly said that "the community cannot tolerate individuals who put the lives and safety of the citizens at risk by driving drunk. The individual has been doing just that for decades. We appreciate the jury's hard work and believe the outcome was just."

BACA Continued from Page 1A

struggled with their technology for the first 30 minutes.

The group also tested a new approach to information sharing. Labeled at the top with "Fears/Worries, Wishes/Possibilities, Pros/Cons, and Volunteer/Donate," four sheets of paper taped to the wall included room for residents to add comments, questions, or concerns. ZOOM participants were encouraged to add similar comments to a Google document. However, the meeting ran long without addressing any of the issues directly.

Desiree Marceau provided answers and reactions to issues raised during the first meeting on Sept. 19. After speaking with Moffat Mayor Cassandra Foxx, for example, Marceau determined that the Town of Baca could still use the Crestone Post Office.

Two residents in the room who expressed frustration during the meeting were asked to leave or Marceau would call the sheriff. The two residents chose to stay, and other residents calmed down other people in the room who also became heated.

One issue that remained unclear is the dissolution of the Baca Grande POA. The ability to vote for township currently before the judge is limited to POA members who are residents and are also registered to vote in Saguache County. Property owners who do not meet this criteria cannot vote on township, although they represent nearly half of the

membership.

According to POA bylaws, only a majority of the members can dissolve the association. According to the Town of Baca volunteer group, the POA would automatically dissolve if a simple majority voted Yes. But POA members would then hold another vote to decide about giving the town its assets — buildings, greenbelts, the golf course, and more. The legal interpretation remained unresolved at the end of the meeting.

The Town of Baca volunteer group will host another informational exchange at the POA Hall at 6 p.m. on Oct. 3. Marceau said that POA member concerns and comments gathered from the Sept. 26 meeting will be addressed.

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OPINION & EDITORIAL

Holes in my shirt

We all had a favorite shirt or two while growing up. You know the one that no matter how threadbare it was, you didn't want to give it up. Even at this ripe old age, Ol' Dutch has some that he just cannot part with.

One such shirt is my camo elk hunting shirt. To say it's threadbare would lead the reader to think that it is still wearable, but, alas, folks, it is so full of holes it no longer resembles a shirt. But, it brings me luck elk hunting, so I keep it.

Up until recently, Ol' Dutch made do with some cheapo Wal-Mart camo and even though it may not be the best quality, the elk, deer and bear don't seem to know the difference between that and some hoity-toity brand of clothes.

And like I said they have worked fine up until now. But son number one seems to think I need to fit in with the NOW crowd and so he bought me the expensive brand that everyone seems to covet.

And Miss Trixie got me into some Merino wool layers so now I am some kind of fancy dan of a hunter, I guess. And I have to admit the clothes are super nice but there is a learning curve when wearing clothes with "technology" built in.

Imagine my surprise when I put the Merino base layer on, and I found out it has a thumb hole in the sleeve. I would not have noticed but it caught my big appendage on the way on and there I was looking akin to some punk rocker dude with a half glove look.

And for the life of me I could not figure out why that hole was put in there until I tried to put on the next shirt over that one. As you can imagine, without my thumbs in the holes in the sleeves the base layer rode up on my arm and felt horrible.

Suddenly it dawned on Ol' Dutch like a lightbulb in a dark room. That darned hole is meant to hold your sleeve down on the base layer while you put on the next layer of shirt. Now that's some nifty idea there.

Now I have been working and playing outside most of my life and of course we were taught at an early age to grab onto the sleeve of the undergarment before inserting it in a coat so it's not like we didn't have a solution to the riding up of material on a sleeve.

But this new-to-me-invention



Trout Republic
by Kevin Kirkpatrick

sure would have saved a lot of tears and stress on my mother trying to dress me and get those sleeves to stay down where they belonged.

A few other holes for thumbs came to mind as I thought about this like Little Jack Horner who put in his thumb and pulled out a plum. Which I would have been glad to get as I have not had a good one in ages.

And who here has not at least once in your life stuck out a thumb to hitch a ride somewhere. That is the universal signal to drivers that some poor stranded soul needs a lift to some destination.

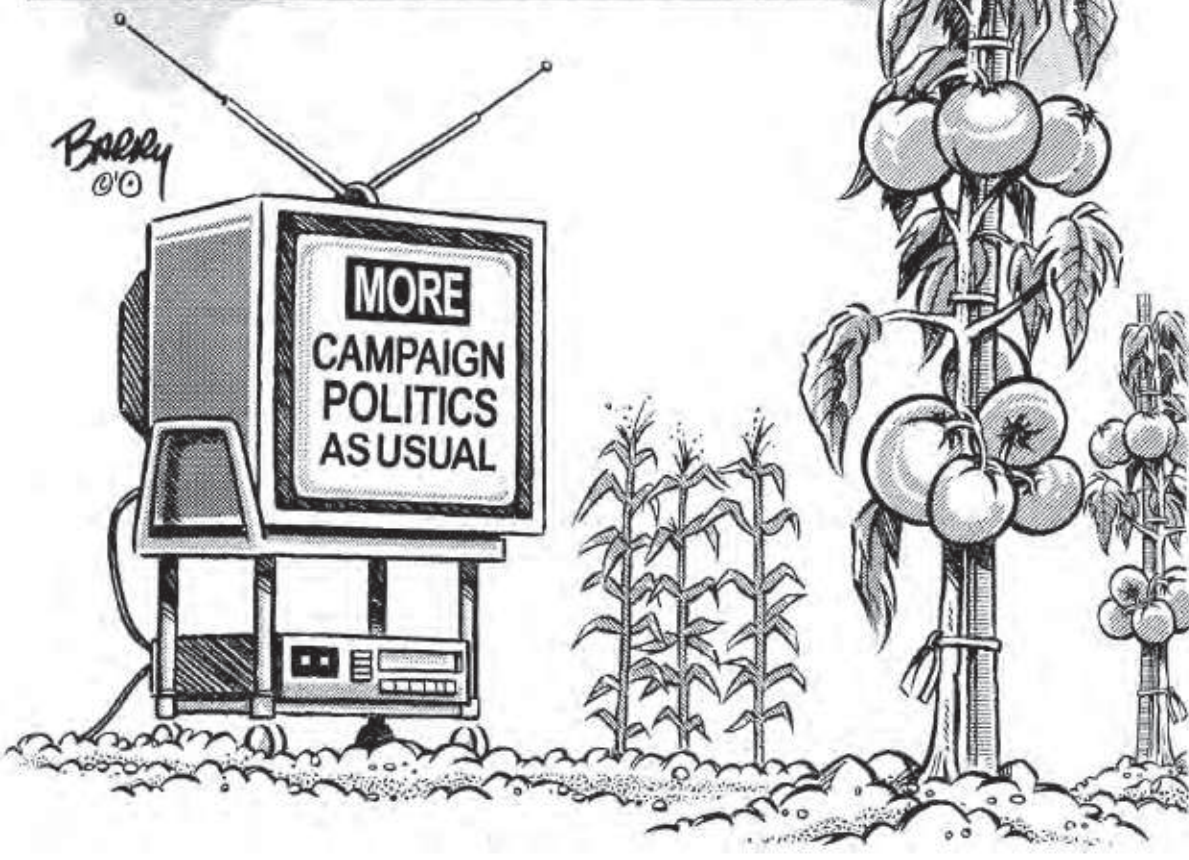
And last but not least, is the little Dutch boy that put his finger in the hole in the dike surrounding Holland thereby saving the whole country from ruin. Now it doesn't say it was his thumb but surely the leak was big enough to warrant the use of the biggest digit.

So, I guess the thumb holes are probably a good idea and warrant the extra dollars I have to spend on "fancy duds" to get that option. And worst-case scenario might come in handy when hitching a ride off into the sunset.

Tomorrow is the last day of elk season, if I don't get one, rest assured these fancy duds will soon find their way into the back of the closet and my holey one will return to top of the pile.

Kevin Kirkpatrick and his Yorkie, Cooper, fish, hunt, ATV or hike daily. His email is Kevin@TroutRepublic.com. Additional news can be found at www.troutrepublic.com or on Twitter at TroutRepublic.

FERTILIZIN' TH' GARDEN - AGAIN...



YOUR NIGHT SKY

BY DARLENE DANKO

Autumn skies

September and October have the clearest and most transparent night skies for viewing. The temperature is still mild, it gets dark earlier, the Milky Way is high overhead, and the monsoon season is mostly over. It's my favorite time for sky watching.

Due to Earth's tilt as it orbits the Sun, some things only happen in the fall. If you've been looking in the sky, you may have noticed that you can't find the Big Dipper. It sits low in the northwest horizon and sets shortly after sunset. Then it's high in the spring. So, it "springs up and falls down". Currently you can see it rise in the northeast before dawn.

Five of its seven stars have a physical relationship in space. They're part of a single group and may have been born together from a single cloud of gas and dust. They still move together as a family and are 78-84 light years from here. The other two stars aren't related to each other or the group of five. They're 101 and 124 light years from us. Eventually the Big Dipper will drift apart as the

stars continue their journey.

Formalhaut is the Autumn Star for the northern hemisphere. It appears in an otherwise empty part of the sky, so it's also known as the Solitary One or the Loneliest Star. Look in the southeast about a third of the way up and you'll see one bright star. It's part of the Southern Fish constellation which is pale and hard to distinguish.

The Southern Fish is mostly visible in the southern hemisphere, but Earth's tilt allows us to see it this time of year for a few months. You may be able to identify the Aquarius constellation above it. Aquarius is a man holding a jug that's pouring water into the mouth of the fish.

Formalhaut is the 18th brightest star in the sky. It's considerably hotter and heavier than our Sun. Side by side it would outshine our Sun by 17 times in visible light. But because it's 25 light years from us, we can't see how bright it really is. It's famous for having the first visible

exoplanet called Formalhaut B which was discovered by the Hubble space telescope.

The first quarter moon is on Oct. 2. Mars, Jupiter and Saturn are the major attractions this month. Jupiter is the brightest object in the sky this month. It's visible all evening, and its moons might also be visible. Mars is a stunning object in the middle of Taurus on Oct. 1. It rises close to 10 p.m. and brightens this month. And Saturn will be visible too. It's to the right of Jupiter and a little higher. It's just above Capricornus.

The Orionid meteor shower also occurs this month. It's active from Oct. 2 to Nov. 7. Its peak occurs on Oct. 21. So, you'll have lots of things to observe.



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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their answers throughout the evening. Wanda Hawman, president of the San Luis Valley League Unit of Women Voters, opened the forum that was livestreamed on Facebook.

"The purpose of tonight's forum is to inform voters," Hawman said. "Neither candidate that is here this evening received the questions ahead of time. We did this on purpose so that you the viewers have a chance to evaluate the candidates grasp of any of the important issues that face house district 62. We hope that your time with us this evening will help you make an informed decision when you go to the polls on election day Nov. 8."

The moderator for the evening was Courtney Hocking. The first question was, "What recommendations do you have to alleviate the lack of affordable housing?"

Martinez answered first, "That's a great question, I think this is something that has been in Colorado and Southern Colorado specifically for a number of years. The housing market, I think prices have been exponentially increased over the last few years. I think at least part of solving that issue is increasing wages for workers. Second of all is looking at housing prices too, so that, that means that when they have increased wages, they are not being overpriced outside of the market."

Riggenbach answered second, "There was actually legislation done in the Senate and in the House last legislative session, that would have helped alleviate some of the crunch that is on our housing situation, and part of it was rental costs that you could actually get reimbursed in your house, for some rent, that would have helped in the COVID situation. There has been some legislation put forth that will actually harm the housing situation that we have right now, just making it much more costly to even build houses and even with tiny homes, there was new legislation that was put in on tiny homes that will make even that tiny home situation more costly for the Coloradans."

The next question was, "Should the state play a role in regulating firearms, if yes what role should be played, and if no why not?"

Riggenbach responded first, "Nope. I always tell people right off the bat, I will not bend a knee on gun rights. I will not. I do not believe that our second amendment should be infringed upon. I believe in the people that fought for this country, and they fought very hard for us to be able to defend ourselves. If you look at our history and when we first became a country, and why we are very fortunate to have gun rights. I think there are other ways to help control gun violence; violence in the schools in particularly is where this always comes up, there was a bill that was also killed by the democrats last year to give more money to security officers within the school system, that

was not even supported. I do not support gun legislation and restrictions."

Martinez responded, "I believe first and foremost being able to protect our citizens and being able to make sure that our children are protected is the most paramount priority. Colorado already has restrictions on some gun regulations, and I think that for the most part some of those are common sense. I think that reinforcing background checks and making sure that people that should not have firearms, that they can't just walk into the store and purchase them on the same day, I don't think that that is a bad thing. I think being able to continue to reinforce those, I think that is something that is paramount."

The candidates were also asked about drought issues in Colorado, the water crisis in Colorado, abortion in Colorado, high quality and affordable childcare, lack of mental health services in Colorado, higher education, the importance of kindergarten through high school education, and state's finances.

The final question of the night was, "Is there an issue that you feel is so important that you would cross the aisle to see it at least partially resolved?"

Riggenbach responded, "There are so many issues. What I totally believe is first you must understand before you can be totally understood. I believe in that. I think that is the way I have operated my teams and all the people I have worked with and hired and the committees and the boards that I have been on. First you must understand before you can be understood. So, I think that it's important that we as legislators that we do that. Of course, some things, some fundamental things that we are not going to want to negotiate on. Again, we have got to understand each other, and we have got to believe in each other, and have faith in each other. We have to represent the people, not a party. We have to represent the people."

Martinez answered, "Making sure that we are not taking water out of any place in Colorado and putting that somewhere else. I believe that too much we have seen in the last 10-20 years where collaboration has been looked at as a bad thing. We have to be able to work across the aisle. We have to be able to let legislation pass because at the end of the day, who is impacted is the people. We have to really make sure that identifying issues that are nonpartisan to start off with and being able to start finding solutions to those issues and being able to work together to benefit our citizens. If we don't work together and we don't work collaborate, we don't get legislation passed, then we are not doing our jobs, and that doesn't benefit anybody."

Martinez was first to speak during the closing remarks.

"Four issues that I want to focus on for this election are fighting for our water, making sure that we are supporting our

community health centers and their networks and local hospitals, passing a rural Colorado incentive package, and making sure that we are passing and implementing a statewide veterans mental health initiative. I think that those issues are something that have plagued rural Colorado for some time, and something I want to fight for. Today

I ask for your support," Martinez said.

Riggenbach then said, "Legislation needs to be written to protect us from government overreach especially in the health care sector. Legislation needs to be written to protect our children from the onslaught of governmental dictating curriculum. Legislation needs to be written so as to protect our tax dollars

for schools and protect our children. We will not choose money over our children's future. Legislation needs to be written to protect small businesses who are especially getting hit hard. Legislators need to work together to solve crime issues. Legislators need to pray for wisdom. I appreciate your vote and all of your support."

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2022 BEST OF SAN LUIS VALLEY

SCAN ME

Town and Country honored for 25 years

General Motors corporation honored the family of Town and Country Auto Mall for 25 years as a Chevrolet dealer on Thursday. Accepting the honor were, front from left, family members Justin and Jeff Hasci, and co-owners Mike and Dianna Goodart. Presenting the honor was Ted Pfister, Chevrolet zone manager for the Rocky Mountains. The dealership became a Chevrolet and Buick dealer in 1997 and added the GMC brand two years later. Staff members of the GM store joined in the celebration. Photo by Keith R. Cerny



Photo by Keith R. Cerny

PUBLIC NOTICE
2022 GENERAL ELECTION LAT
 (Logic & Accuracy Test)
OCTOBER 5, 2022

Notice is hereby given that a public Logic and Accuracy Test of Saguache County's voting equipment will take place on October 5, 2022, beginning at 8:30 a.m. at the Saguache County Courthouse, 501 4th St., Saguache. Information about the test may be obtained by calling the County Clerk and Recorder's Office at (719) 655-2512.

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ELECCIONES GENERALES DE 2022
5 DE OCTUBRE DE 2022

Por medio del presente se informa que el 5 de octubre de 2022, a partir de las 8:30 a.m., se realizará la prueba pública de lógica y exactitud de los equipos de votación del condado de Saguache en el Tribunal, 501 4th St., Saguache. Puede obtener información sobre la prueba llamando a la Oficina de la Secretaria y Oficial de Registro del Condado al teléfono (719) 655-2512.

No. 1646 published in the Center Post Dispatch, Thursday, September 29, 2022.

RECAP

Continued from Page 1A

the first-time event in Saguache County. "Tonight, we're in the problem identification stage," Commissioner Lynne Thompson announced at the start of the meeting.

Representing Villa Grove, Kelly Marshall had already compiled comments and concerns from residents and provided them to commissioners before the meeting. Thompson read through the list and then encouraged others to raise additional concerns.

Multiple residents shared their observations. The dust and pollution affected respiration. Increased data traffic degraded local cell phone service, an added difficulty for business owners.

People drove too fast along Highway 285, sometimes creating a third lane. Pedestrians crossing the highway needed a crosswalk. The community needed a chance to provide input earlier. The lights were too bright. Perhaps orient the stage to direct the sound away from town.

Thompson later announced positive remarks. The event was well organized. Traffic was better than expected. The trash pickup process was good, and it wasn't too loud.

Some residents questioned whether the event organizers — Live Nation — should apply for a conditional use permit instead of a special use permit. For the county coffers, special use permit fees bring in less than conditional use permits, and they are for one-time events. Live Nation would need to apply every year.

One community member said organizers at the event announced on-stage their intention of coming back for years to come. Warwick explained that they would need to apply regardless of what was said at the festival.

"They'll still go through the same process," Warwick said. "As a county,



Photo by Patrick Shea

Travis Denning performed during the Seven Peaks Music Festival outside of Villa Grove over Labor Day Weekend.

we'll get people involved a lot earlier." Commissioner Tom McCracken said the board considered a short moratorium on special use permits for larger events like the Seven Peaks Music Festival while they revisit the application itself. Thompson echoed their goal to manage smaller events while considering all they have learned from the festival, the first of its kind in the county.

Although they have not received sales tax figures for September, commissioners are examining extra revenue for the future. For example, the tickets did not include sales tax, and no lodging tax was charged for the "glamping" and other camping on-site.

Local business owners also recommended another weekend for the festival because they saw a drop in Labor Day revenue, traditionally one of the biggest weekends of the year.

From the Bureau of Land Management perspective, Assistant Manager Dario Archuleta said he "thought it went well." Fewer people camped on BLM land nearby than he expected, and he saw no

impacts to grazing permittees.

Speaking for Villa Grove, Marshall told the board and audience that Live Nation's, "Jim Reid took us on a tour. I observed him engage in conversations with safety agencies. It made me feel confident because he was 'boots on the ground.' And he took time after the event. He met with a small group to hear our comments."

Warwick gave his final assessment before the meeting adjourned.

"I think it went better than I expected," Warwick said. "We made only a couple arrests that weekend and issued one citation."

Make Love Your Lifestyle

I have made it a priority to study about love in the Word of God. Getting a revelation about how much God loves me and learning to receive His love has been life-changing for me. It's been the key to being able to really enjoy my life because when I received God's love, then I could love others.

I've discovered that the best way—the only way—you can have a happy, powerful life is to get your mind off yourself and do something for someone else. Helping people, being a blessing and adding value to other people's lives is what it means to walk in love and follow the example of Jesus.

Ephesians 5:2 (NLT) says, "Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us and offered himself as a sacrifice for us..." Jesus—our perfect and holy Savior—gave His life for us, took all of our sin upon Himself, and shed His blood so we could have a personal relationship with Him and become the righteousness of God. That was His gift to us. And once we experience the gift of salvation, our gift to God is how we live our lives.

Jesus says in John 13:34, "...Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other." If we will learn how to follow this one commandment, everything else in our lives will fall into place. Because we can only become everything we're created to be when we live a life filled with God's love.

Be a Good Samaritan
 In Luke chapter 10, Jesus tells the story of the Good Samaritan to demonstrate what it means to love God and your neighbor as yourself. In verses 30-37, we read that a man was traveling from Jerusalem down to Jericho when "he was attacked by bandits. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him up, and left him half dead beside the road."

A priest and a Levite both passed by him and neither stopped to help. Verse 33 says, "Then a despised Samaritan came along, and when he saw the man, he felt compassion for him." Notice that he "felt compassion" for this man and he was moved to do something to help him.

He dressed his wounds and took him to an inn where he could get the care he needed. He paid the innkeeper and told him, "Take care of this man. If his bill runs higher than this, I'll pay you the next time I'm here" (v. 35).

There are a few things I want you to notice here. First, the Samaritan was traveling the road and was probably going somewhere he needed to be; he had a plan but he was willing to stop and help this man even if it meant his plan was interrupted.

Also, he gave his best effort to make sure the man had good care and then paid for him to get it. He was obviously willing to pay whatever it was going to cost because he told the innkeeper, "If his bill runs higher than this, I'll pay you the next time I'm here." So he was planning to come back and make sure everything the man needed was covered.

This Is Love!
 Jesus is showing us in this story what real love looks like. And 1 Corinthians 13 lists the characteristics of God's love: it is patient and kind, never jealous, boastful or rude; it does not demand its own way, is not irritable and keeps no record of being wronged. Love rejoices when truth wins out. It never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance. Love never fails!

Now, if you're thinking, "There's no way I can live up to this list!" I want to tell you, "Yes, you can!" You can love others like this because as a born-again Christian, you have everything you need to be like Jesus.
 It's not always easy because we



have to resist the temptation to be selfish, but 1 John 4:4 says that the Spirit of God in us is greater than our enemy. So in Christ, we have the power we need to live a life of love.
 It's important to understand that God is not expecting you to be perfect in your love walk or to do it without His help. What He wants is for you to seek Him through prayer and studying His Word, and as you do, lean on Him for the grace to do what He's asking you to do each day.
 God is love, so you can rest in the truth that He is patient with you, He's always with you, He believes in you and will not give up on you. And with God's love in your life, you can learn how to live a life of love!

For more on this topic, order Joyce's four-teaching resource **Live 2 Love**. You can also contact us to receive our free magazine, *Enjoying Everyday Life*, by calling (800) 727-9673 or visiting www.joycemeyer.org.
 Joyce Meyer is a New York Times bestselling author and founder of Joyce Meyer Ministries, Inc. She has authored more than 140 books, including **BATTLEFIELD OF THE MIND** and **THE POWER OF THANK YOU** (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.

San Luis Valley Scoreboard 2022 -2023

FOOTBALL

| | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Centauri 33 | Bayfield 14 |
| Sanford 56 | Wiley 6 |
| Salida 48 | Del Norte 13 |
| Monte Vista 50 | Peyton 22 |
| Sierra Grande 57 | Mountain Valley 0 |

COLLEGE

| | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| Adams State 52 | Fort Lewis 17 |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|

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COFFEE

Continued from Page 1A

districts.

Kelly hit the ground running in the San Luis Valley. She expressed her relief at a relatively calm Seven Peaks Music Festival during her first 10 days on the job, praising Saguache County Sheriff Dan Warwick for keeping her informed.

"We appreciate how she's working with us," Officer Adam Fresquez told Center residents at Town Hall, noting major improvements over cooperation with previous DAs.

When asked about "Personal Recognizance Bonds," Kelly described the complexity of recommending bond amounts to a judge. According to one resident's perspective, when a judge releases a person free of payment in exchange for a promise to return to court, it seems like a free pass.

Kelly explained how the severity of the alleged crime might not correlate with the bond amount. When a person is clearly a danger to the community, Kelly said she pursues a high bond to keep them off the streets. But a perpetrator charged with repeated misdemeanors might warrant a higher bond for continually disregarding the law. Kelly also emphasized how poverty should not be penalized. Considering comparable charges, a person with resources might be released while others without means remain behind bars.

At the close of the meeting, Kelly explained how she needs to campaign quickly for the Nov. 8 election. Instead of completing Payne's term, Kelly must hustle. She placed a print order for her campaign signs, and she has been making appearances while completing her current DA tasks.

"I will keep working hard," Kelly said.

On Sept. 27, Kelly attended the Saguache County Commissioners meeting. In addition to introducing herself, she presented figures from comparable districts to justify her budget increase.

"I hate asking for money," Kelly said. "That's why I left private practice because it's not comfortable for me. But I can tell you that this current situation is unsustainable. I can turn this ship around, but I can't do it without the lawyers I need."

Commissioner Lynne Thompson noted how the DA requested \$90,000 last year and \$285,000 for 2023. According to Kelly, the pandemic upended the judicial system, so her team looked at 2019 figures to compare budgets and caseloads across comparable districts. The budgeted cost this year comes to \$39 per person to align with statewide averages. Over the past four years, District 12 residents in the San Luis Valley paid \$20 a year to fund the office, which is one third of what District 14 residents pay.

"But if you look at the number of cases filed, which is the bellwether for District Attorney office staffing," Kelly explained, "we have an extraordinarily high number of felony cases."

Kelly shared how homicide cases require "two deputy district attorneys, a paralegal, and a tremendous amount of time for preparation. When we're talking about an average of 12.5 homicides per year in the Valley versus, for example, the 14th district with 2.6, that is an extraordinary difference. That cost per citizen should also reflect that we need more resources in order to keep the Valley safe."

Although the budget includes an annual salary of \$75,000 for new lawyers who handle misdemeanors



Photo by Patrick Shea

Highlighting the donuts, officers Christian Guaderrama and Adam Fresquez hosted the Coffee with the Chief gathering at Center Town Hall on Sept. 24.

and \$85,000 for attorneys in charge of felony cases, Kelly said she would not raise her own salary, a statutory minimum of \$130,000. She is seeking one assistant to work with her, probably earning between \$110,000 to \$120,000 a year.

"If we have a DA and an assistant DA," Kelly surmised, "that would probably cover the supervisory duties for the rest of the office."

Concluding her introduction, Kelly

said, "When I came down here and saw what was happening, as a prosecutor my heart was broken. I couldn't imagine what victims were going through. My motivation for being down here is not personal. I had a very good job in Boulder, and a nice house. I came down here because there is a need unlike any other need I've seen in the prosecutor world. Crime victims need to be respected. It affects the health of the entire community."

VOTE

LIZA MARRON

For Saguache
County
Commissioner

For the People

Date of Notice: September 15, 2022

NOTICE OF CHANGE IN TARIFFS ON LESS THAN 30-DAYS' NOTICE

Atmos Energy Corporation ("Atmos Energy")
1555 Blake Street
Denver, Colorado 80202

You are hereby notified that Atmos Energy has filed with the Colorado Public Utilities Commission of the State of Colorado ("PUC"), in compliance with the Public Utilities Law, an application for permission to file certain changes in tariffs, affecting all residential, commercial, interruptible and other consumers in its Colorado divisions to become effective October 1, 2022, if the application is granted by the PUC.

The purpose for this filing is to change rates by revising the Company's existing gas cost adjustment tariff to reflect changes in the rates charged Atmos Energy by its suppliers for natural gas purchases. The present and proposed natural gas rates are as follows:

| <u>Class of Service by Division</u> | <u>Present Rates</u> <u>Total Volumetric</u> | <u>Proposed Rates¹</u> <u>Total Volumetric</u> | <u>Percentage</u> <u>Change</u> |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|------------------------------------|
| North Colorado* | | | |
| Residential | \$1.27625 | \$1.41273 | 11% |
| Small Commercial, Commercial | 1.14496 | 1.28144 | 12% |
| Irrigation | 1.06205 | 1.19853 | 13% |
| Transportation | 0.1570 | 0.15664 | 0% |
| | <u>Average</u> <u>Monthly Bill</u> | <u>Projected Average</u> <u>Monthly Bill</u> | <u>Percentage</u> <u>Change</u> |
| North Colorado* | | | |
| Residential | \$ 87.02 | \$ 94.94 | 9% |
| Small Commercial, Commercial | 447.82 | 497.64 | 11% |
| Irrigation | 523.16 | 584.44 | 12% |
| | <u>Prior Year's Peak</u> <u>Month Bill</u> | <u>Projected Peak</u> <u>Month Bill</u> | <u>Percentage</u> <u>Change</u> |
| North Colorado* | | | |
| Residential | \$ 172.53 | \$ 189.59 | 10% |
| Small Commercial, Commercial | 789.02 | 879.50 | 11% |
| Irrigation | 2,089.68 | 2,352.27 | 13% |

*Notification Published in our North Rate Area Newspaper

The proposed and present rates and tariffs are available for examination at the business office of Atmos Energy Corporation located at 1555 Blake Street, Suite 400, Denver, Colorado, or at the Public Utilities Commission at 1560 Broadway, Suite 250, Denver, Colorado, 80202.

Anyone who desires may either file written objection or seek to intervene as a party in this filing. If you only wish to object to the proposed action, you may file a written objection with the Commission. The filing of a written objection by itself will not allow you to participate as a party in any proceeding on the proposed action. If you wish to participate as a party in this matter, you must file written intervention documents under the Commission's rules.

Anyone who desires to file written objection or written intervention documents to the proposed action shall file them with the PUC, 1560 Broadway, Suite 250, Denver, Colorado, 80202 at least one day before the proposed effective date.

Members of the public may attend any hearing and may make a statement under oath about the proposed change whether or not a written objection or request to intervene has been filed.

Atmos Energy Corporation has filed a separate gas purchase report in accordance with Rule 4607 of the Commission's Rules Regulating Gas Utilities and Pipeline Operators to begin the initial prudence review evaluation for the gas purchase year ended June 30, 2022.

Atmos Energy Corporation
Colorado-Kansas Division
By: Kathleen R. Ocanas
Vice President, Rates & Regulatory Affairs

Panthers open new field with win over Wolves

By Ken Hamrick

BLANCA — After not playing on its home campus for the better part of a year, the Sierra Grande High School football team opened the new John Roybal Jr. Field on Friday, Sept. 23.

It was a good day for a field opening as the Panthers defeated Mountain Valley, 57-0.

“It was good to come out here and christen the field with a win,” said SG coach Luis Corona. “It was nice to have a 57-0 shutout. So, it worked out for us. We respect Mountain Valley and we played a hard game and they played a hard game. We just were able to come out on top.”

The Panthers had the first possession and it didn't take them long to get on the scoreboard. Angelo Lucero ran 28 yards for a touchdown, however, the point-after attempt was no good.

A blocked punt set Sierra Grande up in good field position and it took advantage of the situation. Lucero scored on a 1-yard run, and Ayden Lopez booted the extra point (worth two points in 6-man football), and the Panthers led 14-0.

Special teams came up big again for Sierra Grande as Aron Ojeda returned a punt 41 yards for a touchdown. The point-after run failed and the Panthers led 20-0.

The Wolves drove deep into Panthers territory on their next possession. However, the drive stalled at the 16 and Mountain Valley turned the ball over on downs.

Sierra Grande scored again as Ojeda threw a 24-yard scoring strike to Lucero. The extra-point attempt again failed, and the Panthers led 26-0 after the first quarter.

Tyler Kester set the Panthers up again with an interception, but this time the Wolves were able to make them turn the ball over on downs.

Sierra Grande scored again with 3:44 left in the first half. Ojeda handed off to Kester, and Kester pitched the ball back to Ojeda who went 32 yards for a touchdown. The point-after attempt was unsuccessful.

The Panthers scored one more time before halftime as Lucero returned a punt 37-yards. The kick was blocked and Sierra Grande led 38-0 at halftime.

The Panthers scored the first time they had the ball in the second half. Lucero scored for the fifth time, this time on a 10-yard scamper. The kick was blocked and the lead stood at 44-0.

Sierra Grande scored another touchdown just before the end of the quarter and it was set up by an Adrian Casados interception. Lucero found the



Photo by Ken Hamrick

Sierra Grande High School's Alex Gonzalez (30) tackles Mountain Valley's Jacob Martinez (23) for a loss in Friday's game at John Roybal Jr. Field. The Panthers defeated the Wolves 57-0.

end zone for the sixth time on an 11-yard run. On the point after, the snap was bobbled and Manuel Miranda pitched to Ayden Lopez who then threw to Carlos Lopez for the conversion (worth one point in 6-man).

The Panthers wrapped up the scoring in the fourth quarter as Kester scored on a 1-yard plunge. The kick was unsuccessful.

Sierra Grande had 276 yards of total offense with 227 coming on the ground. Lucero led the running game with 109 yards on 15 carries. Kester ran for 45 yards on 10 carries, and Ojeda had 39 yards on two carries.

Ojeda completed three of five passes for 49 yards. Lucero had all of the receiving yards.

Mountain Valley had only 62 total yards. Riley Heater led the Wolves' offense as he ran for 31 yards on four carries and he completed 6 of 16 passes for 29 yards. Damien Ross was the leading receiver with four catches for 13 yards, and Jacob Martinez had two catches for 14 yards.

Sierra Grande (3-2, 1-1) will host Sangre de Cristo on Friday. Game time is at 1 p.m.

“We're looking forward to Sangre,” Corona said. “We haven't played them yet in 6-man. But we're looking forward to it. I know they're going to be getting better every week, and that's the nature of the sport. You have to get better every week to get your young kids reps. So we're looking forward to it.”

Mountain Valley (0-5, 0-3) will host Miami-Yoder on Saturday. Kickoff is at 1 p.m.

Sierra Grande 57, Mountain Valley 0

Mountain Valley 0 0 0 0-0

Sierra Grande 26 12 13 6-57

First quarter

SG – Lucero 28 run (kick failed), 8:43

SG – Lucero 1 run (A. Lopez kick), 5:54

SG – Ojeda 41 punt return (run failed), 3:45

SG – Lucero 24 pass from Ojeda (kick failed), 0:31

Second quarter

SG – Ojeda 32 run (pass failed), 3:44

SG – Lucero 37 punt return (kick blocked), 1:18

Third quarter

SG – Lucero 10 run (kick blocked), 6:54

SG – Lucero 11 run (C. Lopez pass from A. Lopez), 2:20

Fourth quarter

SG – Kester 1 run (kick failed), 2:25

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Wreaths Across America

Wreaths Across America™, a non-profit 501-c3 organization, was formed as an extension of the Arlington Wreath Project. The Arlington Wreath program was started by Morrill Worcester (Worcester Wreath) in 1992 with the donation and laying of 5000 Christmas wreaths to Arlington National Cemetery. This became an annual journey for Mr. Worcester.

It was relatively obscure until 2005 when a photo of the stones adorned with wreaths and covered in snow circulated around the internet. The project received National attention. Thousands of requests poured in from all over the country from people wanting to emulate the Arlington project at their National and State cemeteries spurred the creation of "Wreaths Across America™". Unable to donate thousands of wreaths to each state, Mr. Worcester conceived the idea of sending 7 wreaths (one for each branch of the military as well as POW/MIA).

In 2007 the Worcester family established the non-profit group Wreaths Across America™ to further promote Veterans

remembrance. The mission Remember, Honor and Teach characterized the projects goals perfectly.

The wreath laying, held annually on a Saturday of December was unanimously voted by the US Congress as "Wreaths Across America™ Day". WreathsAcrossAmerica™ would not be successful without the help of the volunteers, many active organizations and the generosity of the trucking industry.

We collectively thank our military and their families for "Our Freedom"!

Our goal is to have enough wreaths sponsored so that every veteran's grave at the Homelake Veterans Cemetery will be honored. If you are interested in sponsoring a wreath, contact Pam Self at 825-8216 or 849-3154. The cost is \$15.00 per wreath with all orders and money needed by CUT OFF DATE OF December 2, 2022. Please send your request and money to Pam Self, P.O. Box 97, Homelake, CO 81135. Wreath sponsorship for the Homelake Veterans Cemetery



can also be completed online at www.wreathsacrossamerica.com/CO0031. The wreaths will be delivered to the Colorado Veterans Community Living Center at Homelake.

This year's ceremony will take place on Saturday, December 17, 2022 at the Homelake Veterans Cemetery at 3749 Sherman Ave., Monte Vista, CO at 10:00 a.m. The placement of wreaths will occur after the ceremony so volunteers who would like to help place the wreaths will gather after the ceremony.

ASU's Allen advocates for counseling students

CONTRIBUTED

ALAMOSA — Adams State University Courtney Allen, Ph.D., associate professor of counselor education, has testified before state legislature which helped pass laws to improve education policies for professionals in public school counseling and in the classroom. Advocacy is her passion.

Most recently her testimony helped pass HB 22-1220 Removing Barriers to Educator Preparation Act. The bill will help address the current Colorado school counselor and teacher shortage by providing financial assistance to qualified educators-in-training. "My voice is amplified when joined with other voices to support college students who want to pursue careers in school counseling and classroom educators," Allen said.

Adams State University School of Education and School of Counselor Education will receive \$1,211,613 to implement the Educator Stipend Program and the Student Educator Test Stipend Program. The amount includes \$59,838 to be used by the program or institution for program administration, \$1,089,000 for educator stipends, and \$62,775 for test stipends.

"My passion for the field of school



counseling and my love for training mental health and school counselors guides my actions to advocate for laws and policies to support them while they pursue their professional goals," Allen added.

According to Allen, the state and the nation continue to see a need for highly qualified professionals in the field of school counseling.

"We continue to see an increase in suicide ideation and mental health concerns in our public schools," Allen said. "This can have a great impact on the socioemotional growth and

Please see ALLEN on Page 2

'Deal reached in principle' for San Luis and Rio Grande Railroad

BY PRISCILLA WAGGONER

ALAMOSA — After operating for three years in Chapter 11 bankruptcy, there may be some movement in getting the San Luis and Rio Grande (SLRG) Railroad on track to being sold.

According to William Brandt, founder and CEO of DSI and the trustee handling the sale, there is no final agreement at this time, something that Luke Lyons with the Valley Courier reported Alamosa County Administrator Roni Wisdom emphasized during this week's commissioners meeting.

But Brandt has confirmed that, on Monday, Sept. 12, he signed a letter of intent.

"A deal has been reached in principle," Brandt said. "But the deal is still being negotiated."

That deal is with OmniTRAX, a railroad company headquartered in Denver that currently operates more than a dozen short line railroads across Canada and the US, including Great Western Railway of Northern Colorado — an 80-mile short line railroad that runs to Fort Collins, Greeley, Loveland and other stops

in the region.

An affiliate of the multi-million dollar, family-owned Broe Real Estate Group in Denver, OmniTRAX "specializes in freight shipping and freight logistics."

Currently, Brandt and OmniTRAX are negotiating an assets purchase agreement. Assuming that agreement is reached, the deal will then be submitted to the bankruptcy court, followed by a bankruptcy hearing that Brandt estimates will take place sometime in mid-October.

"So, yes, at this time the railroad has not been sold," Brandt said.

The Valley Courier has also reported that, during Wednesday's commissioners' meeting, Wisdom informed the commissioners that a second group, North Central Railcorp, "may be interested in purchasing the railroad."

When asked to comment, Brandt said that, at the time OmniTRAX made the offer, he was negotiating with several bidders, including North Central Railcorp. In fact, the group, which he said is based out of Santa Fe, had signed a letter of intent a year ago but, to date, had yet to assemble

all the financing needed to make the purchase.

When OmniTRAX made its offer, all negotiations with the other bidders stopped.

Brandt describes OmniTRAX as being a well-known, reliable operator across the country.

But while OmniTRAX has successes in its background it also has some failures, including the 2016 purchase of the Central Texas and Colorado River (CTXR) Railroad, a 67.5-mile short line railroad in central Texas.

OmniTRAX bought CTXR in anticipation of a market expansion in shipping sand used in fracking. That market failed to expand.

According to an Aug. 29, 2019, document posted by the Surface Transportation Board (the federal agency that governs railroads), the CTXR line was embargoed on July 25, 2019, due to "bridge problems and unsafe track conditions."

On Aug. 9, 2019 — just three years after purchasing the line — OmniTRAX and CTXR petitioned STB to abandon the line, citing the loss of millions of dollars in acquiring



File photo

San Luis and Rio Grande Railroad trustee Bill Brandt told the Valley Courier that while the railroad is not officially sold, he has signed a letter of intent to pursue the sale to OmniTRAX.

and operating the line and asserting the cost of continuing to maintain and operate the line far outweighed the potential revenue from shippers. STB approved the petition, and the line was abandoned.

When asked to comment on the abandonment, Brandt said, "I wasn't looking for candidates for sainthood in finding a good buyer for the

SLRG. And it's not my job to defend OmniTRAX. But they're one of the best-known operators in the country and their level of reliability and the exacting management message they use is copied by a lot of folks in the industry.

"They've made a habit and a career out of trying to salvage short

Please see SLRG on Page 2

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SLV Area Extension Office offers Cottage Foods Course

By **JANAE NARANJO**
CSU Extension Agent

MONTE VISTA — The San Luis Valley Area Extension Office is offering a Cottage Foods Course from 1 to 4 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 20. This intense 3-hour food safety training provides a 3-year certification and meets the food safety training requirement for Colorado Cottage Foods Act established and supported by the Colorado State Dept. of Health & Environment.

Participants learn food safety guidelines and the specifics for operating a small home-based cottage food business from a home kitchen. Learn about the most current Colorado Cottage Food Act and get a food safety certificate that applies no matter where you live in Colorado!

The main sections of the training cover food safety guidelines for preparing foods in a home kitchen which is different from a food service

site that would be inspected by the County and or State Health Depts. It covers the basics of proper hygiene; preventing cross contamination and cross-contact of food allergens; temperature control for safe food preparation, storage, transporting produce and sales. The allowable food products are highlighted with CSU Extension fact sheets provided for each food product allowed. Then the instructor goes into product ingredient labeling, packaging requirements, marketing, preparation at altitude and for going further with your business.

The cost of the course is \$50. Register online at: <https://CF10.eventbrite.com>. A Zoom link for this online class will be emailed upon registration.

For more information and application, contact Janae Naranjo at 719-852-7138 or janae.naranjo@colostate.edu.

Hospice del Valle receives state award

ALAMOSA — The Board, leadership and staff of Hospice del Valle recently announced that the agency has been awarded a Performance Incentive Payment due to its high performance on its recent survey (audit) this Summer by the Colorado Department of Public

Health and Environment.

This award constitutes a 10 percent discount on the agency's relicensure application fee.

Since Hospice del Valle is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year, the award is particularly timely and affirming, officials stated.

ALLEN

Continued from Page 1

development of K12 students and affect academic success. Removing obstacles for school counselors to enter the profession is vitally important."

Colorado School Counselor Association (CSCA) Executive Director Matthew McClain appreciates Allen's continued dedication to her profession and students.

"There have been several times where we have leaned on Dr. Allen's experience with graduate students and her knowledge of the field to provide testimony for the Colorado Legislature," he said.

Allen provided immense support

and guidance to CSCA when creating a school counselor induction course for licensed mental health providers entering the school counseling field through an alternative pathway.

"Her lens of academia and the counseling field continues to provide us with expert perspective time and again," McClain said. "In the recent legislative session, she provided testimony on a bill providing educators, teachers and counselors, a stipend for practicum and internship. These monies will be lifesavers for many school counselors in preparation to enter the field."

SLRG

Continued from Page 1

line railroads. They take a lot of risk in trying to salvage a company and not everything is a winner. A lot of railroads have a lot of problems right now, but SLRG is not one of them. I think SLRG has a bright future with a lot of expansion in the Valley. And I think (that expansion) is what's attracting OmniTRAX," Brandt said.

"There are no guarantees in life. But they can write a check to buy the railroad and they can write a check to improve it. And they have a very competent marketing team that knows what they're doing. OmniTRAX has no plans to abandon any trackage, including the trackage west of Monte Vista. Frankly, it's probably one of the more qualified operators we could be selling to. You couldn't put the railroad in better operator's hands," Brandt said.

OmniTRAX has offered a bid of \$5.75 million. However, SLRG

is also carrying a significant debt related to back taxes. According to Brandt, using figures projected through Nov. 30 — when a sale might be approved — there is currently a debt of \$3,805,000 in property taxes due to the five counties where SLRG runs in the Valley plus \$141,500 in back withholding due to the Colorado Department of Revenue. That's a total debt of \$3,946,500 due out of a \$5.75 million sale price.

Brandt said that bankruptcy court allows for individuals protesting the sale, including those who may assert their offer is better than OmniTRAX, to make their case.

If Omnitrax's offer is accepted by the court, they will have to file an application with the STB.

"Omnitrax has a good reputation and, I'm assuming, the STB will look favorably upon the sale," Brandt said. "But you can't always tell what they're going to do."



Career paths in agriculture

As the world population grows, the role of the agricultural sector will become even more prominent. There should be significant demand for agricultural professionals capable of meeting the challenges facing the world as it confronts climate change and food shortages. That makes now a perfect time for students to explore potential career paths in the agricultural sector.

- **Agricultural engineer:** Agricultural engineers employ engineering principles to solve issues related to agricultural production. An agricultural engineer may design facilities or machinery or develop solutions to address problems related to irrigation and soil conservation, among other projects. Students interested in a career as an agricultural engineer can expect to study mathematics, physics, chemistry, computer engineering, and, of course, engineering analysis and design as they pursue their degrees.

- **Agronomist:** Agronomists work with crops and soil management and may work as analysts, environmentalists or forecasters. Agronomists may be tasked with analyzing soil structure and chemistry and study how water is moving within soil. Students will study agriculture, biology, chemistry, and physics en route to earning a degree that will help them become an agronomist. Mathematics also will be part of their studies, and statistics courses will be part of those studies.

- **Biochemist:** Biochemists study the chemical and physical principles of living things and biological processes. Within the agricultural sector, biochemists will contribute to the development of agricultural products, including those that will serve a medicinal function. Biochemistry, chemistry, biology, calculus,



and physics will be part of students' coursework as they pursue degrees that prepare them for a career as a biochemist.

- **Climatologist:** Climatologists will figure prominently in the agricultural sector as the effects of climate change manifest themselves more readily over the next several decades. Climatologists study climate change, variability and the biosphere. Climatologists offer insight about the effects of climate change on the growth and development of agricultural products, including fruits, grains and vegetables. The natural sciences feature prominently in climatologists' educations, and students also will study meteorology as part of their coursework.

- **Food scientist:** Food scientists study chemistry, biochemistry, microbiology, and engineering so they can assist in the development of new food products. Food scientists may manage processing plants and some serve as researchers in an effort to solve problems related to food production.

- **Plant pathologist:** Plant pathol-

ogists specialize in analyzing issues related to plant diseases. Research features prominently in plant pathologists' work, and many work in university settings. Some plant pathologists work for companies attempting to develop pest-resistant plants. Advanced degrees are necessary to work as a plant pathologist, and students will study mycology, bacteriology, virology, and physiology, among other subjects, as they pursue their degrees.

The agricultural sector employs millions of people across the globe. Many of those people do interesting work as they attempt to address issues facing the agricultural sector.

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CSFS loan program partners with SLVDRG to reduce wildfire severity

SUBMITTED ARTICLE

FORT COLLINS — The Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) delivered the first Wildfire Risk Mitigation Loan under a new partnership with the San Luis Valley Development Resources Group (SLVDRG) Business Loan Fund.

Along with the help of the Northwest Loan Fund, Marshall Forestry Solutions received this specialized loan that will be used for equipment to help maintain Colorado's forests.

Marshall Forestry Solutions, based in Steamboat Springs, was established in 2016. This company works on forest management and wildfire risk mitigation projects across Colorado.

"We work to create fire-resistant community landscapes while maximizing the utilization of forest products," said Jacob Marshall, founder and owner of Marshall Forestry Solutions.

"Our expertise in financing and lending coupled with the CSFS' work in forestry and with our wood products business community is

helping reduce wildfire occurrence and severity across the state, resulting in more profitable and successful wildfire mitigation and wood products businesses," said Marc Bellantoni, business loan fund administrator with the SLVDRG.

"The Wildfire Risk Mitigation Loan Fund provides financing to wildfire mitigation contractors and forest products businesses to invest in new equipment and working capital to address Colorado's increasing wildfire challenge. It is administered in partnership with the SLVDRG and other lenders like the Northwest Loan Fund," said Tim Reader, the wood products specialist with the CSFS.

The Wildfire Risk Mitigation Loan Fund Program, administered by the CSFS, is available year-round to eligible businesses. To receive financing through this loan fund, a business must be engaged in the harvesting or manufacturing of wood products from wood biomass removed from forest management

and wildfire mitigation activities on public or private lands. Existing and startup businesses that have difficulty qualifying or accessing capital are encouraged to apply.

"Financing for Marshall Forestry will help them acquire and operate equipment to more efficiently remove and utilize trees on public and private lands in Northwest Colorado," said Anita Cameron, director of the Northwest Loan Fund.

For information on the Wildfire Risk Mitigation Loan Fund, contact Tim Reader, tim.reader@colostate.edu, or Marc Bellantoni, mbellantoni@slvdr.org.

Minimum wage to increase to \$13.65 in 2023

STAFF REPORT

DENVER — Governor Jared Polis and the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment announced Tuesday, Sept. 13, in a press release that Colorado's minimum wage will increase in 2023.

The minimum wage will be \$13.65 an hour beginning Jan. 1, 2023. The current rate is \$12.56. The increase is an 8.6 percent increase.

Annually adjusting minimum wage for inflation is a voter-approved mandate in the Colorado Constitution.

"We are building a strong economy that works for all

Coloradans," Polis said in the release. "This new minimum wage of \$13.65 builds upon our work to save Coloradans money, reduce the cost of everyday items and put money back into the pockets of hard-working Coloradans."

Polis signed a law that allows local governments to set a higher minimum wage than the state standard.

The wage adjustments are based on the Consumer Price Index in the Denver-Aurora-Lakewood Metropolitan Statistical Area. It is calculated and issued by the Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics.

HVCC having a great first couple of weeks

CONTRIBUTED

DEL NORTE — Hi, community members! High Valley Community Center had a great first couple weeks with the kiddos.

The activity theme of the first week was Taiwan. The kids learned all about Taiwanese culture while making handheld fans, boba popping pearls, and dinner place mats.

The second week, the kiddos made folk art, elotes and fun activities to celebrate Mexican culture as well as other cultures around the globe.

Each Friday until Thanksgiving, we will be taking the kids swimming at the Sand Dunes Recreation Pool from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. We have swimming lessons for a portion of the morning followed by free swim time and lunch. Please make sure to provide dry clothes, proper shoes, and a towel. Our Friday hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

We can't believe it, but HVCC football and volleyball are coming to a close. We would like to thank the coaches, officials, and parents for their continued support of the kiddos and HVCC sports programs. Your efforts contribute to the success of our programming!

Next up is girls 3-6 grade Basketball beginning in early October. Registrations for K-2 grade co-ed and boys grades 3-4 and 5-6 will be available on our website soon. If your child chooses to participate, please make sure they are registered online as well as with HVCC. Please refer to our website, www.TheHVCC.org for

sports information, or give us a call at 719-657-2172.

A reminder that there will be one more Zumba class this month on Thursday, Sept. 29. Tuesday and Thursday 9 a.m. classes will resume as usual beginning in October. Classes are held at the HVCC gym on 810 Oak St. in Del Norte.

We are happy to report that we will be hosting Water Aerobics classes for our Encore participants beginning Friday, Sept. 16. Our own Jodi Blalock will be instructing at the Sand Dunes Recreation Pool at 10 a.m. every other Friday. Transportation will be included. If you are interested in participating, please let us know the Thursday before classes.

All of us at HVCC wish you a wonderful week!

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

Visit Our Facebook Page

Sulley is our oldest available resident here, and one of our longest as well. We believe he is a Belgian Shepherd, close to 8 years old, and is a little moody. Sulley is a larger guy, about 75 pounds, loves going for adventures, and is best as the only dog. Come meet this Senior Sweetheart today!



Rex is a happy, hyper 3 year old Shepherd looking for a home that can match his energy! He is a large fellow at about 70 pounds, and pulls a bit when walking, but genuinely just wants to romp and play! Seems to get along with other dogs, meet and greets required. If Rex sounds like the dog you're looking for, stop by and meet him!



Benjamin is a sweet 2.5 year old Collie Mix with a unique personality. He has to be the only dog but he is definitely plenty of one! Benjamin has energy for days and is just looking for someone to play with and cuddle with! He does have a medical issue that requires daily medication. Please come meet him today!



The weather is changing and the cold will be upon us soon, so we're getting a head start on our winter prep. If anyone can help with straw, blankets, tarps, and any other winterizing items we would be very grateful!

Please note we are on a first come first serve basis.

All breeds & ages of animals are a "best guess" and are not guaranteed to be accurate. Adoption fee includes: neuter/spay, vaccinations, de-worming and micro-chipping.
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04 Lost & Found

REWARD OFFERED FOR A Nine-Month Old Australian Shepard Mix named Bear, missing from 505 Salazar Street in San Luis, CO. Bear is Black with a White and Yellow chest and black and white spotted paws. Please call 720-229-8437.

05 Notices

Selling private land Buck Deer tags CO 3rd Hunt Season. Unit 80, NM Elk, Mule Deer tags 505-990-0991.

Contractor wanted to remodel bathroom in Creede Haven. Call Steve or Cynthia Haynes 785-475-8576 or 785-475-7416 or steve.haynes@nwkansas.com. (9/28)

WE BUY ANTLER: Great NEW FALL Price: Tell us the code «ELK17» and you will get \$17/lb for Elk Grade A and \$13/lb for Deer Grade A. 5 miles west of Del Norte on Hwy 160. 719-657-0942 (TFN)

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

07 Help Wanted

Construction Laborers, Temporary employment. Must be comfortable with heights. Call Dave 719-496-7630.(10/05)

Rio Grande County is seeking a Human Resources Manager. **Qualifications:** Bachelor degree in Human Resources Management or equivalent, thorough knowledge of the principles and practices of HR, excellent communication skills, knowledge of federal and state labor

laws. Pre-employment drug screening, including testing for marijuana, as well as a background check are required. Application and job description available online at www.riograndecounty.org or pick up and submit to Rio Grande County Human Resources, 925 6th Street, Room. 200, Del Norte, CO 81132. (10/05)

Del Norte Bank is seeking to fill a full-time position for a Teller in the Creede Branch. Duties will be to accept deposits, loan payments and process withdrawals while maintaining a balanced cash drawer. Must be personable and pleasant answering the phone and greeting customers. Many other duties will be assigned as needed. The position is permanent, full-time, M – F, 8am – 4:30pm with ½ hour lunch and a robust benefits package. Application available at TrueLocalBank.com/careers or inquire at 117 N. Main, Creede or call 719-657-3376 and ask for Dawn. Job closes 9/30/22. EOE. (9/28)

FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT-SHORT-TERM RENTAL/CODE ENFORCEMENT – TOWN OF SOUTH FORK The Town of South Fork is accepting resumes and applications to fill a full-time position as a Short-Term Rental/Code Enforcement Manager. Expected hourly wages are between \$17.50 - \$21.50. Excellent benefits include town paid insurance and town/employee paid retirement. Necessary skills include but are not limited to the ability to interact with citizens in a professional manner. Pay will be based on training and experience. The Town of South Fork is an equal opportunity

employer. Interested parties can pick up an application and job description at the South Fork Town Hall, 0100 Silver Thread Lane, South Fork, Colorado. (719)873-0152. The position will remain open until filled. (9/28)

Yard/Driver- Valley Lumber is hiring a seasonal Possible full-time yard/driver associate. Salary based on experience. Duties include: loading/unloading trucks, operating a forklift, band and stack lumber, Helping customers, providing inventory support, and deliveries. Lumber yard experience a plus. The ability to work occasional Saturdays Is necessary. Please apply in person at Valley Lumber. 0981 North Hwy 285, Monte Vista or call 719-852-2481

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PART-TIME SALES

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

Mineral County is currently accepting proposals for Design-Build services to replace the HVAC Components in the Mineral County Medical Clinic and Ambulance Building. The medical clinic houses three different provider practices and is approximately 6,660 sq ft, and the ambulance facility provides parking for 3 ambulances, some Search and Rescue vehicles, storage for both organization and training space for both organizations. The buildings is currently heated using a forced air system fueled by Electric Thermal Storage (ETS) Units placed in mechanical rooms in an attic space (main floor closet in the case of the ambulance facility) and cooled by air conditioning units that reside outside the building. Proposals due EOB 10/31/22. Full RFP and related attachments are available on the Mineral County website, mineralcountycolorado.com. (9/21)

Rio Grande County is seeking Dispatch/Detention Officers. High School Diploma or GED, or one to three months related experience and/or training or equivalent combination of education and experience. Must be 21 years of age, pass background investigation and 5-panel drug test, including testing for marijuana. Inmate interaction required. \$16.84-17.42 per hour depending on associated experience and education. Pick up and submit applications to Human Resources 925 6th Street, Room 200, Del Norte, CO 81132. Applications also available online at www.riograndecounty.org. Full County Benefits. (9/28)

Rio Grande County Sheriff's Office is accepting applications for a Road Deputies. Must be 21 years of age, pass a background check and drug test including marijuana screening, have good driving record, Colorado P.O.S.T. certification, and High School diploma or GED. Pick up/submit applications to Rio Grande County Human Resources, 925 6th Street, Room 200, Del Norte, CO 81132. Applications and job description also available online at www.riograndecounty.org. \$20.55-\$21.28 per hour depending on associated experience and education. Full County benefits.

Rio Grande County Department of Social Services is accepting applications for a Child Protection Caseworker. Full time position with County benefits. Pre-employment drug screening, including testing for marijuana, will be required. \$21.99-\$22.78 DOE. Full job description and application available at www.riograndecounty.org or at Human Resources, 925 6th Street, Room 200, Del Norte, CO 81132. Until Filled

Wolf Creek Ski Area is in need of an Accounting Assistant/Accounting Clerk. Duties include clerical tasks, processing reports, recording transactions and typical Accounts Payable and Payroll duties. Experience with Microsoft Office products is required. Attention to detail and organizational skills are important. **Those with bookkeeping, human resources, or administrative assistance experience are encouraged to apply.** Compensation is hourly and negotiable based on skill set. Reliable transportation and ability to commute to/from Wolf Creek Ski Area throughout the Winter is required. **Year-round position with longer hours during the ski season, and a shorter workweek in the off-season.** Would report to Accounting Supervisor as well as CEO/President. Please email resume to AP@WOLFCREEKSKI.COM or call 970-264-5487.

Wolf Creek Ski Area is accepting applications for all departments: accounting (assistant), lifts, ski school, food and beverage, base operations, rental, retail, ticket office, ski patrol, vehicle maintenance, snow removal, snow reporting and a freelance photographer. To download an application and see job descriptions please visit the employment page of WolfCreekSki.com. Send resumes and applications to wolfcreekski@wolfcreekski.com or P.O. Box 2800, Pagosa Springs, CO 81147. All jobs are winter seasonal (November - April) with competitive wages.

10 Apartments

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Warning signs of suicide

Speech
The AFSP notes that people who take their own lives may speak about doing so prior to committing suicide. People should seek help if they or a loved one talks about feeling hopeless, having no reason to live or being a burden to others. People who speak of feeling trapped or feeling unbearable pain also may be exhibiting warning signs of suicide.

Behavior
Behavior, especially behavior that can be linked to a painful event, loss or change, is another potential indicator that a person is having suicidal thoughts. Such behaviors include:

- Increased use of alcohol or drugs
- Looking for a way to end their lives, such as searching online for methods
- Withdrawing from activities
- Isolating from family and friends
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Visiting or calling people to say goodbye
- Giving away prized possessions
- Aggression
- Fatigue

Mood
Mood also is a potential indicator that a person might be having suicidal thoughts. In addition to depression and anxiety, people who are considering taking their own

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Valley Wide Classifieds

12 Houses for Rent

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17 Real Estate For Sale

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36 Miscellaneous

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Here's How It Works:

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

Solution to last week's puzzle

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| C | O | I | | R | | D | A | L | E | Y | | E | D | H | S | |

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SLV emergency managers continue Hazard Mitigation Plan work

By LYNSIE FERRELL
SAN LUIS VALLEY — San Luis Valley officials, including emergency managers, from all six counties met for their final Hazard Mitigation Plan meeting on Monday afternoon. The purpose of the meeting was to strategize about the few final steps of the plan and the final implementation of the plan once it receives approval from FEMA.

Amy Carr, deputy project manager and Hazard Mitigation Planning consultant, began the meeting by reviewing the steps that have been finished to create the plan. For the past several months, local and state officials have been working together to update the San Luis Valley Regional plan and now that it is in the final stages will be working together to put it into place.

The process begins with setting regional goals, creating more specific objectives that ultimately lead to the action plan tied to the original goal. An example may be to have a goal to improve public communications through several objectives during an emergency and then to act on that goal with steps moving toward achieving it within specific counties.

Five of the six counties — Alamosa, Saguache, Conejos, Mineral and Rio Grande — selected three goals for the plan. The three goals were kept intentionally vague to aid with grant funding in the future through FEMA.

The first goal for this plan was to reduce loss of life and personal injury caused by hazards, to reduce damage to critical facilities, personal property and other community assets caused by a hazard, and to minimize economic losses associated with hazards.

Costilla County had a different set of goals than the other five due to the way its goals were selected but were still in line with the rest of the region.

It was explained that the plan will open funding opportunities for mitigation projects through FEMA and that only mitigation projects focused on removing or decreasing the risk of a hazard during the emergency would be funded.

Carr explained that though funding would only be awarded to mitigation projects, requests for parts of the Hazard Mitigation

Plan that highlighted a need for equipment and training could still be included.

The point of the plan was to alter hazards in the region by changing the environment around or near a hazard through means such as prescribed burns or fuel management to reduce wildfire severity, fixing damaged dams, bridges or other structures for example. The group also discussed how to avert a hazard by installing infrastructure like floodwalls,

drainage or fuel breaks.

There are steps within the plan to also help avoid hazards by literally moving structures from a hazard area or prohibiting building developments in areas that have been identified as hazardous locations, acquiring land to also prohibit building or utilizing open space to redirect a hazard such as flooding. The plan also looks at how to adapt to a hazard and plan accordingly with revised building codes, construction standards or

land-use regulations.

One of the most recent steps taken in the process of finalizing the Hazard Mitigation Plan was to reach out to the public via a survey to learn what each community felt were areas of hazard concern. Some of these topics included events like flooding, drought, earthquakes, fires, dam failures or winter storms.

The survey results were shared with the group, and it was determined that though some of the identified areas of concern were

like what was included in the plan, the communities within the region also had other concerns that will be added before the plan is finalized.

The plan is updated about every five years and is a living document that can be changed or added to at any time to fit the needs of the region. Once the plan is approved through FEMA, state and local officials will work to implement the plan and put it to work within all six counties throughout the San Luis Valley.

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House District 62 candidate forum is Sept. 26

SAN LUIS VALLEY — The League of Women Voters of the San Luis Valley and Pueblo are holding a virtual Colorado House District 62 candidate forum featuring Democrat Matthew Martinez and Republican Carol Riggerbach on Monday, Sept. 26, from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

This virtual event will be live streamed on League of Women Voters of Colorado and at <https://bit.ly/HD62CandidateForumLWVSLV>.

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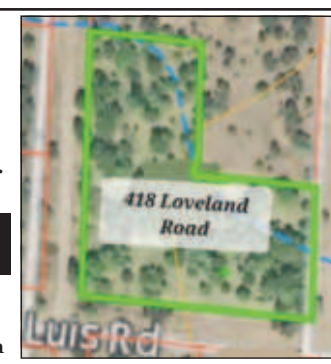
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Rio Grande Hospital opens doors for new clinic

By Lyndsie Ferrell

SOUTH FORK — After a year of construction, the Rio Grande Hospital opened the doors to its new clinic in South Fork on Friday, June 17, with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and tour of the facility.

Rio Grande Hospital Board of Directors joined hospital CEO Arlene Harms, Dr. William Moeller, Alcon Construction, and several staff members in welcoming everyone to the new clinic.

“We don’t serve a lot of people here in South Fork but the people here in South Fork have always been huge supporters of us and we know you deserve this new clinic. We made the old clinic work for as long as we could, but this new building will be a wonderful asset to the community we love. Plans for this have been a long time coming and we are happy to bring it to life for you today,” said Harms.

Dr. Moeller was the next to speak and said that he was more than happy with how it turned out and although the building looked like something from Aspen, the clinic itself was going to be the best medical clinic from South Fork to Aspen.

“The other building was falling down around us, but we made it work,” Moeller said. “Now, we have something to offer the community that is a reflection of the medical care you will receive.”

Last summer, the Rio Grande Hospital announced its plans to bring the new clinic building to South Fork and now, with construction complete, it will offer state-of-the-art medical care for residents and visitors to the South Fork area and beyond. Harms released preliminary plans for the clinic in August of 2021 along with the hospital’s plans to create a new wellness center.

Harms thanked all the key players for not only getting the project off the ground but also seeing it to completion. The Rio Grande County



Photos By Lyndsie Ferrell
Rio Grande Hospital hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the opening of its new South Fork Clinic. Hospital CEO Arlene Harms along with members of the board of directors and Dr. William Moeller thanked everyone who helped make the project successful.

Hospital Board of Directors is comprised of Director Dale Berkbigler, Vice-Chairperson and Secretary Emily Brown, Chairperson Tyler Off, and board members Neal Walters, Sharon Nash, Julie Sauvigne, Leah Weyers, Kazie Hayes, and Tyler Hathorn.

Harms also thanked Alcon Construction, Joe Aldrich, architect Lisa Carpenter, RGH Development Communications Officer Eva Timber-

lake, Adrienne Marcilla, Ted Anderson, Sharon Haynie, artist Karin Slade and many more for their contributions to the new clinic.

The clinic at 52 Jackson St. has six exam rooms and two consultation rooms with state-of-the-art equipment and all the necessities for patient care. The new building is an open floor plan that utilizes natural lighting and efficient heating and cooling systems.



What to know about disease transmission between pets and people

Just like humans, animals can develop and spread illnesses. People who welcome pets into their homes may be concerned about transmission from pets to people as well as other animals to pets. To alleviate some fears, here’s some information about disease transmission among pets, people and other animals.

Heartworm

Heartworm cannot spread from pets to people, and humans rarely get heartworm. Heartworm cannot be caught from another pet like a cold or flu. It only spreads through mosquito bites. Two pets in the same household would each have to be bitten by infected mosquitoes to contract heartworm.

Roundworm and hookworm

These are parasites that can be found in dogs and cats. The worms’ eggs and larvae are passed from pets through stool. People can get hookworms through the skin by walking barefoot outside (a common reason why dogs tend to be off-limits on beaches during swimming season). Anyone may also accidentally eat roundworm eggs from touching the mouth or eating after inadvertently touching the eggs and failing to wash their hands.

Tapeworm

Tapeworm is an intestinal parasite that cats and dogs can get when bitten by an infected flea. However, humans contract it from eating contaminated meats.

Rabies

Although it’s essentially been eradicated from domestic pet populations, rabies remains a concern among wild animals. A bite or scratch to a human or pet from a wild animal is cause for concern and should be brought to the attention of a veterinarian.

Toxoplasmosis

Toxoplasmosis is a parasitic infection in cat feces that doesn’t produce symptoms in healthy adults, but is a concern for pregnant women and their unborn children.

Cryptococcosis and psittacosis

Cryptococcosis is a yeast present in bird droppings, especially from pigeons, that can cause pneumonia and meningitis in people with weak immune systems.

Individuals with pet birds should be aware of psittacosis, which is a bacteria that can infect pet birds. Someone who cleans the

cage can become infected after breathing the dust from accumulated droppings. Symptoms include coughing and high fever.

Leptospirosis

This disease typically spreads through the urine of wildlife. So dogs or cats that spend time outdoors may come in contact with contaminated urine from wild animals, or drink from contaminated puddles. Many vets now immunize against leptospirosis.

These are just a few of the illnesses that can affect pets, wild animals and humans. Proper hygiene, medical care and observation of symptoms should be paramount in homes with pets.



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Explore resources for caregivers

Caregivers are called on to step in for any number of reasons. Some serve as companions to the elderly, while others assist those with debilitating diseases like cancer. While many caregivers are professionals hired for their services, a good number of caregivers are informal — meaning they are family members or friends assisting loved ones.

Even though they are trying to help others, caregivers often must confront a form of stress known as caregiver burnout. The Cleveland Clinic states this stress is marked physical, emotional and mental exhaustion that occurs in caregivers. This burnout may lead to fatigue, anxiety and depression.

While there may not be a way to completely eliminate all caregiving stress, there are some ways to prevent burnout. Utilizing various resources can be a start. Here's a look at some available caregiver resources.

- **Trusted friend:** Find someone you trust with whom you can discuss your feelings, including any frustration you may feel. This can be a neighbor or a coworker with whom you feel comfortable sharing personal details.

- **Support groups:** Support groups can provide safe spaces to vent with others who are in the same boat. Houses of worship may host support groups, or you can find out about meetings through hospitals or from personal doctors. The National Family Caregiver Support Program was established in 2000 and provides grants to states and territories to fund a range of support that assists family and informal caregivers to care for their loved ones at



home for as long as possible. Other groups include Caregiver Action Network and Family Caregiver Alliance.

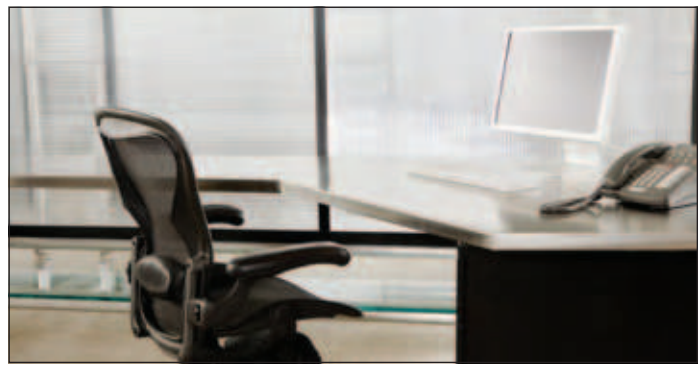
- **Respite care services:** Respite care services provide temporary breaks for caregivers by enabling the sick, elderly or injured to stay in care facilities for anywhere from a couple of hours to a few days. Some respite care services will provide short-term, in-home care as well.

- **Professional therapist:** Many therapists are trained to counsel individuals who have particular issues. Some may specialize in grief or even caregiver needs. Utilize their services if speaking with a confidante is not enough.

Caregivers often put the needs of others before their own. But they may need a little help along the way, which is where caregiver resources can come into play.

Exploring a career in occupational therapy

Occupational therapists are important allies for individuals with a chronic illness or those who are trying to live independently after an accident. According to *The Balance: Careers*, occupational therapy involves assisting people of various ages build or restore their ability to live daily life by modifying or changing daily activities that a person wants to do.



There are three main types of practitioners who work in the field of occupational therapy. These include occupational therapists, occupational therapy assistants and occupational therapy aides. Salaries, duties and educational and licensing requirements differ between the three roles.

Individuals who want to become occupational therapists must complete a four-year bachelor's degree and a two- to three-year master's degree. Individuals will then have to go through the local licensing process. Many people begin working in OT in positions of less responsibility to gain relevant experience once they have completed the associate's level program, and then gain experience and build their résumés from there.

- **OT therapy aide:** This person has the fewest educational requirements and will earn the lowest salary on an OT team. However, OT therapy aides are essential. The aide sets up treatment rooms and prepares equipment. He or she also may perform clerical duties.

- **OT assistant:** This person falls between an occupational therapist and an OT aide on the spectrum of responsibility. This can be a good option for someone who is uncertain about an OT career, but wants to try it on for size. Assistants work under an OT's supervision and make sure patients are correctly performing exercises spelled out in treatment plans.

- **Occupation therapist:** OTs oversee the operations and have the most responsibility by setting goals and developing treatment plans. An OT will do a home or work assessment to analyze a patient's environments and make accommodations. He or she also will suggest equipment to use in a workplace to help that patient do his or her job comfortably. To become an OT, one will need to go through a master's program accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education.

Occupational therapists have many ways to specialize their careers. *ExploreHealthCareers.org* says OTs may work with premature babies, assist children with cerebral palsy or Down syndrome, work in schools with students who have learning disabilities, or may work with older people in nursing homes or private residences. There are new specialties, too, such as training workers to use the correct ergonomics or helping people with low vision issues maintain their independence.

Occupational therapy is a great career for individuals who want to help others maintain their independence and live life to the fullest.



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SLVH Foundation honors Dr. Allen with appreciation award

SUBMITTED ARTICLE

ALAMOSA — The San Luis Valley Health Foundation awarded Dr. Jason Allen at the 2022 Bolos and Boots fundraising event for his service to the community in helping to grow the radiology department at San Luis Valley Health. The appreciation award is an expression of appreciation for contributions to the department and expansion of patient care and services that have occurred in the past few years as a medical director.

Dr. Allen started serving the San Luis Valley in July of 2016. He works full-time with Radiology and Imaging Consultants located in Colorado Springs, allowing him

to commute back and forth between there and Alamosa.

Working within urban and rural communities pushed him to see technological advances in radiology that have the potential to progress Alamosa's hospital. His experience with a 3D mammography unit in Colorado Springs showed him the need for one in Alamosa. Because of the limits of the 2D mammography unit, such as not being able to see calcifications, many patients would be referred to a different clinic.

Weather conditions and individuals' financial situations can make travel difficult and sometimes impossible, limiting patients' ac-

cess to advanced health care. Dr. Allen pushed for this addition, and when the opportunity came, he and Janet McGinnis, department director, put their heads together and purchased a 3D mammography unit that could also add a stereotactic biopsy unit onto it.

SLV Health patients can now visit the Stephanie L. Miner Women's Imaging Center where they can be screened using Tomosynthesis (3D mammograms) and ultrasounds. Tomosynthesis can increase the ability to detect breast cancer by up to 40% AND can also help reduce unnecessary callbacks (extra pictures) by up to 40% compared to standard 2D digital mammography.

The addition of Tomosynthesis to SLVH's breast imaging services has also made it possible for our breast radiologists to perform stereotactic (mammography-guided) biopsies. Onsite breast imaging specialists are available every Monday and Tuesday, as well as interventional specialists every Thursday and Friday.

Winning an award is honorable, but Dr. Allen would have done the same work regardless of an award.

"It's nice that people are paying attention and appreciating what we have done, but I want the best for my patients, and I would have



Courtesy photos

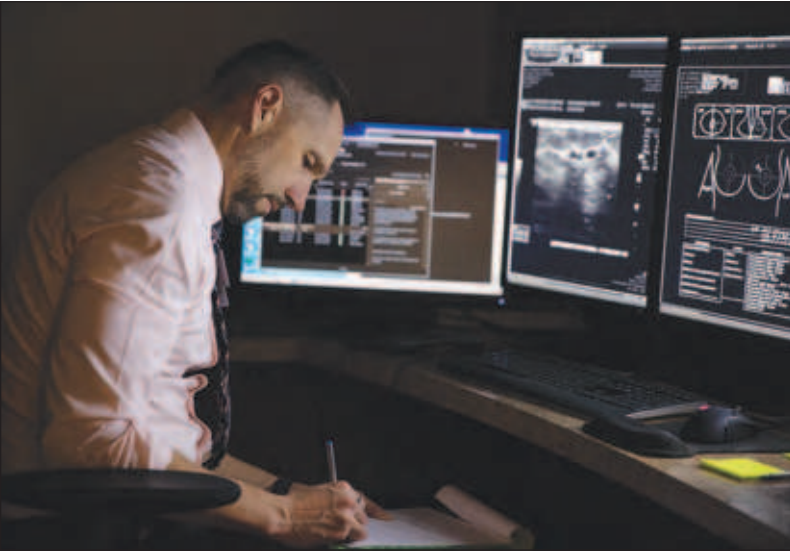
The San Luis Valley Health Foundation awarded Dr. Jason Allen at the 2022 Bolos and Boots fundraising event for his service to the community in helping to grow the radiology department at San Luis Valley Health.

continued to push for advancements without the recognition," Allen said. "I just want to make sure people are aware that we appreciate their confidence in us to provide services. We are always trying to work better and expand services that we currently offer to meet needs."

Dr. Allen hopes to continue

contributing to the expansion of services offered here, specifically in breast imaging, with hopes of an addition of a breast MRI unit.

"Having these advanced services at SLV Health will allow patients to reach out to their local hospital rather than spending time and money on unnecessary travel," Allen said.



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SLV celebrates Alamosa Rural Training Track residents' graduation

STAFF REPORT

ALAMOSA — Valley-Wide Health Systems recently announced that the Alamosa Rural Training Track (RTT) Residency Program had its fourth graduation ceremony Wednesday, June 22, honoring Dr. Nathan LaFevers and Dr. Rami Naseef.

The mission of the Alamosa RTT Residency Program is to provide medical education and training for Family Medicine Residents in an accredited residency program while they live and work in a rural community. Training begins with the internship year at St. Mary-Corwin Medical Center in Pueblo, and the next two years are spent in Alamosa. The residency program is integrated with Valley-Wide Health Systems for primary care and with the SLV

Health hospital for specialty rotations.

Dr. Tammy Gregg, Valley-Wide Family Medicine Physician and RTT Site Director noted, "Another graduation is upon us, and we are happy to announce that Dr. Rami Naseef and Dr. Nathan LaFevers will be starting their new adventure. Dr. Naseef will be leaving us for the University of Arizona in Tucson and also the Cleveland Clinic where he will work as a hospitalist. Dr. LaFevers will be traveling the world as a locum provider. Everyone here will miss them greatly including their patients. We wish them well on their journey."

The residents awarded "Preceptor of the Year" to Dr. Justin Buchholz from SLV Health.



Courtesy photo

From left, Dr. Sarah White, Residency Preceptor; Dr. Nathan LaFevers, graduating resident; Dr. Joseph Quintana, Residency Preceptor; Dr. Rami Naseef, graduating resident; Dr. Tammy Gregg, Alamosa RTT Residency Program Site Director.

8 reasons for a premature birth

A human being is conceived and draws its first breath in less than a year. According to the March of Dimes, a full-term pregnancy is 280 days, or roughly 40 weeks from a woman's last menstrual period. A child is considered full term anywhere from 39 weeks to 40 weeks and six days, or a week before and a week after the 40-week mark.

Each week of a pregnancy is crucial for the development of the fetus, with the child's lungs and brain developing in the last weeks of the pregnancy. So the closer to full-term a woman gives birth, the greater the likelihood that the child will be healthy. For a variety of reasons, some pregnancies do not reach full term and children are born prematurely. A child is considered premature if he or she is born before the 37th week of pregnancy.

Complications can occur when a child is born prematurely, and such infants may require specialized care. Infants born preterm may need to spend time in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU), says the Mayo Clinic. While certain causes of prematurity occur seemingly without reason, many other premature births may be linked to the mother's health. Recognizing the various causes of premature birth may help women navigate their pregnancies through to full-term.

- Infection: Infection or inflammation can lead to preterm birth. Any systemic infection may lead to a child being born prematurely, and this can include infections in the mouth (such as gum disease), vagina, uterus, and kidneys, according to Verywell Family.

- Low PAPP-A levels: Pregnancy Associated Plasma Protein-A (PAPP-A) is a hormone that is made by the placenta in pregnancy. Women with low PAPP-A levels may deliver prematurely or develop pre-eclampsia because the placenta is not working correctly.

- Cervical issues: A short or insufficient cervix can lead to preterm birth, especially if labor symptoms are present.

- Polyhydramnios: This is a condition in which there is extra amniotic fluid surrounding the fetus. It may sometimes lead to increased prematurity risk.

- Stress: Chronic, high-level stress may bring on labor before it would otherwise begin.

- Smoking: Nicotine in cigarettes and other tobacco products can cause blood vessels to constrict and inhibit blood flow and oxygen from reaching the fetus, leading to complications like preterm birth, according to the Mayo Clinic.

- Medical emergency: Some doctors may suggest a medical preterm delivery if the mother has pre-eclampsia or another condition where the risk for waiting for full term would be a worse outcome than delivering the child early through a caesarian section.

- Elective C-section: Some women choose to have C-sections before they have reached full term. The Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development says that even preterm delivery at 37 or 38 weeks puts an infant at risk for poorer health outcomes, so elective caesarean deliveries early on are not recommended.

Premature delivery can occur for a number of reasons. For the health of the infant, every measure should be taken to ensure a full-term pregnancy.

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The roles EMS workers play in your community

Every community has its unsung heroes. Without the contributions of selfless individuals whose efforts often go unnoticed, thriving communities would not be as safe, welcoming or successful.

EMS workers are among the most important individuals in a community. The contributions of these individuals, many of whom work as unpaid volunteers, are invaluable and worthy of recognition. Making an effort to understand the role EMS workers play is a great first step toward showing them how much they're appreciated.

What is EMS?

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Office of EMS notes that Emergency Medical Services, or EMS, is a system that provides emergency medical care. The Office of EMS also notes that EMS does not exist in isolation, as it is integrated with other services and systems with the goal of maintaining and enhancing the health and safety of a community and its residents. This is why EMS services, though they vary from community to community, may be based in fire departments, hospitals, independent government agencies, or non-profit corporations.

What duties do EMS workers perform?

Because EMS is a system, EMS workers wear a range of hats. The Office of EMS

notes that the responsibilities and services EMS workers provide may include:

- Incident recognition
- Access 911
- Dispatch
- First responder
- Basic life support
- Advanced life support
- Air/ground transport
- Emergency department services
- Specialty care
- Patient rehabilitation
- Prevention and awareness
- Public education

When do EMS personnel interact with their communities?

Many people only encounter EMS workers during medical emergencies when they are most in need of help. That underscores the vital role EMS workers play in public health and safety and just how integral they are in instances that could escalate into life-or-death situations.

Recognition of the roles EMS workers play is a great way to show support for these often unsung community heroes.



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What dental hygiene does for overall health

Brushing and flossing your teeth may save you extra sessions in the dentist's chair each year, but the benefits of dental hygiene do not end with pearly whites. In fact, there's a direct correlation between oral hygiene and overall health.

Oral health offers clues about overall health, advises the Mayo Clinic. When a dentist or hygienist checks a person's mouth, he or she is getting a window into that person's overall wellness — including if something is amiss.

Dental hygiene matters because, without proper brushing and flossing, bacteria in the mouth can grow unchecked. Over time, that bacteria can infiltrate and break down the soft tissues in the gums and teeth, eventually leading to decay and gum disease. Greenwood Dental Care in Illinois states that the bacteria from the mouth could travel into the bloodstream and elsewhere, causing a host of issues.

There's a high correlation between an unhealthy mouth and systemic diseases. The United Kingdom-based dental group Fulham Road Dental indicates that gum disease is linked to heart problems, kidney diseases and certain types of cancer. Dentists who notice problems in their patients' mouths may be able to predict potential illnesses elsewhere in the body, advising those patients to seek consultations with other healthcare providers.

Here's a deeper look at some of the correlations between oral health and overall health, courtesy of the Mayo Clinic.

- **Endocarditis:** When bacteria or other germs from the mouth or another part of the body spread through the bloodstream, they can attach to certain areas of the heart. This causes an infection in the inner lining of the heart chambers or valves.

- **Pregnancy and birth complications:** Periodontitis has been linked to low birth weight and premature birth.



- **Cardiovascular disease:** While it's not fully understood why, clogged arteries, stroke and heart disease may be linked to inflammation and infection caused by oral bacteria.

- **Pneumonia:** Bacteria in the mouth may be pulled into the lungs, where it can lead to respiratory illness, such as pneumonia.

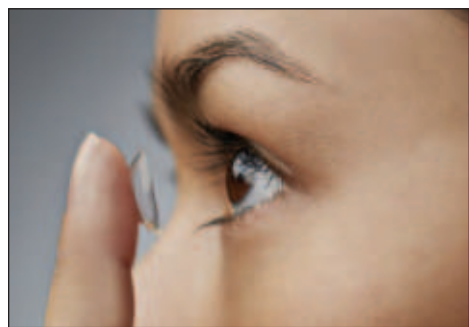
It's a two-way street with health and the mouth. Certain diseases can lead to issues in the mouth. HIV/AIDS may cause mucosal lesions in the mouth; those with osteoporosis may have weakened periodontal bone and tooth loss; and research has shown that diabetes puts gum health at risk.

Individuals should make oral health a priority, as it has a significant effect on their overall health and well-being.

Link between dirty contact lenses and infection

Contact lenses are a solution for people with impaired vision who don't like the look or feel of eyeglasses. But unlike eyeglasses, contact lenses require daily maintenance. Without such TLC, contact lenses can become dirty, which can lead to serious infection.

Physicians typically emphasize the importance of proper contact lens care upon prescribing lenses. That's because of the link between dirty lenses and infections. But the Cleveland Clinic notes that such infections are often avoidable.



The American Academy of Ophthalmology reports that, in addition to bacteria and fungi, various things can cause contact lens-related infections. Those factors include:

- Using extended-wear lenses
- Sleeping in contact lenses
- The buildup of microbes under the lens
- Herpes virus
- Parasites
- Reusing or topping off contact lens solution
- Failure to keep lenses clean

What are the signs of contact lens-related eye infection?

Serious vision loss or blindness can result from contact lens-related infections. However, less severe symptoms may present themselves before the infection progresses to the point of vision loss.

- Blurry vision
- Unusual redness of the eye
- Pain in the eye
- Tearing or discharge from the eye
- Extra sensitivity to light
- The feeling that something is in the affected eye

Contact lenses require daily maintenance to prevent infection. More information is available at www.aaopt.org.

Infections and bacteria

According to the Cleveland Clinic, roughly 80 to 90 percent of contact lens-related eye infections are bacterial. The bacteria staphylococcus aureus, also known as "staph," is linked to many cases of contact lens-related eye infections. Staphylococcus aureus bacteria are resistant to common antibiotics, which underscores the importance of cleaning contacts to reduce the risk of infection.

Pseudomonas aeruginosa is another type of bacterial infection that can affect individuals who wear contact lenses. The Cleveland Clinic indicates that this fast-growing infection is possibly the most severe. It can lead to a hole in the cornea and there's a significant chance of permanent scarring and vision loss.

Fungal infections

Poor contact lens hygiene also can lead to fungal infections. Fungi such as aspergillus or fusarium pose a threat to vision and infection can occur if lenses are not properly and routinely cleaned.

What causes contact lens-related infections?

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