

## Shorts

### CPD, CFD to hold fundraiser for Monte Vista Fire victims

**CENTER** — In an email to the Center community, Center Police Department Police Chief Dale Meek asked for the community's help to fundraise for the victims of the April 20 fire in Monte Vista. Meek stated, "We will be holding a Fundraising Basketball game between Crimefighters and Hosedraggers. All proceeds will go to the Monte Vista victims of the recent fire. If we could get volunteers to run concessions, donations and refs that would be a big help."

The date of the event will be Mother's Day, May 8, with the time to be determined. The cost is \$2 per ticket and CPD is asking that the community at large donate what they can.

For more information regarding this event, contact CPD

### MV Cinco de Mayo Celebration is Thursday

**MONTE VISTA** — The OptiMystics Citizens Action Network is hosting Monte Vista's 2022 Cinco de Mayo Celebration in downtown Monte Vista from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Thursday, May 5 on 100 and 200 blocks of Adams Street, plus 2nd Avenue from Adams Street to the alley ways both east and west.

Nearly 40 vendors, food trucks and local organizations will be on hand all day. Lots of exciting things will be happening throughout the day including a live DJ, face painting, bounce houses, belly dancers, kids crafts and activities, food and drink and more.

### Chamber holding ribbon cutting on May 6

**MONTE VISTA** — The Monte Vista Chamber of Commerce will be hosting a new business ribbon cutting at 10 a.m. on May 6 for My Sister's Pantry Spices & Seasonings, 210 North Broadway.

### MVHS Class of 1972 seeking classmates

**MONTE VISTA** — The Monte Vista High School Class of 1972 will be having a class reunion on July 22-23 and is trying to locate fellow classmates. Members of the MVHS Class of 1972 are asked to call 719-852-5474 or email mvhs Pirates72@yahoo.com, for more information.

## Saguache County seeks public input on future site for affordable housing

**By MECHEL MEEK**  
**SAGUACHE COUNTY** — The Saguache County Housing Authority is hosting a public outreach session for ideas regarding future development and to listen to public comment on the affordable housing planned at 250 Gunnison Ave.

The meeting will be from 5 to 7 p.m.

on May 17 at the Saguache County Road and Bridge meeting room, 305 3rd St. in Saguache.

According to the Saguache County Housing Authority, "The Saguache County Housing Authority has been working to find the avenues to provide more affordable housing in Saguache and Saguache County.

Through the Small Scale Housing Technical Assistance Program provided through the Colorado Housing and Finance Authority, Saguache County Housing Authority has developed a preliminary concept design for the property located at 250 Gunnison Ave., Saguache, CO 81149. The Saguache County

Housing Authority would like to invite you to share your thoughts and concerns."

The Saguache County Housing Authority is attempting to receive feedback from all community members regarding the preliminary design of the affordable housing at that location.



Photo by Mechel Meek

**Dry and windy conditions are impacting all aspects of planting this year, not just in the San Luis Valley but throughout Colorado, according to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).**

## Drought, wind impacting agriculture across the state

**By MECHEL MEEK**  
**SAN LUIS VALLEY** — Dry and windy conditions are impacting all aspects of planting this year, not just in the San Luis Valley but throughout Colorado, according to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Windy conditions, minimal moisture, and above average temperatures were seen across most of the State last week, according to the USDA Mountain Region Field Office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service.

According to the U.S. Drought

Monitor, 89 percent of Colorado is under drought conditions, up 2 percentage points from the previous week.

Forty-eight percent of Colorado is experiencing severe to exceptional drought conditions, *Please see DROUGHT on Page 2A*

## Hiking and backcountry tips that increase safety

Part 1

**By MECHEL MEEK**

**SAN LUIS VALLEY** — With the advent of warmer temperatures comes an increase in people wanting to enjoy the outdoor activities available in the San Luis Valley, including hiking, boating, or other recreational activities in the backcountry areas.

According to the Alamosa Volunteer Search and Rescue (ASVAR), it is important to consider all safety aspects before hiking or planning a backcountry adventure.

ASVAR stated, "Planning a day or extended hike in the back country? If so, ensure that your preparation includes leaving a detailed trip plan with someone you trust. Someone that is not going on the trip. Why is this important? If unexpected events occur and you are in need of Search and Rescue, trip plans can significantly shorten response time and provide invaluable information

to rescuers. Contrary to popular belief, emergency responders do not wait '24 Hours' to start looking for missing persons. When you leave a trip plan with an expected estimated time of return SAR teams can respond as soon as it is clear you have missed your expected return and may need assistance. There are several popular hiking sites on the Internet that you can download a trip plan template. Get into the habit of filling it out or refreshing it each time you head into the back country. Send it to trusted friends and family and hike with the peace of mind that if something unexpected were to happen you have critical time saving information in the hands

*Please see HIKING on Page 2A*

**According to the Alamosa Volunteer Search and Rescue (ASVAR), it is important to consider all safety aspects before hiking or planning a backcountry adventure**

Photo courtesy of ASVAR



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# RGWCD

Continued from Page 1A

it is anything but a last-ditch effort in preventing the “inevitable shut off of wells,” a narrative Renewable Water Resources (RWR) has repeatedly promoted.

According to Marisa Fricke, Subdistrict No. 1’s program manager, the amended Plan of Water Management is the culmination of work since 2018 including intense, detailed analysis, negotiation and discussion on the part of Subdistrict No. 1 farmers, ranchers, managers, water experts, engineers, economists, attorneys and staff.

“I know the Board of Managers and the constituents of sub district one have worked extremely hard and with a real sense of urgency on their amended plan of water management,” Cleave Simpson, Republican state senator and general manager of the Rio Grande Water Conservation District, told the Valley Courier. “The challenging climatic conditions have made creating sustainable aquifers in the Valley extremely difficult and burdensome.”

For those just joining the conversation — the original Plan of Water Management, approved in 2011, established a required level of water to be achieved in the unconfined aquifer with a deadline of 2031.

Failure to reach the target level could potentially result in the 3,000 wells that comprise the subdistrict being shut off by the state engineer until the water in the aquifer reaches the goal on its own.

At the time the original plan was

crafted, both level and time to reach it seemed feasible and, over the years, resulted in a 30 percent reduction in water drawn from the aquifer.

But no one could predict that the drought, in its ninth or tenth year when the plan was written, would briefly abate for a few years and then hit with such a vengeance that all significant progress made up to 2018 would be wiped out.

As Simpson notes, climatic conditions have played a major role.

The amended plan sets a new target deadline of twenty years from now. If approved, that provides not only sufficient time for the new plan to have the predicted impact but cements in the revolutionary “don’t take out more water than is put back in” approach to sustainably managing the aquifer well into the future.

As Fricke and others have noted, it is vital that the measures in the plan remain flexible in response to climatic conditions that are behaving in relatively unseen ways. As NOAA reported on April 25, La Niña — the weather pattern that brings drought to the western portion of the United States — could potentially go into a “rare third year.”

“The amended plan should have the effect of reducing drawdown from the aquifer by approximately 30 percent, which is on top of the 30 percent that has already been reduced,” Fricke says, adding that the drawdown may need to be more than that, depending upon what the climate does.

But, for now, growers and the

board governing Subdistrict No. 1 are adapting to the changing circumstances with their focus trained completely on how the aquifer is responding.

“We’re going to live within our means, and the aquifer will tell us what we need to do,” Fricke says.

Ultimately, how growers in the subdistrict move forward is up to Rein. Once the plan is submitted, a response can be expected soon.

But his office has not been left out of its planning, as confirmed by Simpson.

“I can’t predict how the State Engineer will respond, but the staff at the Division of Water Resources here in the Valley has been very engaged with the entire process,” he said.

At this point, one factor cannot be ignored.

Subdistrict No. 1 is years ahead of other water users outside of the Valley and in other parts of the state and country facing similar challenges. As has been reported, the plan was the first of its kind anywhere. Not only were the growers addressing sustainability in 2002 when the word was not in the public discourse, they took steps that were unheard of at the time — including paying for water that they, and the generations that preceded them, had used for free.

As local farmer and rancher John Kretsinger recently told the Courier, “Those other water users outside of the Valley are 20 years behind and just now getting started. Can you imagine where we’d be if we had waited that long?”

# DROUGHT

Continued from Page 1A

up 15 percentage points from the previous week.

Extreme drought conditions are affecting 4 percent of Colorado, unchanged from the previous week.

In northeastern and east central counties, a couple of small rain events helped crop conditions slightly, but overall conditions remained dry.

Strong winds continued, topping off around 50 mph toward the end of the week.

In the San Luis Valley, potato planting continues, and barley planting was almost complete

throughout the Valley. The recent windy conditions and blowing dust hampered most planting operations.

As of May 1, the amount of snowpack in Colorado was 76 percent, down 6 percentage points from the previous week with the San Luis Valley at 35 percent with the local higher temperatures contributing to snowmelt in the surrounding mountains.

The field reports indicated that 19 percent of the potato crops were planted as of May 1, which is lower than the reported amount last year of

26 percent and the five-year average of 24 percent.

Reports indicated that barley crops have been planted at 70 percent as of May 1, down from last year’s report of 80 percent and the five-year average of 83 percent.

The emergence rate of the barley crop stands at 25 percent as of May 1, significantly lower than last year’s 51 percent and the five-year average of 43 percent.

# HIKING

Continued from Page 1A

of people you can trust.”

Make sure to include the following important information in your trip plan — your planned route, who are your travel companions, what activities you will be doing such as hiking, rock climbing, or boating, what is your estimated start time, what is the estimated travel time, the estimated time of return, a description of what clothing will be worn by all people in your party, a list of gear that you will have, what type

of communications you are carrying such as a cell phone, GPS, or other communication devices, how much food and water you are carrying, any medical needs or medication, and finally your vehicle make, model, color and license plate. While these precautions may seem like overkill, this information can shorten the time it takes search and rescue to locate you if something unexpected happens and can save your life or the life of another.

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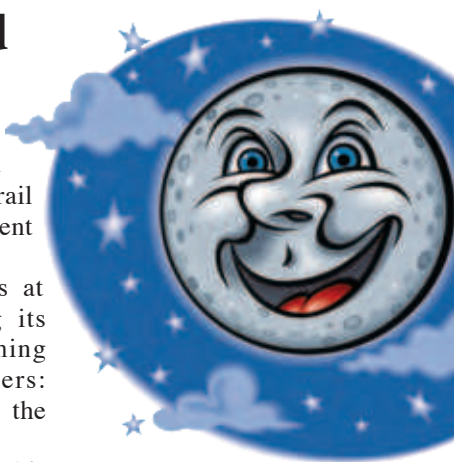


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# YOUR NIGHT SKY

BY DARLENE DANKO

## Eta Aquariid Meteors



The last time we saw comet Halley was in 1986, and it won’t return until 2061, but it left a trail of debris in its path as it went around the Sun.

Earth intersects this debris at two different places during its orbit around the Sun, forming two separate meteor showers: the Orionids in October, and the Aquariids in May.

Comet dust smashes into Earth’s upper atmosphere at nearly 150,000 mph. About half leave ionized gas trails that glow for several seconds to a few minutes creating meteor showers that are fun to watch.

The Eta Aquariids is visible pre-dawn in the east southeast when the constellation Aquarius rises into the sky. They’re named after the star Eta Aquarii, which is one of the four stars that make up the Y shaped “water jar” asterism which is part of the constellation.

Aquarius represents a man pouring water out of a jug. This is probably because in ancient times the rising of Aquarius coincided with the annual arrival of rain and floods in the Middle East.

Unfortunately, the Eta Aquariid meteors are primarily visible in the Southern hemisphere where they put on quite a display. They’re rarely seen above latitude 40 degrees north, but since we live at 37 degrees, we’ll get to see some of them. The lack of northern visibility is due to Earth’s tilt at this time of year, which causes dawn to begin

earlier the farther north you are. So, the meteors don’t have time to rise high enough to clear the horizon before sunrise.

What’s interesting about these meteors, and makes them worth watching, is that many of them will be “earth grazers.” These are bright long-lasting meteors that travel horizontally across the sky near the horizon. The only problem we might have, depending on where you live, is the mountains being in the way. But there will still be regular meteors shooting every which way across the sky. We will see between 10 and 30 per hour. But you know how meteors are, you can see 5 in 10 minutes, and then nothing for the next half hour.

The Eta Aquariids peak on the morning of May 6, with good displays also on the 5th and 7th. Sunrise is about 6 a.m., so you’ll have to get up by 4 a.m., and give yourself an hour to watch. Since the new moon was on April 30, the sky will still be dark for good viewing. Don’t forget to look low in the east southeast for the earth grazers!

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# OPINION & EDITORIAL

## Thank a nurse during National Nurses Week

By CHARLOTTE LEDONNE

The American public has again ranked nurses as the professionals with the highest honesty and ethical standards, according to a Gallup poll released in December, 2021. The annual poll marks the 20th consecutive year that nurses have been ranked the most trusted out of a wide spectrum of professions, including medical doctors and police officers. The trust Americans have in nurses is due to their holistic approach to providing high-quality, patient-centered care to individuals, families, and communities.

The COVID-19 pandemic has placed a spotlight on nurses, reinforcing the critical contributions they make to our health care system, while also highlighting the devastating impact it has had on their mental health and well-being.

The American Nurses Association is celebrating the month of May as National Nurses Month with the

theme “Nurses Make a Difference” to honor the varying roles of nurses and their positive impact on our lives. Nurses make a difference as trusted advocates who ensure

individuals, families, and populations receive quality patient care and services.

Nurses make a difference by influencing and shaping health policy decisions that ensure all Americans have access to high-quality, affordable health care coverage.

“I want to congratulate every nurse across the nation for earning this well-deserved recognition,” said ANA President Ernest Grant, PHD, RN, FAAN. “The fact that

this is the 20th year in a row that the American public has voted nurses #1 is a testament to your consistent professionalism, despite the challenges of the persistent pandemic. We are all indebted to you and will continue to

acknowledge and honor your courage, commitment, and expertise during the COVID-19 pandemic and well beyond.”

Thank a Nurse! National Nurses Week is May 2-8. Nurses in the San Luis Valley community work hard to provide you with the best possible health care. Give them a big smile and a heartfelt Thank You.

For more information, contact Charlotte Ledonne, RN at SLV Area Health Education Center, 719-589-4977.



## Yankee in the South

No matter where you are from, it seems that we are still somewhat identified by the events that occurred during the Civil War. The dividing lines during that conflict determined if you were a Yankee or a Southerner and that designation for people of a region seems to have held over even today.

Ol’ Dutch was born and raised in Kansas and, since Kansas eventually was admitted to the Union as a Free State, I guess that makes me a Yankee. And of course, Miss Trixie, ever the yellow rose of Texas, is a Southerner through and through. This may explain some of the conflicts we have from time to time since battle lines as real as Lee vs Grant are drawn in our house replete with cannon fire and rebel yells.

Since Ol’ Dutch is so even-tempered and easy to get along with, plus handsome and of a tender and sweet nature, I can calm Trixie down when she goes on the warpath. (Miss Trixie’s medical problem of eye-rolling would keep her out of any modern-day army. She really does need to get that checked out.)

When I first began to hang out with these Southern folks, I soon learned that there are some things they do that are not really found in the more northern climates. And chief among Southern traditions is their food. Not only is it tasty but it is served in amounts that can feed anything from a harvest crew to an entire church social. Those people know how to cook.

However, there is one thing that Ol’ Dutch can’t seem to get used to: Sweet tea. Now you may think that should be two separate words as in, Sweet Tea but the difference between those two is as far apart as the politics that almost split the Union in half.

I will never forget the first time I went out to eat in the South and ordered iced tea. When the nice little girl sat it down on my table Ol’ Dutch took a big old swig and about gagged. It was so sweet it was just short of Karo Syrup consistency. Tea to these folks is always served as sweet as you can get it. And it’s hard to find it any other way, actually. Doing a little research, I learned that they add copious amounts of sugar to boiling water so that the sugar will stay in suspension better.

It’s kind of like hummingbird feeder water in that regard and I can tell you one thing, after a glass of that sugary concoction a person gets the jitters so



**Trout Republic**  
by Kevin Kirkpatrick

bad you soon resemble a hummingbird flitting around the room yourself.

Just last week we were at Miss Trixie’s aunt’s house and she served Ol’ Dutch a nice cold glass of — you guessed it — Sweet tea. This prompted me to Google about boiling water and sugar and I came up with the following facts.

It seems that if you boil water before you add the sugar a person is able to get about seven pounds of sugar into a gallon of water. And from what I have tasted that’s about the proportion used anywhere south of the Mason Dixon line. And honestly, I would not doubt that the old gals who make this stuff probably just put in the whole 10-pound bag of sugar so that the ants don’t get in the remaining three pounds while stored in the cabinet.

It’s so bad I do not doubt that one of the main contentious ideas that the North and South fought over was the use of Sweet tea in all things southern.

And maybe, just maybe the cavities caused by said syrupy slurpy brown liquid is what sent southerner Doc Holliday over the edge and turned him from a doting young dentist into a hard-core killer of men.

Like booze before it, trust me, if drunk in enough quantities Sweet tea will latch onto your eternal soul and feed the demons of carbohydrate cravings and expanding waistline pants to your eventual demise.

*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*

## LETTER

### Thankful for South Fork Ambulance, RG Hospital

Editor,  
People sometimes think that rural or regional hospitals suffer in comparison to the larger, general hospitals. They see a lack of specialists — diagnosticians and surgeons — in life-and-death health events such as snake bite or heart attack. They may also have the perception that the quality of care at rural or regional hospitals is inferior to that at larger hospitals. Here’s evidence the first problem may be true but not necessarily the second.

Last Feb. 1, just before midnight, my wife suddenly experienced searing pain across her shoulders and back. It was a five-minute drive from our house in Del Norte to the Rio Grande Hospital emergency room, where the physician on call, Dr. Clifford Robins, quickly diagnosed aortic dissection and put her on medication to reduce her blood pressure. That alone probably saved her life.

Aortic dissection is when the layers of the artery wall begin to tear apart. It is a prelude to rupture of the aorta, which is usually lethal. Surgery is essential, the

sooner the better. Every hour that aortic dissection is left without intervention, the chances of death increase three percent.

Normally at Rio Grande Hospital, Jan would have been put on a medevac helicopter and flown to Colorado Springs Memorial Hospital, which has the closest cardiovascular surgeon. But the night of Feb. 1, as may be remembered, was the worst snowstorm of the season, not only across Colorado but across New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, and Wyoming. The emergency-room personnel spent three hours trying to find anyone who would fly Jan to a large hospital in any of those states, with no luck. Finally, they contacted South Fork Ambulance, who, amazingly, agreed to drive her to Colorado Springs. It was 4 a.m. and snow was falling heavily the whole route. La Veta Pass got 16 inches that night. Colorado Springs itself got 22 inches.

The ambulance arrived. Members of the crew, Jed Pilant and Lucas Slade, were friendly, unassuming, and efficient. Without hesitation, the emergency-room nurse, RN Kelli Overall, agreed that she

should ride in the ambulance to attend Jan the whole way. And they were off into the night, thick with snow.

To cut the story short, it took them about five hours to get to Colorado Springs. An operation-room assistant told me that the snow was so bad he barely was able to get to the hospital, and he lives in Colorado Springs.

Open-heart surgery proceeded shortly, and currently Jan is almost fully recovered. So, the point of the story could be her miraculous survival. The surgeon said he didn’t know how she lasted the ambulance ride. But another point of the story is that she survived because of local expertise and decisions on the part of people with the South Fork Ambulance and the Rio Grande Hospital. I can’t thank them enough.

Regional or rural health care has its challenges, for sure — funding, breadth of expertise, low pay. But one of its problems is not the knowledge, dedication, or professionalism of its staff.

*Rich Haswell  
Del Norte*

# CENTER POST-DISPATCH

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# Special Colcha Embroidery exhibition coming to Valley

## SUBMITTED ARTICLE

**SAGUACHE** — San Luis Valley Colcha Embroidery will open on Saturday, May 7, at The Range in Saguache. The exhibition brings together artwork on loan from artists, families, and museums across Colorado and New Mexico. There will be a reception in honor of the artists at 1 p.m. on Saturday,

May 7, during Saguache's Cinco de Mayo Fiesta.

Colcha embroidery is practiced in the San Luis Valley as a traditional art informed by Spanish Colonial culture with Indigenous and Anglo-American influences. Colcha embroidery artworks from the region often illustrate personal histories and local landscapes, capturing

complex memories of the Valley. Periodic efforts to pass on the tradition through workshops have created a dynamic conversation around colcha embroidery in Southern Colorado, with influential connections to communities in Northern New Mexico, where the art form originated in the early 19th Century.

Many contemporary San Luis Valley colcha embroidery artists respond to changing technologies and cultural trends, integrating available materials that embody the textures of their era. Some artists in the exhibition use hand woven *sabanilla* cloths and plant dyed thread made from Navajo-Churro sheep wool, long used to create textiles in the region. The colcha embroidery technique employs a single needle and thread, laying long stitches secured to cloth with tacking stitches. The term *colcha* refers to the Spanish word for bed covering. It is common in the historical and the modern San Luis Valley style to fill the entire surface of the fabric with embroidery.

Groups including Artes del Valle Cooperative, the Ladies Sewing Circle of San Luis, and Saguache Colcha Embroiderers operated in the 1970's and 80's, providing instruction and support for dozens of artists across the Valley, and influencing family and friends to take up the art practice. One such artist is Josephine Lobato from San Luis, who after decades working in colcha embroidery was named a National Endowment for the Arts National Heritage Fellow in 2019. Today colcha embroiderers meet monthly in San Luis, coordinated by artist Marcella Pacheco. Artists Patsy Garcia and Dolores Worley of Saguache continue to share stories of working with their group more than 40 years ago, offering vivid insight into one of the most treasured arts in the community.

Donna Madrid Hernandez of San Luis reflects on how the colcha embroidery tradition in her town influences her, writing that "it makes me happy, relaxes me, and takes me back to when I was a child, thinking of my grandmother's friends and how they spent time doing colcha embroidery. All the buildings and churches now in frames make my heart sing because I was a part of

those structures. I look at Las Posadas (an artwork by Josephine Lobato) and think about how for nine days before Christmas we would go out each night and ask for *posada*, a place for the Virgin Mary to rest. Walking house to house in the snow and the cold, I just can't explain the beauty and the memory that has forever impacted my life. I love doing colcha embroidery and have so many more projects to do."

San Luis Valley Colcha Embroidery will feature over 60 artists.

In conjunction with San Luis Valley Colcha Embroidery, temporary photo murals by Edica Pacha celebrating San

Luis colcha embroiderers will be on display in Alamosa. These murals are hosted by Ef's Restaurant on Highway 285 and the A & J Solar building next to Zapata Park.

These murals will be on view through the summer of 2022.

San Luis Valley Colcha Embroidery will be on view from May 7 to June 19 at 307 4th St. in Downtown Saguache at The Range gallery. There will be open hours during the exhibition on Friday, Saturday, and Sundays 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Ring the bell or call 646-734-1373, to visit the exhibition outside of these hours.



Photos by The Range

Sostena Sandoval Cleven, El Rancho Grande, 1978. Colcha embroidery. Courtesy of Sangre de Cristo Heritage Center.



Tina Valdez, The Vega, 1976. Colcha embroidery. Courtesy of Sangre de Cristo Heritage Center.

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# Sgt. Martinez Memorial Scholarship Run and Golf Tournament May 28

## STAFF REPORT

**MONTE VISTA** — The 12th annual 5K Run/Walk and Veterans Golf Tournament will be held at the Monte Vista Golf Course on Saturday, May 28. All proceeds benefit the Sgt. Glen E. Martinez Memorial Scholarship Fund, in which \$1,000 scholarships will be awarded to a senior boy and senior girl of Monte Vista High School.

The 5K run/walk will begin on Saturday, May 28 at 7 a.m. at the Monte Vista Golf Course and will include breakfast, t-shirt and ribbons (eight different age groups). Cost is \$20 pre-registration or \$25 day of the event. Deadline for mail-in registration and online registration is May 25. Send mail-in registration to P.O. Box 181, Monte Vista, CO 81144 and register online at [www.glenmartinez.org](http://www.glenmartinez.org). For more information, call Ron or Carol at 719-850-3758 or 719-849-1830.

The Veterans Golf Tournament will begin on Saturday, May 28 at 10 a.m., shotgun start at the Monte Vista Golf Course. It will be a 4-man team scramble, 18 holes and will cost \$180 per team. The tournament is limited to 18 teams. The cost is \$45 for singles;

they will be grouped up. The cost includes golf cart (limited to 18 carts), team entry fee, complementary range balls, and a gift certificate for first and second place teams and lunch after the golf tournament. To sign up or for more information, call Michelle or Grace at the Monte Vista Pro-shop, 719-628-0130.

Martinez was a Sgt. in the United States Marine Corps when he and three other Marines were killed in action on May 2, 2008, while on a combat mission. The Humvee they were riding in hit a roadside bomb in the Al Anbar Province of Iraq.

Martinez knew the value of education and the value of physical fitness. Growing up in Monte Vista, he participated in nearly every sport available including football, wrestling and baseball. He played in the band and was an excellent student. He was quarterback for the Pirate football team for three years and competed four years on the state wrestling team and played baseball all four years. Glen chose to play baseball for Ottawa University in Ottawa, Kan. on an academic and baseball scholarship where he earned

his bachelor's in mathematics.

He subsequently earned a surveying degree from Westwood College and was going to work on his Master's in Hydro-Engineering at Boulder, Colorado University, when he made his decision to join the Marine Corps.

Living in Boulder, he explained, "he got tired of hearing people cutting down his country," so he decided to do something positive. He could have gone directly into officer candidate school but chose to start at the bottom like all the other recruits. Should he go

on to command, Sgt. Martinez said, he wanted to have hands-on experience rather than classroom philosophy.

"I want those I command to know that I have been where they are," he said in an interview just after basic training. He was ready for whatever came. After a childhood filled with the challenge of athletic competition, staying in peak physical shape was second nature to him and he strongly supported the discipline and leadership skills learned on the mat, football field, baseball diamond and the school room.



## Campaign to recall District Attorney hits ground running

BY PRISCILLA WAGGONER

**ALAMOSA** — Barely more than a week after petitions to recall 12th Judicial District Attorney Alonzo Payne were handed out to people gathering signatures, Alamosa City Manager Heather Brooks reports that, as of Friday, 1,072 individuals in the San Luis Valley had signed.

According to Brooks, more than 60 petitions were being circulated for signatures with one packet already returned as complete. One packet has space for 80 signatures.

"We have a hard count of 1,072 signatures, but we haven't heard back from 20 circulators, whom I know have gotten signatures," Brooks said.

Brooks reported that petitions were being circulated in Alamosa, Rio Grande, Costilla and Conejos counties, including the towns of Alamosa, Moffat, Center, Monte Vista, Del Norte, Saguache, Antonito, Mosca and Crestone.

"We feel that this is a very good start considering the petitions were first handed out Wednesday, April 20, just a week ago," she said.

In March, Alamosa City Council

passed an ordinance allowing the expenditure of up to \$10,000 for participation in the recall campaign. When asked how much money had been spent Brooks said the city had used approximately \$2,450.18 of the funds authorized by council.

Included in that approximate sum was \$460 spent on items including "petition printing, upcoming utility stuffers, lanyards, registered voter lists, etc." The remaining funds from the \$2,450.18 have been spent on "staff tracking their time spent on the effort."

Brooks emphasized that the figures are just approximate, at this point, and include "placeholders" where actual expenditures have yet to be made.

Those involved in the recall campaign have until June 17 to submit petitions with a minimum of 4,000 signatures.

Brooks says the goal is to collect 6,000 signatures by May 23.

Anyone with questions about the funding or the recall campaign efforts should either go to the city's webpage at <https://cityofalamosa.org/da-concerns/> or contact the City of Alamosa, for further information.

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## The Greatest Comfort in the Midst of Life's Storms

At one time or another, all of us have experienced a setback or endured a significant loss. Maybe that's where you are today; perhaps you've lost a job, a relationship, or even someone or something you love.

If so, I want to encourage you with Matthew 5:4. Jesus says, "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted" (NIV).

I used to think this was odd. I wondered, How can we be blessed if we are mourning? Then God helped me understand that our times of pain are actually perfect opportunities to receive and experience His supernatural comfort.

In fact, having a problem is one of the best places to begin again. Why? Because God's comfort goes far beyond any ordinary kind of comfort. He is the only One who can carry you through the pain and help you to actually become a better, more powerful person than you were before.

With God's help, we can look at our pain as an opportunity. I believe we can have an attitude that says, "This may be tough right now, but I will never give up. I'm really hurting, but I'm going to bounce back!"

**Decide to Drive the Bus**

I remember a conversation I had with a woman who told me, "Joyce, life has just thrown me under the bus." Almost without thinking, I responded, "My life used to be the same way, but I decided to drive the bus."

I wasn't trying to be flippant or insensitive to her hardship—I wanted to help her. So I explained that when things go wrong, the enemy wants us to spend the rest of our lives under the bus, feeling sorry for ourselves. But God's plan is for us to bounce back, get in the driver's seat, then go pick up other hurting people who are under the bus.

I'm not saying we shouldn't grieve after a loss or tragedy, but we just don't want to get stuck there.

**From the Pit to the Palace**

Just look at the life of Joseph in Genesis chapters 37 – 50. As a young man, Joseph had great dreams for his life. But his older brothers hated him and sold him into slavery, and he was taken to Egypt. But Joseph refused to give up. He found great favor with his master, Potiphar, and was eventually put in charge of his entire household.

Years later, when Joseph was falsely accused of trying to seduce Potiphar's wife, he was thrown in jail. But he still didn't give up. And when the time was right, the Lord eventually gave Joseph an opportunity to interpret a dream for Pharaoh, who then promoted him to be the highest official in Egypt!

Joseph literally went from the pit to the palace. And when a famine struck the land, the Lord used Joseph to save his family and the entire house of Israel.

Romans 8:28 says, "We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." When we refuse to give up, the greatest tragedy of our life can actually turn out to be one of the greatest blessings.

Some of my greatest victories have come out of difficult times when I had to press through and seek God for His help and comfort. I'm grateful that I didn't give up during those times because I wouldn't have the privilege of helping people the way I do today.

I know it's not easy, but I want you to see that your attitude and response to the problems you face can make all the difference for you and so many others.

**The Source of ALL Comfort**

When you are hurting, run to God—the "Father of compassion and the God of all comfort" (2 Corinthians 1:3). Spend time in His Word, talk to Him in prayer, and choose to worship Him even when you don't feel like it.

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The Lord will often use others to comfort us. But even those people who are extremely close to us cannot give us everything we need all the time. When we expect others to do for us what only God can do, we have our expectations in the wrong place, and we will be disappointed. However, the Bible says those who put their hope in the Lord will never be disappointed (Isaiah 49:23).

Psalms 34:18 says, "The Lord is close to the brokenhearted...." He sees every hurt, every injustice, and every disappointment. If we let Him, He will take the bad things that happen and work them out for our good.

Be determined to never, ever give up on God. He's the only One who can take your pain and turn it into a blessing in every storm in your life.

For more on this topic, order Joyce's four-teaching CD series *Nine Attitudes That Keep You Happy*. You can also contact us to receive our free magazine, *Enjoying Everyday Life*, by calling (800) 727-9673 or visiting [www.joycemeyer.org](http://www.joycemeyer.org).

Joyce Meyer is a New York Times bestselling author and founder of Joyce Meyer Ministries, Inc. She has authored more than 135 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](http://www.joycemeyer.org).

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

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# Bones found near Crestone identified as human

**STAFF REPORT**  
**CRESTONE** — Bones found April 25 near Crestone were positively identified as human, according to the Saguache County Sheriff's Office (SCSO).

According to the sheriff's department, the remains had been scattered by family members who could not get to the North Crestone Trailhead due to the time of the year. An investigation was launched into the burned bones due to the way they were scattered along the side of the road.

"It was not the intent of the Saguache County Sheriff's Office, Saguache County Coroner's Office or Colorado Bureau of Investigation evidence team to disturb the final resting place," according to sheriff's office. "The Saguache County Sheriff is saddened that the final resting place of the deceased was

disturbed." The county coroner was working with the family to return the remains. The sheriff's office said while they respect the ability of families to scatter ashes of loved ones in places that the family and friends of the deceased hold special to them, they request that ashes be placed in areas that are not noticeable to the traveling public.

A tip was received by the SCSO about 5:30 p.m. on April 25 about possible human bones being found along the road near the forest service gate to North Crestone Campground, also known as Saguache County Road 71.

In their original announcement, the SCSO said that "it is not believed that the bones are of Suzanne Morphew or Kristal Reisinger," two people who are still missing in the region.

# Colorado Congreso de Acequias is May 21

**SANLUIS** — The Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association's 10th Annual Colorado Congreso de Acequias is on Saturday, May 21.

Acequia irrigators and their families are encouraged to attend but all are welcome.

Congreso will be held in San Luis at Centennial School in San Luis from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and will include coffee, snacks, and lunch.

The event is free to attend and activities will be provided for children

over 3 years of age. The event will focus on land water rights opportunities for today and engaging the next generation.

An election will be held for the Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association Board of Directors during lunch.

Organizers are asking people with digitized historic or sentimental photos of land, family or community, send them to sangredecristoacequia@gmail.com to be shown during Congreso.

# Mountain Shoot Out entries due by June 3

**CREEDE** — The 2022 Mountain Shoot Out call for entries is now available on the Creede Arts Council website. The deadline for entry is June 3. The traditional Opening Reception will be on June 24 at 5 p.m. at the Creede Visitors Center. The photographs will be displayed in the Visitor Center through Sept. 12.

This year's judge, John Gary

Brown, will select first through third place awards and Honorable Mentions. Visitors can vote for their favorite photo, and the winner will receive the People's Choice Award.

For more information and to download the call for entries, visit the Creede Arts Council website here: <https://creedeartscouncil.com>.

# City of MV celebrating Arbor Day on May 12

**MONTE VISTA** — The City of Monte Vista Tree Board, and Colorado State Forest Service will be celebrating Arbor Day by planting a

tree at 1 p.m. on May 12 at the Monte Vista Skate Park. The Skate Park is located on Highway 160 across from Marsh School.

**Saguache County Public Health is seeking sealed bids for the following:**

12 x 16 shed with the following:

- 8 ft side walls
- 6ft double steel doors
- Floor insulation
- Hang sheetrock
- Floor to ceiling shelving 3 feet in depth on two walls
- Shingle roof

Bids need to be mailed or delivered to the Saguache County Administration Office-PO Box 100-Saguache, CO 81149.

**The envelope MUST be sealed and say Public Health Shed Bid DO NOT OPEN.**

**Bids must be returned by May 9th at 3:00 p.m.**

No. 1634 published in the Center Post Dispatch, Thursday, April 28 and May 5, 2022.

Saguache County Government is accepting bids for a 60'x26' equipment shop in the Town of Sargents. This shop will be used to house Road and Bridge equipment with a monolithic 5000 PSI concrete pad.

For specific specifications of the building please contact Wendi Maez at [wmaez@saguache-county-co.gov](mailto:wmaez@saguache-county-co.gov) or Randy Arredondo at [arredondo@saguachecounty-co.gov](mailto:arredondo@saguachecounty-co.gov).

Bids must be submitted in a sealed envelope with "Road and Bridge Sargents shop" written on the front of the envelope which contains the sealed bid. Bids must include proof of liability and proof of workers compensation insurance coverage.

Bids must be submitted to Saguache County Administration, 505 3rd Street, or PO Box 100, Saguache, CO 81149 and must be submitted by Thursday, May 12, 2022 at 3pm.

For further information you can also call Wendi Maez at 719-655-2231 or Randy Arredondo at 719-655-2554.

No. 1635 published in the Center Post Dispatch, Thursday, April 28 and May 5 and 12, 2022.

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# What is a Children's Advocacy Center

By **SHELLY MARTINEZ**  
SLV CAC Program Director

A Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) is a child-focused, facility-based program in which representatives from many disciplines, including law enforcement, child protection, prosecution, mental health, medical and victim advocacy, child advocacy, work together to conduct interviews and make team decisions about investigation.

The Children's Advocacy Center of the San Luis Valley (SLV CAC) has been serving the community of the San Luis Valley since 2013. The services provided are to children ages 0-17 and their non-offending caregivers. Services are free and consists of family advocacy, forensic interviews and Sex Assault Nurse Examinations (SANE) and wellness exams.

Family advocacy is offered to the non-offending caregiver and family members. A Family Advocate provides support to the family from beginning to end of a case. Forensic interviews are for children who have experienced sexual abuse/ assault, severe abuse/neglect and or have witnessed a crime. Forensic interviews are neutral, unbiased and aimed at eliciting facts from children in a developmentally appropriate manner. There are currently three forensic interviewers and bilingual interviews are available. The Tu Casa, Inc. SANE program is also a key program that works within

the SLV CAC service area. The program offers acute sexual assault examinations within four days of the assault and a wellness exam any time after the fourth day.

Referrals for forensic interviews and SANE services must be made by the Department of Social/Human services, Law Enforcement or the District Attorney's Office. The number of interviews completed in 2013 was 20. The number of interviews completed in 2021 was 102. The SLV CAC is located in Alamosa, CO, but provides services to all six counties in the SLV.

When utilized correctly a child will not have to tell the worst experience of his or her life over and over again, to doctors, law enforcement, lawyers, therapists, investigators and sometimes school personnel. Before the existence of the SLV CAC in the valley, children were asked to talk about their experience in a police station or other non-child friendly environment and could potentially believe they are in trouble. When law enforcement and/or child protection believe a child is being abused, the child is referred to the CAC, a safe, neutral, child-focused environment, and taken to the CAC by the non-offending caregiver or guardian.

The number of referrals received for services decreased significantly during the two years of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Prior to the COVID-19, the SLV CAC was completing anywhere from 130 interviews to 175 per year.

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# Sargent School Trustee Mitchell censured by board

BY MARIE MCCOLM

**MONTE VISTA** — Sargent School District Trustee Gina Mitchell was censured by the school board after an investigation found that she abused her power as a board member.

The 3-0 vote came during the school board's regular meeting on Monday, April 25. The meeting was held in the auditorium of the gym. There were at least 150 people in attendance at the meeting. Trustee Matthew Smartt voted "present" and said it was because he was not on the board when the complaints were filed.

Sargent School Board Trustee Michelle Peterson read the findings of an investigation conducted by Theresa Martinez aloud during the meeting and the board agreed they were true and correct.

Mitchell, who is the secretary of the board, did not agree with the findings.

"I know that by no means am I a perfect person," Mitchell said. "However, I do want you to know that I respectfully disagree with the reports that have been released into a complaint. They do include a variety of misinformation. I do wish to continue working with the board. I know that the board is under a lot of stress and pressure related to my situation, and I will respect whatever decision they make. However, you should expect a challenge from me regarding those reports, as they are not accurate."

Some parents and teachers publicly called for her immediate resignation and said they were willing to take legal action.

Sargent teacher and coach Terry VanBibber spoke at the meeting after submitting a copy of a letter dated April of 2021, and a copy of a new letter that had been written, to each board member dated April 2022. VanBibber said he was at the meeting to submit the letter and to share the feelings and opinions of most of the staff at the school.

Sargent teachers and staff sat together during the meeting wearing shirts printed with "Sargent Strong."

VanBibber spoke plainly and called out Trustee Mitchell by name.

"We proudly stand together as a work family, and we are tired of seeing each other mistreated, bullied, and abused by one board member Ms. Gina Mitchell," he said.

VanBibber reminded everyone that this had been going on for more than a year and they were not going to be quiet any longer.

"Another year has passed, and these concerns have not been resolved, but rather have grown significantly," he said.

VanBibber added that it was time to take a stand against the constant bullying, harassment and blackmailing done by Mitchell and her husband, Clay Mitchell.

VanBibber said staff had tried to resolve this in numerous ways in the past, including mediation, meetings, emails and phone calls. VanBibber said the constant mistreatment by the Mitchells had been kept secret and allowed to continue.

"We will no longer keep this a

secret," VanBibber said. "We will no longer be directed to keep quiet. We will take a stand and protect our school, for the sake of all our students and our families, or we will be left with no school to protect."

VanBibber cited several instances in which Mitchell had abused her power as a board member — from entering the school and not checking in, to entering teachers' classrooms without notice, to refusing to return a master key that was school property.

Prior to the meeting, an attachment was given out along with the meeting's regular agenda to teachers, students and parents. The attachment included the findings of investigations initiated by Mitchell and by Sargent Elementary School Principal Joni Hemmerling. There were two total investigations initiated.

Each investigation involved a third party, Martinez, conducting interviews with witnesses and filing a report with the school district that included a summary conclusion for each investigation.

Hemmerling's grievance alleged that Mitchell abused her power as a board member, and in doing so created a hostile work environment, and that Mitchell over time had engaged in harassing behaviors which led Hemmerling to resign from her position as principal. The investigator found the allegations to be true.

"I find after interviewing all the witnesses involved that witness #1 does single out the complainant multiple times, oversteps the boundaries of a board member

acting individually directing her supervisor to take action against her, focuses upon the religious views and or associations of complainant and other staff, and inappropriately seeks for personal purposes, confidential employment information in regard to performance and medical issues," Martinez wrote in the report under findings of fact.

Mitchell's grievance investigation stemmed from a student requesting a prayer at a graduation ceremony. The witness in the investigation stated that since the student requested this, the witness believed that by denying the prayer, the student would be denied their right to freedom of speech. Two total grievances were filed by Mitchell, and as a result, the witness did seek legal advice to determine how to proceed in the future, when a student requests prayer.

"I do believe that it is not the intention for the staff to violate any freedom of religion, rather it has been tradition in the local community since the foundation of the school," Martinez concluded. "If there was a violation in past grievances filed, I believe the behavior has been corrected to the best of their knowledge. I reviewed evidence regarding the training for staff that was done Jan. 22 as well as touring the school. The behavior has been corrected and there is an ongoing effort to educate the administration and staff in this area. All Bible references have been removed. I did not see any evidence of religion in the school."

Mitchell stated there were several instances of religion creating a hostile working environment, but the conclusion of the investigation pointed out that Mitchell was not an employee of the district, and that there were no records of complaints by actual employees of the district.

The attachment included other allegations made by Mitchell toward the school, regarding racism and nepotism. These allegations were also found to be nonfactual by the investigator.

"I have concluded that I cannot find any evidence to prove racism other than the complainant's description of conversations," Martinez wrote in the report. "I found no official complaints, documentation from individuals, nor any other witnesses that can corroborate the allegations."

The Sargent School District Board said that it may take more action against Mitchell and if it did this would be made public at a future meeting.

The full report is available on the Sargent School District website at [www.sargent.k12.co.us/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Agenda-policies-investigation.pdf](http://www.sargent.k12.co.us/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Agenda-policies-investigation.pdf).

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

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# Lifestyles

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## South Fork Friends Foundation sets dates for coming events

By **LYNDSIE FERRELL**

**SOUTH FORK** — With summer just around the corner, the South Fork Friends Foundation (SFFF) recently announced some events that will be happening this year.

First off, on the morning of April 26, volunteers with SFFF and the Town of South Fork gathered

at the South Fork Visitor Center for the first of five road clean up events between now and Memorial Day weekend. SFFF is partnering with CDOT on specific days to help clean up the highway and prepare for summer guests. Volunteers are always needed. Contact the visitor center for the next scheduled date.

As volunteers work to clean up South Fork, the SFFF is also preparing for its annual yard sale which has become one of the most anticipated events on the western end of the Valley. As the old adage goes, out with the old and in with the new, participating families gather all their non-essential goods to turn it from their junk, into

another's treasure. This event will be held the first weekend in June.

The yard sale coincides with the annual South Fork Town cleanup day and is an opportunity for people to clean out yards, garages, sheds and more. Not only will the town be collecting trash

**Please see EVENTS on Page 2**

## Mineral County 4-H Club participates in Wolf Creek Ski Area School Program

SUBMITTED ARTICLE

**MINERAL COUNTY** — The Mineral County 4-H Club participated in Wolf Creek Ski Area's School Program. This program offered all children enrolled in the 4-H Club a ski lift ticket, equipment rental and a skiing or snowboarding lesson — \$20 for skiers or \$40 for snowboarders. This program allows children the opportunity to see what skiing and snowboarding are about.

The Mineral County 4-H Club provided \$20 for each child to participate. So, children skiing attended for free and children snowboarding attended for \$20.

The club traveled to Wolf Creek from Creede on April 8.

Attendees ranged from kids who had never skied before to those who took advantage of advanced

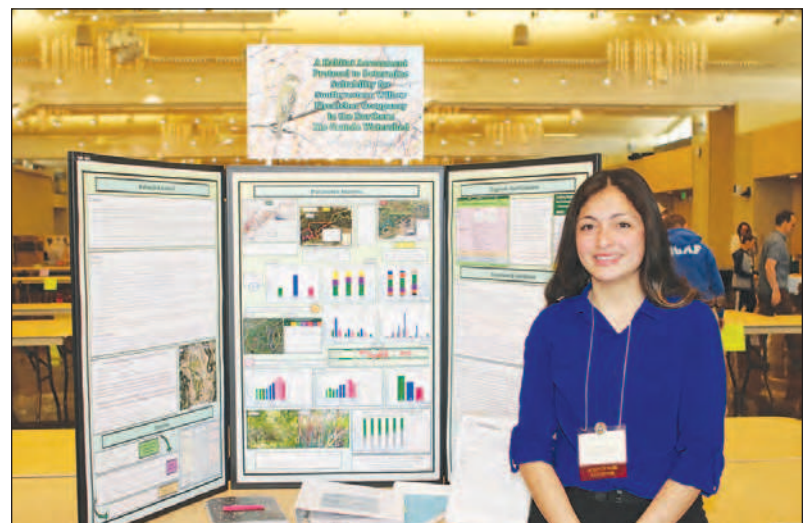


Courtesy photo

lessons to improve their skills in skiing and snowboarding.

Fourth-grader JT Cook said, "I've skied before but today I learned how to ski faster and to ski backwards. My instructor was the best."

Regardless of skill level, everyone had the opportunity to improve, and enjoy the experience during the 6 hours of beautiful weather and excellent conditions at Wolf Creek.



Courtesy photo

Marissa Martinez will be taking her science project to nationals next month.

## MVHS junior advances to International Science and Engineering Fair in Atlanta

By **MARIE MCCOLM**

**MONTE VISTA** — Seventeen-year-old Marissa Martinez is excited that her Monte Vista High School science project has gone so far.

"I started my science project last July, and honestly, I wasn't really into environmental stuff, until my teacher Ms. (Loree) Harvey dragged me out and said, 'Let's go do science' and I was like OK," said Marissa, who is a junior at MVHS. "The first project I ever did though with science was my sophomore year. I did something with eggs, and my science teacher Ms. Harvey took me to a hatchery, and the guy donated eggs to me and I did really well with this project. With the project that I did my sophomore year, I was also able to intern with the Bureau of Land Management. During the summer, the BLM said we have all these issues here with our wildlife in one area, and I was like OK, I can turn this into a Science Fair project. I took this project to regionals and took first place in my category. I also got ISEF recognition, which is huge."

The International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF) is the world's largest international pre-college science competition. The fair is held in May every year and began in 1950. The fair is directed by the Society for Science. Each year, the fair awards tuition grants, internships, and grand

prizes of \$50,000 and \$75,000 in college scholarships. Martinez took first place in Environmental Sciences, as an ISEF finalist at the Colorado Science and Engineering Fair.

"When they announced I was a finalist for ISEF. I was like wow, I really did this," Marissa said. "I looked around at all the other projects, and there were projects on cancer, and just like all these other intense topics, so when I looked at my project, I really couldn't believe they chose mine as a finalist. Then when they announced that the finalists of this award would also go to Atlanta in May, I was just stunned."

The title of her project is "A Habitat Assessment Protocol to Determine Suitability for Southwestern Willow Flycatcher Occupancy in the Northern Rio Grande Watershed."

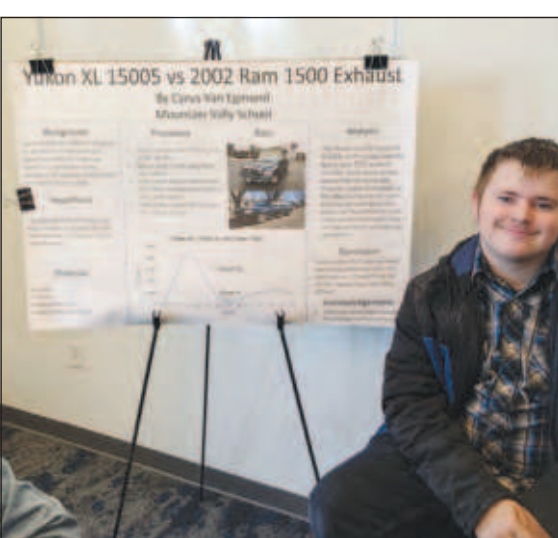
Marissa explained that she found her project interesting because it presents a problem and a solution. Martinez talked about all the extensive research she put in, adding that it was not an easy project to put together.

"It was a ton of data analysis, but I really had fun putting it together," she said.

Marissa worked for hours on the project and was proud that her hard work paid off.

"It's unbelievable to think I am going beyond state with this, I always thought

**Please see MARTINEZ on Page 2**



Courtesy of Mountain Valley School District

Students presenting findings.

## Mountain Valley High School students present air quality experiments

By **MECHEL MEEK**

**SAGUACHE** — Several Mountain Valley High School students and two Colorado University Boulder students partnered to investigate and discover the importance of the Earth's air quality.

According to Mountain Valley School, "Each Student used CU Boulder's manmade equipment (The Y-Pod) to conduct their experiments. The

U-Pod can measure many different compounds in the air (particulate matter, volatile organic compounds, carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide, and more). Our bright ninth-grade students did their own investigations surrounding an air quality question to design an experiment."

The Mountain Valley ninth-grade students posited different questions

and then presented their findings. The scientific questions ranged throughout the air quality spectrum including comparing emissions from different vehicles, cigarette toxicity, bathroom cleaner toxicity, and comparing gasoline to diesel engines.

Some of the findings enabled the students to perform practical experiments to test their hypotheses.



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# MARTINEZ Continued from Page 1

state was it for me. I am still really shocked about it," she said.

Marissa is a student of MVHS science teacher Loree Harvey. Harvey was recently named Teacher of the Year by the Monte Vista School District.

In 2019, Harvey was selected for the Society for Science and the Public 2019-2020 Advocate Grant Program. The Advocate Grant Program helps encourage adult educators to mentor middle and high school students by helping them conduct scientific research and enter and compete in research competitions.

Marissa spoke highly of Harvey and said that without Harvey, she could not have gone this far.

"Ms. Harvey is so awesome," Marissa said. "She has opened so many doors for me. I am proud of how far

I have come. I really owe so much of this to her. She takes kids and shows them biology, she shows them science. Before Ms. Harvey helped me, I didn't realize this was something I was even interested in, but after she took me outdoors, I was like I am an outdoors kid, I really love this. This is my path. I want to do something with biology. I am thinking maybe zoology and wildlife. It is so neat to have Ms. Harvey as a mentor, and great friend. She is a really good role model and has influenced me so much. I didn't start out wanting to do this, but now I definitely want to do this. I am really stoked about Atlanta. Even if I don't win over there, just to go this far, yeah, it's pretty awesome and amazing."

The International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF) is May 8-13 in Atlanta.

# EVENTS

but the items that can be reused can be put into the yard sale. A map of all yard sale locations throughout town is provided to people looking to shop and the visitor center parking lot serves as a community yard sale for people who want to bring things to sell but do not reside in South Fork. People who want their addresses added to the map need to contact the visitor center at 719-873-5512.

The organization is also working to put together a Garden Club that would allow participants the chance to plant flowers and learn about gardening techniques at the visitor center. The club was supposed to start earlier this month but because of Colorado's spring weather it was postponed to another date that will be announced as soon as the weather permits.

## Continued from Page 1

In addition to the events listed above, the South Fork Friends Foundation is also looking to add a few events this year, including an arts and crafts festival on July 20. Details about this event are still in the works but the date is set, and the event is moving forward.

At the end of the summer, SFFF is hoping to add a Burro Stampede to the agenda in September. This event would bring burro racers to the area for one last showdown before the cooler temperatures come crashing in. The event is scheduled for Sept. 3 with location and details to come.

To stay up to date on the coming events, visit the South Fork Friends Foundation Facebook page or look for calendar events scheduled on the South Fork Visitor Center website at [www.southfork.org](http://www.southfork.org).

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# Wildfire preparedness should begin now

May is National Wildfire Awareness month. This fact alone should raise your eyebrows a little. Add to that the numerous Red Flag Warnings issued by the National Weather Service for our area in the month of April and your eyes will get wider. Add to the mix, that just a short 150 miles south of here our New Mexican neighbors are dealing with three very large wildfires and our eyebrows have probably reached their peak. The addition of this next collection of news may make your eyebrows cover your head. The Rocky Mountain Geographic Area, in which we live, is predicted to have an above average Significant Wildland Fire Potential for May and June. Our long-term forecasters are predicting below normal precipitation and above normal temperatures for the same period. Finally, the US Drought Monitor shows the bulk of our area in Severe Drought. If this hasn't raised your eyebrows, nothing will. Mine are flapping in the wind. That's right, the same wind that has caused yet another Red Flag Warning as I write this.

It is with these predictions and under these conditions that I sincerely hope our Weather Service, Predictive Services, and climatologist folks are all very wrong, but as specialists, they are likely correct. These extremely valuable specialists use numerous models to create the highly valuable products, such as the above-mentioned products, that fire managers use to plan fire responses. I know the agencies are working on their plans and closely monitoring the conditions and situation, both regionally and nationally. But what are we, the non-agency people doing?

The key here is planning. With local state and federal fire agencies already planning for what may come, I'd like to encourage everyone to begin your fire planning process immediately. As fires on the front range just a few months ago have illustrated, wildfires seem to be a bit different and reaching areas we have previously thought to be at very low risk. My eyebrow just raised again. So, what do we do with that information? I mentioned it before. Plan and prepare.

Each property owner should take a critical look at the fuels on their property. My definition of fuels is anything that can burn long enough to sustain heat or spread to other items that are also fuel. Vegetation is the most common fuel we speak of in wildland fires. But property owners need to consider that wooden fences can act as a wick that can bring a fire from their yard, directly to their buildings. Scrap lumber and stacked firewood in the wrong places can serve as a receptive fuel bed for embers that flew a long way. Your cars, boats, campers, and stuff-I'm-savin'-under-the-tarp are all fuels too and once burning, can lead to the dire consequence of igniting your home. Make the changes now, when it is a no-stress time, because if you try to do this when the smoke is in the air, you'll be no where near as effective with your efforts. Besides, when the smoke is in the air and your property is at risk of an advancing fire, your time would be better spent working on your evacuation.

Since we are not all fire experts, there are numerous ways for property owners to get help in getting started in this what may seem a daunting task. Don't worry, it isn't. It just takes commitment. One of my favorites, the Ready, Set, Go program was launched by California's premier firefighting

has help thousands of homeowners navigate the mountains of information by dividing up the complex issue into three key elements. Get ready and Plan for the fire that is inevitably coming, Know what to do when it starts, and GO when the evacuation orders are issued. An easy to navigate website for the program is <https://www.readyforwildfire.org/>.

Taking that critical evaluation of your property is a great first step. The Colorado State Forest Service

has an excellent website: <https://csfs.colostate.edu/wildfire-mitigation/protect-your-home-property-from-wildfire/>. I recommend taking a look at that website and navigating to a few of the pages within. Another good resource is <https://www.nfpa.org/Public-Education/Fire-causes-and-risks/Wildfire/Firewise-USA>. They have gotten a bit complex over the years, but the information is still great.

If you want to reach out to a real person, many fire departments often

## Land, Water and People

BY GREGG GOODLAND

provide a property review service. I am not sure of which departments here do that, but it might be worth a call. The bottom line is that there are resources out there that can help you understand what is needed, how to get there and possibly even help accomplish your goal. I urge every property owner, that has even the slightest risk

of a home ignition from wildfire, to start the process of protecting your home now. It is never too soon.

*Gregg Goodland is the Public Affairs Officer for the Rio Grande National Forest. An avid outdoor enthusiast, you'll find him enjoying all public lands as often as possible.*

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## 05 Notices

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**FREE Trees, Crabapple, Aspen, Cottonwood. 3'-6'.** Saturday May 7<sup>th</sup> 9-11AM. 219 Dunham St., Monte Vista. Bring A Shovel. (5/4)

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## 07 Help Wanted

**Economic Development Services Director:** The Upper Rio Grande

**Economic Development (URGED)** is seeking proposals from firms/individual consultants interested, experienced and knowledgeable in providing Economic Development Services under a Professional Services Agreement. The deadline for submittal of responses is May 13, 2022. For more information and a full copy of the RFP, contact Linda Robinson – officemgr@urg-ed.com. Or visit [www.urg-ed.com](http://www.urg-ed.com) (5/11)

The Upper Rio Grande School District has received a grant for a **K-12 school counselor** - the first year is 1/2 time, then full-time for the next 3 years, starting in the 2022/2023 school year. Applicants must have a Master's Degree or higher and possess or be able to obtain an appropriate Colorado school counselor license. Please submit your application, resume, and cover letter to: Amy Duda, DNES Principal at [aduda@urtigers.co](mailto:aduda@urtigers.co) or contact Amy at 719-657-4050; or to David Grabowski,

DN Jr/Sr High Principal at [dgrabowski@urtigers.co](mailto:dgrabowski@urtigers.co) or contact David at 719-657-4020. Applications for certified staff positions can be picked up at the District Office or online at [www.urtigers.co](http://www.urtigers.co). (5/11)

**Help Wanted: Contact: Larry Brown SLV Area Extension Director** PO Box 30, Monte Vista, CO 81144L.Brown@colostate.edu 719-852-7381 CSU Extension. **SLV Area and Conejos County are hiring a part time, 4-H Youth Program Coordinator. We deliver community education which fosters healthy youth and families, prosperous farms, ranches and businesses, and strong, resilient, proud communities.** You will be the link between SLV Area Extension Agents and Conejos County youth and Families in delivering 4-H, in-school and after school Extension educational programs. This is a 9-month pilot position. Job Hours will be variable

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# Valley Wide Classifieds

**Saguache County Public Health Office is seeking to fill the position of Public Health Office Manager. Must have great phone skills, computer skills, knowledge of Google Documents, organized and be able to multitask. Spanish language skills helpful.** All inquiries should be directed to: Mona Lovato, Public Health Director E-mail: mlovato@saguachecounty-co.gov Applicants must submit a job application. The job application is available online at Saguache county.colorado.gov/jobopportunities Send application to the following address no later than 3:00 p.m. on Friday May 6, 2022 Faxed and emailed applications are accepted 719-655-2635 or aquintana@saguachecounty-co.gov (5/3)

**Saguache County Road and Bridge is hiring for One (1) more Temporary Summer position. REQUIREMENTS:** Applicants must be 18 years of age and have a valid driver's license. Prospective employees applying with Saguache County will be required to submit and pass a pre-employment drug screening and criminal background check. Temporary Summer positions – applicants must have working knowledge of common hand and power tools, shovels, wrenches and radios. Must be able to lift 25 to 45 pounds. Will be required to work in various climate conditions and be able to stand for long periods of time. Flagging certification a plus. Work Hours will be Monday – Thursday 7:00 AM to 5:30 PM. Rate of pay: \$14.00/hour. Applications are available at the Saguache County Road and Bridge Office 305 3rd Street, PO Box 476, Saguache, CO 81149 – 719-655-2554 or on the Saguache County website – [saguachecounty.colorado.gov](http://saguachecounty.colorado.gov) under the Road and Bridge Department Completed applications can be hand delivered or mailed to Saguache County Road and Bridge – at the address listed above, sent by email to [mhashbarger@saguachecounty-co.gov](mailto:mhashbarger@saguachecounty-co.gov) or faxed to: 719-655-2543. APPLICATION DEADLINE: Open until a qualified candidate is hired. Saguache County is an Equal Opportunity Employer.(5/4)

**WANTED: Saguache County Road and Bridge is hiring for Operator I positions....\$18.22/hour** REQUIREMENTS: Applicants must possess a current Class-A CDL license with heavy semi-truck endorsement and a current medical certificate. Applicants should have a high school diploma or GED and six months or more of relevant experience. Prospective employees applying with Saguache County will be required to submit and pass a pre-employment drug screening and criminal background check. Operator I is a full time position – applicants must be able to operate light

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and heavy equipment and perform manual labor in the maintenance, repair and minor construction of roads, streets, bridges, signs, markings and related facilities. Applicants must be physically capable of periods of sustained physical exertion and may be required to lift and move up to 75 lbs. to 150 lbs. Applications are available at the Saguache County Road and Bridge Office 305 3rd Street, PO Box 476, Saguache, CO 81149 – 719-655-2554 or on the Saguache

County website – [saguachecounty.colorado.gov](http://saguachecounty.colorado.gov) under the Road and Bridge Department tab. Please fill out and submit the Drivers-Application. A complete job description is available at the Road and Bridge Office. Completed applications can be hand delivered or mailed to Saguache County Road and Bridge – at the address listed above, sent by email to [mhashbarger@saguachecounty-co.gov](mailto:mhashbarger@saguachecounty-co.gov) or faxed to: 719-655-2543. APPLICATION DEADLINE: Open

until qualified candidates are hired. Saguache County is an Equal Opportunity Employer. (5/4)  
**Colorado Works Eligibility Technician needed for Rio Grande County Department of Social Services.** Requires High School Diploma or GED. Proficient in Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, and Excel. Pre-employment drug screening, including testing for marijuana, will be required. 37.5 hours per week/starting at \$17.98 per hour plus full benefits

package included. Application and job description available online at [www.riograndecounty.org](http://www.riograndecounty.org) or pick up and submit to Human Resources 925 6th Street, Room 200, Del Norte, CO 81132 (4/27)  
**Help Wanted- Landscaping Top pay/Paid weekly** Seasonal with possible year-round employment 40 hours weekly guarantee plus bonus. Must have dependable transportation. Located in Creede 719-588-0838. (4/27)

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**Driveline is Hiring in our area.** For more Information visit [www.driveline-retail/careers.com](http://www.driveline-retail/careers.com) (6/25)

**Ecodynamics Inc is hiring a pump technician!** This includes, but is not limited to, pulling & resetting water well pumps, shop time, cleaning & maintenance. Valid driver license and drug free are non-negotiable requirements. **No experience required.** Call 719/852-2662 for more info, prefer drop-off of resumes in person at 5492 US Hwy 160 E, east of Monte Vista. (5/18)

**12 Houses for Rent**  
**Del Norte Country House 3-bedroom, 2-bath,** wood stove, appliances, W/D included. **\$1250/Month, 1-year lease.** NO PETS! Call David at 720-315-3493. (5/04)TFN

**23 Lawn and Garden**  
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**Zapata Land for Sale** 75 Gallon Gas Tank for Pickup or Truck, Wind Guard for Pickup or Truck Pickup toolbox. 719-937-3850. (5/25)

**38 Machinery, Tools, Equipment**  
**2016 Bobcat T650 Skid Steer 74" Bucket with Teeth and Hardware** 1695 Hours for \$46,000 Enclosed cab Heat and Air conditioner. Call 719-754-2222. (5/18)

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**51 Boats and Equipment**  
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**56 Business Opportunity**  
**35.71 acres between Monte Vista and Alamosa on County Line Road,** borders highway, good grass, easy access, power and ready to build on. Priced \$109,000. Call **Bruce at Steffens & Company Realty Inc** 719-873-1700. (5/25)

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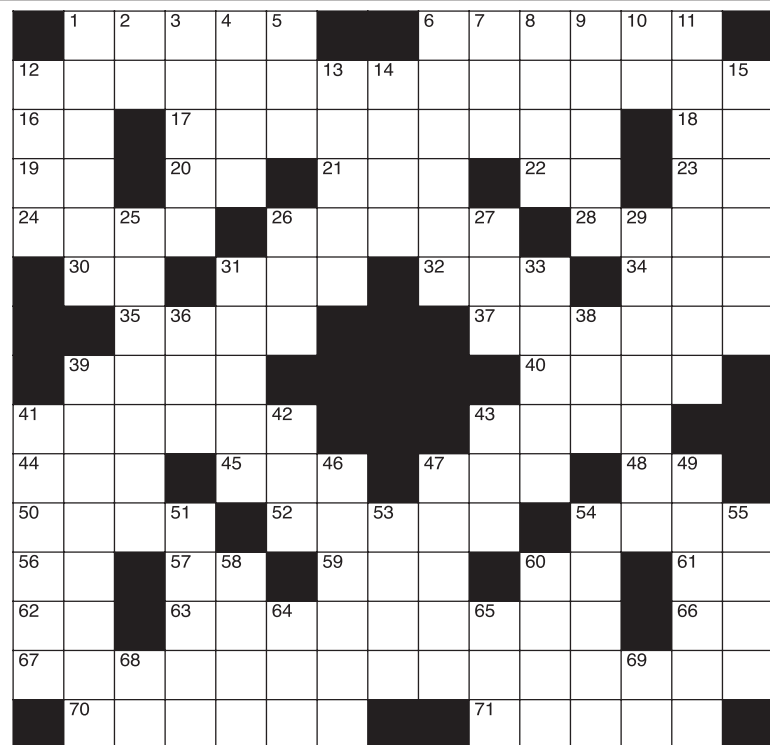
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**CLUES ACROSS**

1. Struck firmly
6. Shirt part
12. Nevertheless
16. Article
17. Adornment
18. Educator's helper
19. Healthcare pro
20. Atomic number 28
21. Extinct flightless bird
22. Mystic syllable
23. College sports decision maker (abbr.)
24. Edible mushrooms
26. Venerable English monk
28. Surrounded by
30. Forming fractional numbers from 4 onwards
31. Eastern France river
32. Short cry or yelp
34. Brew
35. Ornamental box
37. In a way, surfaced
39. Attired
40. Peculation
41. Netted
43. It shows you paid (abbr.)
44. Payroll firm
45. Antidiuretic hormone
47. Japanese classical theater
48. The first two
50. Ancient burial chamber
52. Type of card
54. Expression of sorrow or pity
56. Hectoliter
57. Morning
59. NYC subway dweller
60. Law enforcement
61. Sodium



62. Elevated subway
63. Facility where wild animals are kept
66. Integrated circuit
67. Seaman's tool
70. Drink to
71. Small group

26. Story of one's life
27. Small island in a river
29. A type of bliss
31. Genus of large herons
33. A way to make dry
36. One's grandmother
38. Vocal style
39. Pronunciation mark
41. American Indian chief or leader
42. Insecticide
43. Go bad
46. Capital of Zimbabwe
47. Polish river
49. Cast out
51. People of India and Sri Lanka
53. Cleaning fabrics
54. Very skilled
55. Pouches
58. Restaurant must-have
60. Native Americans from Arizona
64. Remaining after all deductions
65. Fleece
68. Dorm official
69. It cools your home

**CLUES DOWN**

1. Poem
2. Everest is one (abbr.)
3. Olympic legend Jesse
4. Portable tent
5. When you hope to get there
6. Unwavering
7. Back muscle
8. Within
9. Excessive fluid accumulation in tissues
10. Six
11. Involved as a necessary part
12. 2002 Liotta, Patric film
13. Living thing
14. Type of gin
15. Moved around in pursuit of fun
25. Makes light bulbs

**Solution to last week's puzzle**

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

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Courtesy graphic

The South Fork Fire Rescue Facebook page provides tips and tricks for homeowners and people looking for ways to be more fire aware, including ways to protect homes from fire ignition.

## Fire danger continues to be a concern for Southern Colorado

By **LYNDSIE FERRELL**

**SAN LUIS VALLEY** — In light of recent events, the concern for the fire season and current fire danger continues to be a hot topic among local and state emergency agencies. After the fire that spread quickly along the north side of Monte Vista on Wednesday, April 20, local and state agencies took to the newswires and social media to warn people throughout Colorado about current conditions and their concern for wildfires.

The 17-acre blaze left six families without their homes and over 15 structures were burned or completely lost to the flames. Though the investigation continues, law enforcement in charge stated there were no signs of criminal or intentional ignition.

The City of Monte Vista and Rio Grande County signed “Declarations of Disaster” on Thursday, April 21, hoping to bring in additional resources for those affected by the fire.

Days before the fire in Monte Vista, Mineral County and Rio Grande County Emergency Managers Terry Wetherill and Art Wittner spoke about the fire season and what agencies are doing to prepare for it.

Wetherill spoke about the interagency work being done to plan for evacuation in the event of an emergency on Wolf Creek Pass as well as what state and local emergency departments would do to notify dispersed campers and outdoor recreationalists should a fire break out.

Wittner focused on what people can do to help mitigate fire around their homes and what they can do to aid emergency personnel in locating them in the event of a fire.

These two messages remain some

of the most important to remember as the warm, dry season comes to the San Luis Valley.

Another message that bears repeating, according to local officials, is for residents and guests to stay up to date on fire bans and red flag warnings in their areas. Several red flag warnings are issued throughout the springtime in the San Luis Valley, and it is important on those days to refrain from burning in any shape or form. Burn permits are automatically suspended in the event of a red flag warning and are reissued under better weather advisories.

The South Fork Fire Rescue Facebook page is an appropriate source for information. It provides daily fire danger warnings, weather advisories and other pertinent information, and provides tips and tricks for homeowners and people looking for ways to be more fire aware. In the coming days, the page will be featuring ways to protect homes from fire ignition and what homeowners can do to help by cleaning out dead debris.

Another source here in the Valley is the SLV Emergency Facebook page. This page also provides up to date information about coming fire warnings and inclement weather.

It has also been recommended that people with summer homes or homes in the mountains update their information on the reverse 911 service through Everbridge. The reverse 911 allows law enforcement and emergency services to contact people in the area of an emergency and give warnings of events that may be occurring in the area. It is free and open to anyone. For more information or to update information, visit [www.everbridge.com](http://www.everbridge.com).



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Donnie is a happy little Red Heeler mix looking for his forever home. He's great at running around with you or just chilling at home. Donnie is a dominant little guy, so we definitely need him to meet any other dogs in the family. Come by today!

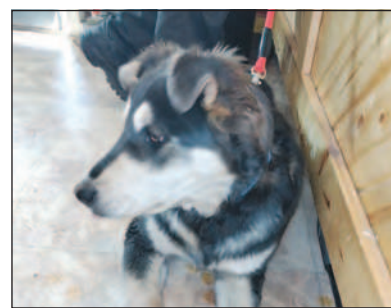


Melly is a Greyhound/Blue nose mix that's full of energy, and love for a new family! She's a selective young lady when it comes to her furry friends so intros are required, but she's totally worth it. Come meet her today!



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**LOOK IMPROVED PRICE! \$88,000** Beautiful 8.01 Acre parcel located in Crow's Nest subdivision in South Fork, CO. Paved roads, city water and sewer with water tap that is currently paid. Wonderful mountain views over looking the Rio Grande River and the town of South Fork. Your perfect location to build your dream home. Moments away from Gold medal fly fishing, hiking, camping, skiing, 4 wheeling, hunting and everything outdoors. Call and schedule your showing today! **MLS #775764**  
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**Under Contract**



**SOLD**

**\$658,000** MLS #785486  
441 Lande • South Fork

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**SOLD**

**LOOK IMPROVED PRICE \$66,900 Seller Motivated!** This Parcel is located in the mountain town of South Fork, Colorado. Located in the majestic San Juan Mountains. You will find a variety of historic motels, hotels, medical clinic, grocery store, repair shops restaurants, shopping for the active sportsman, RV and ATV dealers. The avid golfer will enjoy the play at Rio Grande Golf Club and Resort. The winter sport opportunities are boundless as well. Wolf Creek Ski Area is famous for the most snow in the country and only 20 minutes away. South Fork, Co is a popular destination for skiing and those who love snowmobiling, four wheeling, hiking and camping. Come enjoy this majestic place. **MLS #781184**

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**SOLD**

Custom built, impeccable quality, full log home located just minutes from town of South Fork, Colorado. This home and 1015 sq. ft. bunk house provides a total sq. ft. of 5458. Features in the home include a massive rock fireplace, 3 bedrooms, 3-1/2 bathrooms, loft that boasts a futon plus two-window beds, office, playroom, and a large living room for you to enjoy with family and friends. The wrap around deck will allow you to experience world-class high mountain views. Above the garage is a custom log guest quarters with a spectacular kitchen, bath, large living room, and bedroom combined into one unit. Bear Creek subdivision offers controlled access through a gated entrance. **MLS #738155**  
107 Marmot Lane • South Fork

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Nice area to build with beautiful views! 1+ acres in Alpine Vista. **\$31,500** **MLS#786764**

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810 First Ave. • Monte Vista  
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This long time restaurant and laundry mat are a wonderful investment opportunity! You can either operate the business yourself, or invest and lease it out. Located in the heart of Monte Vista, just off highway 160; the property comes with the land, building, and equipment. Turn key and ready to go! Inquire within! **\$279,000** **MLS#791564**

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Great access with 101 feet of exposure just off of US Highway 160! This property offers multiple options! It would work great for mobile homes, developments, or a commercial building. All utilities are available, but would need to be tapped into. This is the perfect property for your next project! Call to view! **\$175,500** **MLS#789021**

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**123 Acre Greenhouse farm!** South of Monte Vista 48' billboard on gunbarrel! You can build 9 homes on this property with 3 domestic water wells 10,000 sq. feet of greenhouse Solar Water well perfect water Underground water to greenhouses 3 pressure tank system 36'x40' insulated drying building Bedroom, huge safe, Blaze King Ultra Stove 8' Chain Link fence around 2 acres Underground water run to perfect home building site inside fence Ready to build your dream home! **\$549,000** **MLS#792476**

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The historic Stoddard Ranch is a rare mountain property that hasn't been offered for purchase in the last 48 years. It is a tract of fertile meadow land outlined by an upland bench. San Luis Creek flows through the lush fields of native grass for over 1.75 miles. Spring Creek from the West and Decker Creek from the East flow through the property to confluence at San Luis Creek. The waterways have an abundant population of Brook Trout and are natural habitat and water source for many wildlife species. The rare Gunnison Sage Grouse along with bird species such as Mallard Ducks, Canadian Geese, Red Tailed Hawks are found here. Antelope, Elk, and wiley Coyote are frequent visitors. The mountain ranch located in the headwaters of Colorado's San Luis Valley, is 20 minutes from the bustling town of Salida and the Arkansas River. The ranch has been owned and operated as a working cattle and hay ranch by the same family for the last 48 years. The first private ownership of this ranch was in 1876, the year that Colorado became a state. Deeded water rights were established in 1880. Diversions from Spring Creek, Decker Creek, and San Luis Creek are established through water rights known as the Means #1 which is diverted from Alder Cr., Means #2, Richards #1 and Richards #2. The property is rich with history. Arrowheads, Spearheads and other Native Indian artifacts have been found over the years. A Silver Spur from the Spanish Conquistadors was found in a prairie dog hole. Captain John Gunnison chronicles his journey in 1853 across these lands where he camped and even made note of Sage Grouse that would one day bear his name. There is convenient access to the property from Highway 285 and electric power is nearby. The majestic Collegiate Peaks can be viewed to the North and the beautiful Sangre De Cristo mountain range tower above the ranch to the east. **\$2,800,000** **MLS#790744**

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Perched up on the ridge at the 17th fairway of the Rio Grande Club & Resort, the views are stunning. 1.42 acres give you plenty of options for a building site. Water, sewer, power and phone lines are already to the lot on paved roads. Priced to sell- Don't miss out on this opportunity!! Take a look today. Just minutes from world class skiing, championship golf, gold medal fishing, and 12 million acres of National Forest. **WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? \$75,000** **MLS#791179**

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Kazie Deacon, Associate Broker  
719-850-2827  
810 First Ave. • Monte Vista  
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Beautiful home on 2 acres of land just outside of city limits. This 4 bedroom, 3 bath home offers so many great views of our local farming community and mountains. The home has just recently had the roof, stucco, windows/doors replaced, as well as all bathrooms being remodeled. The magnificent yard is adorned with beautiful trees, and has a sandbox for children to enjoy while you are having summer BBQ's on the back deck. Inside the home There is a fire place in the living room. The large master bed room has a beautiful bathroom with a large walk in shower. The cozy kitchen is a great place to make home cooked meals for your friends and family. Attached to the home is a 2 car garage with a one car detached garage as well. **\$595,000** **MLS#791385**

**Legends Premier Properties**  
Klayton Gosar, Associate Broker  
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810 First Ave. • Monte Vista  
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