

Shorts

Del Norte Food Bank distribution is May 21

DEL NORTE — The Del Norte Food Bank will be open for its regular distribution on Saturday, May 21, from 9 to 11 a.m. The food bank is located in the alley behind the Pioneer United Church at 630 Spruce St. in Del Norte, and is open to people in need of food assistance from Del Norte and South Fork.

For the past several years, Robin Medina has been the trusted director of the Del Norte Food Bank. With seemingly endless energy, she has organized fundraisers, rounded up volunteers to help on distribution day, ordered food, completed all the necessary reporting, and kept the whole operation running efficiently.

The food bank was kept in shipshape condition with Medina at the helm. She did all this work while also working full-time at the Del Norte high-school and coaching the high-school cheerleading team.

When health problems forced Medina to retire from her school career, she continued to be the director of the food bank. Medina is now taking a well-earned break. "We hope that you will join us in thanking Robin for all of her dedication and service to our community. She will be missed," food bank officials stated.

The Del Norte Food Bank
Please see FOOD on Page 6A

CPD conducting traffic operation May 21-22

CENTER — The Center Police Department will be conducting a traffic operation May 21-22.

The operation will be targeting speeders, those without proper registration, insurance, seatbelts and driving under the influence.

This operation is in response to the reckless driving that has been occurring, drunken driving videos that are being posted on social media and a recent fatality.

The Center Police Department will be targeting improper driving due to these events, Chief Dale Meek stated.

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 mvhsirates72@yahoo.com, for more information.

RGNF implementing Stage 1 fire restrictions on May 20

SUBMITTED ARTICLE
MONTE VISTA — The Rio Grande National Forest is implementing Stage 1 fire restrictions effective at 12:01a.m., on Friday, May 20. The persistent drought, and the lack of spring rains have led to the dry conditions that elevate fire danger in the San Luis and Upper Rio Grande Valley's, RGNF officials stated.

"The relentless spring winds have accelerated the snow melt

and drying process this year," said Forest Supervisor Dan Dallas, of the Rio Grande National Forest. "With the increasingly dry conditions, unfavorable long-term forecast, and the beginning of the summer recreation season, we feel this is a prudent decision."

Stage 1 fire restrictions prohibit:

- Igniting, building, maintaining, attending, or using a fire (including fires fueled by charcoal or briquettes) outside of a permanent metal or concrete fire pit or grate

that the Forest Service has installed and maintained at its developed recreation sites (campgrounds and picnic areas). 36 CFR § 261.52(a).

- Smoking, except in an enclosed vehicle or building, a developed recreation site, or while stopped in an area at least three feet in diameter that is barren or cleared of all flammable materials. 36 CFR § 261.52(d).

- Operating a chainsaw without an effective and properly installed USDA- or Society of Automotive

Engineers (SAE)- approved spark arrester, a chemical pressurized fire extinguisher (with a minimum 8 oz. capacity and rating of 2A) kept with the operator, and a round point shovel with an overall length of at least 35 inches readily available for use. 36 CFR § 261.52(j).

- Blasting, welding, or operating acetylene or other torch with open flame without being in a cleared area of at least 10 feet in diameter and keeping a chemical pressurized

Please see FIRE on Page 6A

Center celebrates opening of new wastewater plant

BY MECHEL MEEK

CENTER — The Center community gathered Thursday, May 12, to celebrate the opening of a state-of-the-art wastewater treatment plant with a ribbon cutting and tour of the facility.

This facility has been a long-term project that has finally come to fruition. The facility is not finished, but it will be fully operational soon.

The ribbon cutting was followed by a small lunch and a tour of the facility. This facility, according to officials, is the first of its type here in Colorado, and is using the latest technology to handle the wastewater needs of Center and the surrounding areas.

According to Moe Jones, who is on the Sanitation Board, "We've Got to clean up our environment and this is one great way to do it."

The new facility can handle a greater amount of wastewater while functioning at a more efficient

Please see PLANT on Page 6A



The Center community gathered Thursday, May 12, to celebrate the opening of a state-of-the-art wastewater treatment plant with a ribbon cutting and tour of the facility.

Photo by Mechel Meek



Courtesy photo

Center High School rocks capstone projects

BY KEITH BROCKHURST

CENTER — One of the biggest events in Center this spring was the C-Town Classic and Custom Car Show. Complete with awards, plaques, vendors, food, prizes, and almost 50 cars, this inaugural event was a huge success.

What might be surprising to learn is that this car show had been entirely organized and managed by two juniors at Center High School through the school's capstone program. And while these students created an impressive capstone project, it was just the tip of iceberg of all the incredible projects completed by juniors at Center High School through this year's capstone

program.

Over the course of this school year, 23 juniors at Center High School completed capstone projects that vastly exceeded expectations. These projects require students to go beyond the classroom and draw on their academic experience to initiate philanthropic and real-world projects.

In doing so, the experience teaches life skills in preparing students for success after high school and beyond. While completing a capstone project is now required by the State of Colorado for graduating seniors, the program at Center High is at the forefront of the state initiative.

Please see CAPSTONE on Page 5A

Fourth of July celebrations announced for Center

BY MECHEL MEEK

CENTER — The theme for this year's Fourth of July celebration in Center will be the Old West.

The celebration will be held on July 2, starting at 11 a.m. and continuing to fireworks held at dusk.

According to the Town of Center, "Come join the Town of Center for a Wild Wild West Day

of entertainment."

The festivities will begin with a water parade featuring water guns, and four different bands will be playing throughout the day.

People who wish to become vendors for the event are asked to contact Town Hall and Peggy Martinez will be organizing a Poker Run. To participate in the pokerrun, contact Martinez at 719-850-0725.

SLVREC warns of electricity phone scams

BY MECHEL MEEK

SAGUACHE COUNTY — According to an email from San Luis Valley Rural Electric Cooperative to its customers, several people have been targeted with a phone scam that preys upon fears of electricity being turned off.

SLVREC stated, "A few members have reached out to let us know that they received a scam phone call saying their electricity will be turned off due to non-payment. Please warn elderly friends and family members of these types of scams! When

calling to discuss your account, SLVREC customer service reps will always verify service address, amount due, etc. before asking you to pay through our automated phone system, SmartHub, or at a local bank branch. We will never get payment information from you! If you ever question if a phone call is legit, please call our customer service team."

While the Town of Center has a utility company, residents of Center should also be aware of these types of scams. People can always call Town Hall directly to discuss their bill.

OBITUARIES

Dorothy 'Mickey' Hart Merrell

Dorothy "Mickey" Hart Merrell passed away May 7, 2022, at 97 years old at her daughter's home in Boise, Idaho. She was the oldest of six children to Howard and Dorothy Hart of Monte Vista, Colorado. Mickey was born in Del Norte, Colorado on Aug. 23, 1924.

After living in Denver and having three children with her first husband, Harry H. Kanatzar, Jr. the family moved to Idaho Falls, Idaho. Mickey married Gerald Merrell in 1973 until his death in 2015. During her time in Idaho Falls Mickey was an artist doing fashion illustrations for LeVines and other stores in the area. She was a lifelong artist focusing on landscapes and portraits as well as illustrating two books.

Mickey spent many hours playing bridge where she met good friends. She moved to Boise to live with her daughter and granddaughter in 2020 until her passing.

Preceding her in death were her parents, brothers Ivan Hart, Loyal Hart, Ronnie Hart, and her younger son Douglas Kanatzar. Mickey is survived by her daughter Kathy Kanatzar of Boise, son Steve Kanatzar of Colorado Springs, grandchildren Ashley Morrison, Nick Morrison, Jackie Ripke, Steve Kanatzar, Cameron Kanatzar, eleven great grandchildren, stepson Bill Merrell, stepdaughter-in-law Carol Merrell, and stepdaughter Kay Merrell. She was dearly loved and will be missed, until we are together in heaven.

Services will be at The Vineyard in Boise, Idaho on May 14, 2022, at 10 a.m. followed by inurnment with her younger son Douglas Kanatzar at Cloverdale Cemetery in Boise, Idaho on Monday May 16, 2022, at 11 a.m.

In lieu of flowers please send contributions in Mickey Merrell's

Terry A. Larson

Terry A. Larson, 87, of Creede, Colo., passed away on May 10, 2022, at his home surrounded by his loving family.

Terry was born on March 1, 1935, to Harry and Mary Larson in Creede, Colo. After graduating from Creede High School in 1953, he attended Trinidad State before joining the Navy.

Terry served in the U.S. Navy for 4 years, achieving the rank of AE1, and transitioned into the Air Force. His service moved him and his family across the world, including his favorites in Germany, Bitburg and Hahn Air Force bases. After many years of service in the Air Force, Terry retired with the rank of SMSGT.

During his transition from the Navy to the Air Force, Terry met and married Beverly Jean Foster of Palo Alto, CA. They were married for 66 years. Terry and Beverly had three children: Jeffrey, Curtis, and Linda.

When he retired from the Air Force and moved to Creede, Terry worked at the Bulldog Mine for the Homestake Mining Company as Chief Electrician. He also worked for Mineral Engineering and at the Summitville Mine.

After retiring from all mining operations, Terry pursued many hobbies including rebuilding cars, hunting, tinkering with clocks and antiques. He enjoyed sharing coffee and cookies in his sunroom with his friends, spending time at cabins in Spar, and chopping firewood. He and Beverly would head to Berthoud, Colo., often to spend time with Linda's family.

Terry was predeceased by his father Harry L. Larson, mother Mary L. Larson (Davis), and brother Monte Jay Larson.

Terry is survived by his wife Beverly Jean (Foster), sons Jeffrey (Susanna) and Curtis, daughter Linda

JoAnn Marie Sanz

On May 8, 2022, JoAnn Marie Sanz was called home to be with her Lord and Savior. She received the greatest grace of eternal peace, where there is no sadness or tears.

Her life, memories, smile and her willingness to help others will always be remembered and cherished by her devoted and loving husband, Phil Sanz; her children Monica (Art), Valerie, Phil (Jolene), Eric (Rachel), Annamarie (Damon); her grandchildren Jozette (Ernie), Art Jr. (Monique), Patricio (Amanda), Julian, Briauna, Camden, Nalen, Eric Jr. (Angelina), Sierra (Brady), Dezmond, Savannah, Angel, Ashley, Damon Jr., Ashlyn, Caitlyn, Steven, and Dae'Sanii; her 24 great-grandchildren; her sister Bernice and her brother Frank (Dolores).

She was preceded in death by her

parents Jose Benigno and Anita; her siblings, Phil, Tillie, Samuel, Vicky, Eloisa, Andrew and Bertha; and her spouse, Patricio C. Vigil.

Our mother was a kind, caring and giving person who always put the needs of her family before her own. Our mother was always there for anyone, whether we needed prayer or a shoulder to cry on. She was a woman of strong faith and she instilled in us the importance of family, hard work and doing what is right. Our mother was a true role model whom we will always look up to. Mother, you will always be in our hearts, and we will never forget you. We love you so much. ¡Te quiero mucho mucho! All of God's children say Amen!

Del Norte Services
Rosary: Friday, June 10 at 7 p.m.
Mass: Saturday, June 11 at 10 a.m. at Holy Name of Mary Catholic Church, 645 Pine St., Del Norte, CO 81132

Please see OBITUARY on Page 4A



name to the Art Museum of Eastern Idaho, 300 S. Capital Ave., Idaho Falls, ID 83402.

Arrangements are under the direction of Summers Funeral Home, Ustick Chapel, Meridian, ID 208-898-0642 www.summersfuneral.com.



(Scott Pickert), grandchildren James Terry Pickert - J.T. (Madi) and Preston Pickert, Angela Hamilton, Frank Maze, Charles Maze (Brenda Stone), and Vincent Maze, and numerous great-grandchildren.

In lieu of flowers, please send donations to the Ladies Aid Society of Creede: P.O. Box 126 Creede, Colorado 81130.



Internment: Following the funeral at Del Norte Cemetery, 18844 County Rd 15 Del Norte, CO 81132. Reception to follow.

Flowers may be sent to 440 1st St., Del Norte, CO 81132, with a delivery date of June 10. Food donations/drop-offs can be coordinated by Trini Gonzales, 303-524-5465.

YOUR NIGHT SKY

BY DARLENE DANKO

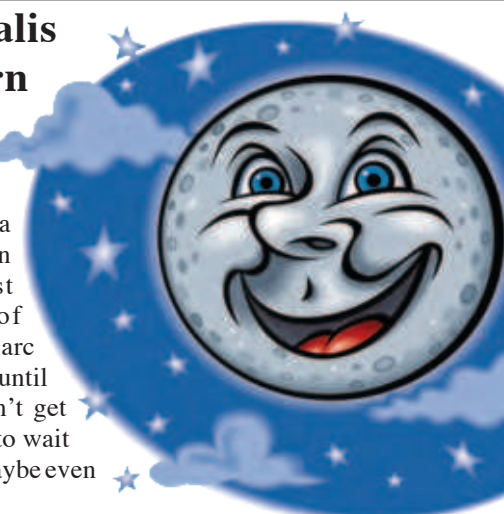
Corona Borealis — the Northern Crown

High in the eastern sky you will find the constellation Corona Borealis, the "Northern Crown". It's an almost perfect semi-circle of stars that will gradually arc across the sky from now until September. The sky doesn't get dark early, so you'll have to wait until at least 9:30 PM, or maybe even a little later.

You'll find it by looking for two of the brightest stars in the sky, Arcturus in Bootes and Vega in Lyra. Arcturus is the bright orange star high in the east. Vega is the bright blue, white star low in the northeastern horizon, to the left of Arcturus. You'll find the Northern Crown between them, but closer to Arcturus. The crown appears on its side with the opening to the left, and the top to the right.

According to Greek legend, Corona Borealis represents the crown that Ariadne, the daughter of King Minos of Crete, wore at her wedding. The brightest star is Alphecca, which shines like a jewel at the tip of the crown.

To see the planets, you will have to get up in the morning before the sky gets bright. I'd say around 4:30. The full moon was on May 16, and now it will start to get a little dimmer. On May 22, it will be in its last quarter and will join Saturn in the morning. So, just look for the moon and Saturn will be just above it.



Also, in the morning Jupiter and Mars will rise together in the east with the moon just to the right of them. So, close to dawn the three will form a compact group in the ESE. When they start to rise higher, Venus will rise just below them in the east. So, have fun looking for the planets!

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OPINION & EDITORIAL

Little Johnny comes calling

As Miss Trixie and I approach our soon to be 11th summer together, we just may have hit the inevitable seven-year itch where people break up.

It seems that she suddenly discovered that Ol' Dutch only has nine toes and she herself is lack-toes-intolerant.

I know. That was a bad joke. I stole it from someone on the Internet, and you get what you pay for. And, in this case, nothing.

The Internet really is a wonderful place where a person can explore places, people and events to his or her heart's content.

There is enough historical writings and videos on there to keep even Ol' Dutch entertained most of the time and that's a lot of information right there, let me tell you what.

Of late I have noticed the huge increase in the number of what is called feel-good stories on there.

You know the type? Stories that people write that are supposed to make the reader feel good at the end with some kind of unbelievable ending to a tragic beginning.

Most, if not all of them, are what has become known as "false news" or what we called "lies" back in the day. It's the same thing as when politicians say they "mis-spoke" instead of saying the truth, "I lied."

The little stories are written in such a way as to draw the reader into some sad little kid's life and either through divine intervention or miraculous happenings, the subject of the story is made rich, happy and or gets a new loving family. You know the type.

Ol' Dutch is not new to this type of contrivance as I used to celebrate Christmas with a niece-in-law who would read the same story about little Billy every year to all of us gathered there. And she would just cry and cry as she read it while we all waited patiently for her to end so we could get to the pumpkin pie and Cool Whip.

Ol' Dutch, a raconteur from way back, has been known to spin a yarn or two. My stories are always about two little children, Little Johnny and Little Suzy, who lived up at Bachelor, Colo., in the old mining days.

I can always elicit a "those poor little children" from my attentive listeners as they buy into the story hook, line, and sinker no matter how many times I tell it or how large I embellish it.

The measure of success, however, to any of these stories whether



Trout Republic
by Kevin Kirkpatrick

online or one you make up yourself is the ending. If you really want your listeners to go away with good vibes you need to be sure and structure said story with a horrible beginning and a wonderful ending and that just is not that hard in the land of, make believe.

A sad lilting voice as you tell it also helps to convince your listeners that you are sincere and can tug at the heart strings like a preacher trying to jerk lost souls from the portals of Hell itself.

And I guess we all were really brought up on such stories with fables like Little Red Riding Hood, Hansel, and Gretel plus the Seven Dwarfs. Or as they are known today, vertically challenged little people who I thought were gnomes anyway. Go figure.

But you get my drift and even our movies are generally written with the same kind of pattern of a slow sad start and a happy ending. This is called "smart" by the movie producers as they want us to go away elated and willing to return to sequels numbering in the many's.

So, we are awash with fake news, fake stories and even fake boobs that I guess are also a happy ending to a sad ending of sorts so there you have it.

And all we can do is go along for the ride as everyone from news outlets, Hollywood writers and even the televangelists see fit to try and somehow reach our inner soul.

Which, if you're looking for Ol' Dutch's soul, is deeper than that nonsense can reach if it's ever found at all.

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.



Parents weigh in while reading remains essential

Across the Street

By JOYCE RANKIN

The Colorado State Board of Education is responsible for setting statewide standards for K-12 students. Local school districts then align curricula to those standards.

As the Social Studies Standards revision committee is active, public comment continues to pour in. Last month the Department of Education received more than 17,000 emails from concerned citizens. When the state board convened in April, they discussed the new input. The Social Studies Standards revision committee recently withdrew references to LGBTQ in K-3rd grade. Parents and community members had expressed that the subject was inappropriate for young children. As soon as the revision was made public, commenters began requesting that the LGBTQ terminology be restored.

At our April board meeting, Chalkbeat, a news organization reporting on educational issues, wrote that "three... Democrats on the State Board were adamant that LGBTQ references remain in K-3." Currently, there are 4 Democrats and 3 Republican members on the board. They will vote at a date to be determined.

Another topic that I reported on last month and the acknowledged most crucial mission of K-12 education is reading proficiency. Only 40% of our third graders are proficient in reading. I've focused on reading since the READ Act passed into law in 2019. The bill requires that all teachers of reading in kindergarten-3rd grade must complete an evidence-based course aligned with the Science of Reading by August 1st, 2022. Teachers must then upload their training certification to the Colorado Department of Education by Aug. 15. Accordingly, when this is complete, the school will be eligible to receive READ Act funding.

I recently highlighted seven school districts in the 3rd Congressional District that have already completed the training. They are South Conejos and Sanford (Conejos County), La Veta (Huerfano County), Dolores (Montezuma County), Ouray (Ouray County), Moffat Schools (Saguache County), and Garfield 16 (Garfield County). Congratulations to our Reading Leaders in the Third Congressional District.



In addition to the K-3 reading teachers in Garfield 16, Superintendent Brad Ray also included the art teacher, physical education teacher, 4th and 5th-grade teachers, and special education teachers. Garfield 16 exhibits strong leadership where reading is fundamental in all classroom instruction.

Other school districts continue to monitor teacher training to ensure that students have the best opportunity to succeed in life. I'm proud to serve and never cease to be amazed by the leadership and effort of teachers and superintendents in the Third Congressional District.

Joyce Rankin sits on the State Board of Education representing the Third Congressional District. Her columns are written to inform constituents in the 29 counties she represents. You can reach her at boardmemberrankin@gmail.com.

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National Parks Service provides tips for water safety

By MECHEL MEEK
SAGUACHE COUNTY — With the summer season coming, it is important to remember to take safety precautions when enjoying the recreational opportunities in the area. There are several actions people can take to safeguard themselves and family when recreating on the area's lakes and rivers. According to the National Park Service (NPS), "Whenever swimming in natural waters, always keep these tips in mind; always wear a life jacket, designate

a 'Water Watcher' to supervise children, inexperienced swimmers, and those who cannot swim, even in lifeguarded areas. Natural water is very different from swimming pools." The NPS goes on to explain the various hazards of natural waterways. First are currents, which can be unpredictable even if there does not appear to be a significant current. Whitewater in rivers, unseen currents, and waves on lakes are some of the dangers to be wary of in our local waterways.

They suggest that all persons wear life jackets, check for safety warnings, and if you are caught in a river current to swim across the current not against it. Strong undercurrents can pull even a strong swimmer under the water, and as such life jackets are the key safety equipment, and you and your family

should always wear a life jacket when on, in, or around water. It is also important to understand that if you are boating and fall in, the waters may be very cold even if it is sunny and warm outside. Cold water can cause hypothermia quickly.

According to the NPS, if you are fishing, swimming, or wading you should always wear a properly fitting life jacket. Do not make the assumption that you have the swimming skills to keep you afloat in the water. Even the most skilled swimmers can drown.

OBITUARY

Charlotte L. Fuchs

Charlotte L. Fuchs, 80, of Del Norte, Colo., went home to be with her Lord and Savior on May 2, 2022. She was born on March 31, 1942, to Joe and Fern (Richardson) McMillan in Twin Falls, Idaho. At the age of 1, the family moved to Walden, Colo., and lived there for 15 years. In 1957, they again moved to South Fork and later Del Norte. Charlotte graduated from Del Norte High School in 1960. After graduation, Charlotte worked for Wilbur Helms at the E-Z Freeze, a popular drive-in for burgers and shakes.



It was here that she met Freddie Fuchs (lovingly called Doozie), the love of her life. They were married on Nov. 6, 1960. They lived on a ranch west of Del Norte when first married and then moved to their home north and west of Center in 1964. Two children were born to this union; a daughter, Julie (Bill) Hume of Rangely, Colo., and a son, Stace (Loni) Fuchs of Del Norte. She was Gram to Michael (Carrie) Sprunger and Nicole (Bryan) Howe. Bryce, Brent, Mary and Zach Fuchs called her Grandmother with a special emphasis on the Grand. When great-grandkids, Stella, Emerson and Barrett came along, she was affectionately named GiGi. She was Step-Grandmother to Denali, Cody, and Macayla Hicks.

infamous jar of honey which earned her the nickname "The Honey Lady". She delighted in serving in this role. Many a visitor left after services feeling just a bit sweeter.

Freddie and Charlotte raised their children while running nearly 2000 head of sheep and growing alfalfa, barley, and potatoes. Charlotte loved helping Freddie with the farm work; no matter if it was working at the sheep shed during lambing season, raising orphan lambs on a bottle, or baling hay. They worked side by side as a family and spent many happy times in the everyday work they were doing.

She loved God with all her heart and all of His creation. She thought each day was a gift from God and she tried to live her life the way she thought He would have her to. She loved the beauty of a sunrise, the majesty of the mountains, and all of the animals. She had a special fondness for the farm animals raising cats, dogs, chickens, ducks, turkeys, geese, peacocks, pigs, and of course, sheep. She had a soft spot for the other little critters who ventured into her world and she befriended baby bunnies, numerous birds and even a fox. Most of these animals were affectionately named and brought her great joy. The most recent gift her and Freddie received was the unexpected arrival of a black tom cat, "Tweedle". It goes without saying that he ruled the roost but he brought them great joy and was a tremendous comfort to her after Freddie went to his heavenly home.

One of Charlotte's favorite things was her yard and flowers. Working together with Freddie, they had a beautiful yard. They spent countless hours getting everything just right and it could have been featured in a magazine.

Charlotte is survived by her sister, Jessie James of Del Norte; children Julie and Stace; six grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; two brothers-in-law and numerous nieces and nephews.

Another favorite past-time was taking pictures. She recorded 60-plus years with her camera. She labelled each one with subject, date and place and they were entered in albums. You could trace her and her family's lifetimes through these photos and her family is thankful for the memories recorded.

She was preceded in death by her parents and beloved husband of 59 years.

Charlotte was baptized while living in Walden as a teenager. She attended the Valley Community Church of God in Center and then later First Baptist Church now known as Gateway Church where she and Freddie were involved in the building of the church. She enjoyed many evening services at Hill Top Baptist (Lonnice and Toni Skinner). At Gateway, she was a greeter and how she loved this job! She greeted everyone with a welcoming smile, hug and the

Charlotte was a very special lady to all who knew her. She was a devoted daughter, wife, beloved mother, sister, grandmother, great-grandmother, aunt and a friend to all she met. She will be greatly missed.

A Celebration of Life Service will be held on May 23, 2022, at 10 a.m. at Gateway Church in Del Norte. There will be a luncheon following the service for anyone wishing to stay. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to Gateway Church to support their Gateway Greeters' Ministry (Charlotte welcomed newcomers and each received a jar of honey on behalf of the church) and to La Puente Home, Inc. in Alamosa. Arrangements in care of Strohmayer's Funeral Home.

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The Key to Having Real Confidence

Do you need more confidence in your life? In this world, we often get the message that we need more self-confidence, but God tells us in His Word that being confident in ourselves is actually a dangerous way to live. Instead, we need to be confident in Him. And as born-again Christians, we have everything in us—through Christ—that we need to do everything we need to do. Philippians 3:3 (AMP) says, "For we [who are born-again...] are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory and take pride and exult in Christ Jesus and place no confidence [in what we have or who we are] in the flesh."

This means our confidence shouldn't come from what we can do in our own effort or strength, who we know, a professional title or what we look like. This is how the world operates, but God doesn't see us that way. God sees our heart!

First Samuel 16:7 (AMP) says, "... For the Lord sees not as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." God is not impressed with our good works, nice clothes, the kind of car we drive, or anything else that has to do with our outward appearance. The only thing that impresses God is a good heart—a heart that sincerely loves Him, that desires to be obedient to Him and that loves people. When our heart is right with God, we have all the confidence we need to be and do everything He has created us to be and do.

Confidence is a belief that you can do a thing; it's faith in God that He has equipped you to do it. When you're confident in who you are in Christ, you can relax, and you won't be caught up or controlled by fear, worry or anxiety. The key to living with this kind of confidence is understanding that apart from Jesus, you can do nothing of eternal value, but you can do all things through Christ

who gives you strength! (See John 15:5; Philippians 4:13.)

I heard someone say once that a Christian with no confidence is like a jumbo jet sitting on the runway with no fuel. In other words, you have all the equipment but no fuel to go anywhere. That's a frustrating way to live!

We desperately need the wisdom of God if we're going to accomplish the things He's planned for us to do. The best thing we can do is be constantly dependent on Jesus. John 15:5 (AMP) says, "I am the Vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in Me and I in him bears much fruit, for [otherwise] apart from Me [that is, cut off from vital union with Me] you can do nothing."

Here's a good illustration to demonstrate what this verse is talking about: A flower is attached to a vine that gives it life. As long as that flower stays connected to the vine, it is connected to its life source. But once it's detached, it can't continue to thrive.

In the same way, we are dependent on Christ to be our source of life. When we accept Him as our Savior and we're born again, He comes to live in us and He gives us life deep within our spirit. We need to really get this because as long as we're "hanging on the Vine," looking to God as our vital necessity, then we will be confident we can do whatever we need to do in life.

Jeremiah 29:13 (AMP) says, "Then [with a deep longing] you will seek Me and require Me [as a vital necessity] and [you will] find Me when you search for Me with all your heart." I love that! And I often pray, "God, I'm nothing without You. I need You. You have to help me or things just won't work right."

God must be our top priority—our vital necessity—every day of our life! There's nothing more important than having a personal relationship with Him, spending time with Him in prayer and studying His Word. If you will keep Him

Moving Up Higher
with
Joyce Meyer



first, then everything else in your life will fall into place and you'll have the wisdom, grace and strength to face every challenging situation that comes against you.

I want to encourage you to remember that being self-confident is foolish. It's rooted in pride and only leads to frustration and dissatisfaction. When you get up each day, before you get busy with your daily responsibilities, take a few minutes to pray.

Tell God, "I need You, Lord. I'm nothing without You, and I know that whatever I do today, it won't work out right if You don't help me. Forgive me of my sins and cleanse me of everything that's not right in me—every thought, word and deed. Help me to treat people right today and to be a blessing everywhere that I go. And help me to never forget that I'm blessed because YOU are good, not because I'm good. Help me to keep You first in my life, Lord. Thank You for helping me. Amen!"

For more on this topic, order Joyce's four-teaching CD series Self-Help. 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 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.

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.

CAPSTONE Continued from Page 1A

This year's projects did a great job of addressing the needs students identified in our community. Seeing a lack of mental health awareness for younger students, two students created comprehensive workshops for 11- to 15-year-olds to address this.

Several students painted murals to spread joy, celebrate local culture, and build community pride. Others undertook creative philanthropic efforts for the elderly, shelter animals, and those experiencing homelessness.

And for a community that never has enough to do, the movie nights, basketball open gyms and tournaments, and car show brought excitement and entertainment to residents of all ages.

However, one of the most successful aspects of Center's capstone program is how each project aligns with the Colorado State standards while matching each student personally.

Kindra Rounds, the Center High School Capstone Facilitator, has been leading and growing this program for years.

"Not only are these capstones acts of service, they let students pursue their passion and provide them with a sense of self-worth and satisfaction," says Rounds.

Under her leadership, the capstone program has grown tremendously each year since its inception in 2018.

"When we started we knew the State mandate had to be met, however the projects we are seeing students complete go above and beyond State requirements and will only continue to get better," Rounds says.

A unique feature of Center's capstone program is that they are done when students are juniors, instead of when they are seniors as is customarily done. A core reason for this is to give students the opportunity to continue working with their project with the support of school resources.

With the help of a REDI grant received by the Town of Center, a RISE grant received by the school, and additional support, students at Center High School have the opportunity to receive stipends, training, and more to expand their projects.

For example, the two students putting on mental health workshops have already received a grant to bring their workshops to the children at the local Center Viking Youth Club.

Similarly, a student who provided instruction to youth on skateboarding for his capstone is going to continue to be hired over the summer for his work.

Now, fast-forward to May 4 at the RISE Student Expo held at Adam's State University. While there were seven San Luis Valley school districts



in attendance, many of the projects from Center were major highlights.

Center students won awards for Best Overall Project, Most Out-Of-The-Box Project, Most Caring Project, Most Creative Presentation, Most Detailed and Organized Project, and several more. And while the awards are great, they do not do justice to all the work these students put in and all they learned.

Many students learned to craft professional letters and communicate with leadership at partner organizations.

Others learned how to effectively plan, organize, and promote a public event. Others learned how to manage failures, mistakes, and the realities of working with others to achieve real-world outcomes. And they all got practice and feedback presenting and telling their stories.

"These students should be so proud of what they accomplished. I know I am," says Rounds.

Center's capstone projects were tremendously successful this

year. And they stand poised for improvement into the future. With capstone programs just getting started in schools around the state, they should consider looking toward Center as a model of success.

"It was an amazing experience and we are already making improvements for next year," stated Rounds. "I can't wait to see what these students will accomplish in the future."

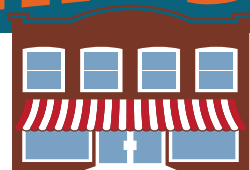


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Photos by Mechel Meek

People toured Center's new wastewater treatment plant on May 12.

Inset: The Center wastewater treatment plant project was made possible through numerous grants by the USDA, DOLA and other entities.



PLANT

Continued from Page 1A

level. This new facility comes as the addition of the North 90 acreage will be adding homes and businesses wastewater that will need treatment, as well as any future expansion in the town.

The ambitious \$11.791 million project was made possible through numerous grants by the USDA, DOLA and other entities.

The facility will be run by Town of Center employees when it is completed and is an example of what can be accomplished through the considerate and careful use of grant funding in rural communities, officials stated.

FIRE

Continued from Page 1A

fire extinguisher (with a minimum 8 oz. capacity and rating of 2A) with the operator. 36 CFR § 261.52(i).

• Using an explosive. This includes but is not limited to fuses, blasting caps, fireworks, rockets, exploding targets, tracers, and incendiary ammunition. 36 CFR § 261.52(b).

As a reminder, the use of explosives and incendiary devices, including fireworks, are always prohibited on all federal lands.

Fire restrictions will be in place until further notice. In addition to criminal penalties, those found responsible for starting wildfires may also face restitution costs of suppressing the fire.

The San Luis Valley Field Office is also in Stage 1 fire restrictions on Bureau of Land Management lands in six San Luis Valley counties. For more information about BLM Colorado Fire restrictions visit BLM Colorado Fire Restrictions.

FOOD

Continued from Page 1A

continues to serve Del Norte and South Fork. Any donations received are appreciated and will help us to continue Medina's vision of helping these communities with their food needs. If you would like to make a donation to the Del Norte Food Bank, checks may be sent to the Del Norte Food Bank, P.O. Box 72, Del Norte, CO 81132.

SAGUACHE COUNTY SHERIFF'S REPORT

SAGUACHE COUNTY — The following information was provided by the Saguache County Sheriff's Office for the period between Monday, May 9, 2022, and Sunday, May 15, 2022.

controlled burns, three fires (other), provided information six times, one noise complaint, one search and rescue call, and assisted nearby agencies once.

ARRESTS
• A 38-year-old Moffat woman was arrested on an outstanding warrant.

• A 25-year-old Littleton woman was arrested on outstanding warrant.

• A 33-year-old Burly, Idaho, man was arrested for parole violation.

• A 51-year-old Mosca man was arrested on third-degree assault charges.

• A 47-year-old Alamosa woman was arrested on third-degree assault and domestic violence summons and complaint charges.

• A 21-year-old Center man was arrested failure to comply charges.

Date of Notice: May 4, 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 June 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 Total Volumetric</u>	<u>Proposed Rates¹ Total Volumetric</u>	<u>Percentage Change</u>
North Colorado*			
Residential	\$0.94725	\$1.27312	34%
Small Commercial, Commercial	0.82040	1.14627	40%
Irrigation	0.73618	1.06205	44%
Transportation	0.15568	0.15700	1%

	<u>Average Monthly Bill</u>	<u>Projected Average Monthly Bill</u>	<u>Percentage Change</u>
North Colorado*			
Residential	\$71.03	\$91.23	28%
Small Commercial, Commercial	340.93	464.44	36%
Irrigation	291.93	400.77	37%

	<u>Prior Year's Peak Month Bill</u>	<u>Projected Peak Month Bill</u>	<u>Percentage Change</u>
North Colorado*			
Residential	\$135.44	\$177.81	31%
Small Commercial, Commercial	669.91	924.09	38%
Irrigation	1,459.57	1,861.05	28%

*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
Colorado-Kansas Division
By: Kathleen R. Ocanas
Vice President, Rates & Regulatory

National EMS Week

May 15 - 21, 2022



Thank you to these individuals for their hard work & dedication!

South Fork Fire and Rescue

- Tyler Off - Chief
- Tyler Schmidt - Captain
- Michael Filippi - 1st Lieutenant
- Tyler Hathorn - 2nd Lieutenant
- Brittany Off
- Lucas Slade
- Michael Dickey
- Andy Dickey
- Shannon Goldsberry
- Nate Goldsberry
- Woody Wilson
- Melanie Dickey
- Linette Schmidt
- Jed Pilant
- Mark Worle
- Ben Webster
- Aimee Blackmon
- Josh Brophy
- Brantlee Webster
- Scott Hobbs
- Amanda Hobbs
- JC Hart
- Bob Chastain
- Steve Delaney
- Curtis Mclain
- Matt Huber
- Brittany Hathorn

- Amy Wetherill EMT
- Kim Kosciusko EMT

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- Sherri Vigil
- Kathy Christenson
- Crew Members
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- Jackie Martinez
- Sandi Martinez
- Tanya White
- Stephanie Giebeig
- Dylan White
- Victoria Sisneros
- Shannon Ural
- Arlene Miller
- Juan Durado
- Sara Loggin
- Michael Abeyta
- Stacey Kiesel
- Maria Quezada
- Lauri Knowlton
- Medical Director
- Dr. Grant Hurley

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- Steven Simpson EMT-I
- Jon Montano EMT-I
- Don Watson FF/EMT-BIV
- Emily Esquibel EMT-I
- Jim Lancaster Paramedic
- Betsey Strawn Paramedic
- Emily Logan EMT-BIV
- Molly Hart EMT-BIV
- Kendra Sears EMT-BIV
- MVCA Board Members
- Eric Kimberling
- Carolyn David
- Judy Kuske
- Sandra Varner
- Curtis Crawford, DVM
- Medical Director
- Dr. Grant Hurley

- Lt. Ryan Koehn EMT-IV
- Lt. Jason Ensz
- Lt. Tristan Hostetler
- Medical Advisor Dr. Pat Thompson
- Dale Bartee
- Javier Urbina
- Erin Yost
- Alex Enriquez
- Ruben Rendon
- Cody Loewen
- Erika Wickham EMT-IV
- Jaden Yost
- Jaylon Koehn
- Miguel Macias
- Ryan Holland
- Junior Gardea
- Zyra Gomez
- Joe Villanueva Delsa Chavez
- Darwin Ensz EMT-IV
- Travis Paskett
- Sheila Paskett AEMT
- Wyatt Simmons
- Francis Song PAR
- David Macias

Alamosa

- Darrick Garcia Paramedic/RN
- Jason McGinnis Paramedic
- Kim Jordan Paramedic
- Kyle Crawford Paramedic
- Shannon Uran Paramedic
- Mike Valdez Paramedic
- Adam Daniels Paramedic
- Nelson Vialpando Paramedic
- Teyler Hurst Paramedic
- Craig Worth EMT-BIV
- Brandon Sowards EMT-I
- Reyna Martinez EMT-BIV
- Bob Cook Paramedic/CC
- Caitlyn Morgan EMT-I
- Erika Wickham EMT-BIV
- Taylor Capuzzi EMT-BIV
- Ashliegh Taylor EMT-I
- Colin Brown Paramedic
- Ryan Daugherty Paramedic/CC

Conejos County EMS

- Donna Nelson Med. Director
- Ernest Abeyta Director/CCP
- Brent Place Med Crew Lead/CCP
- Sara Loggin CCP
- Amanda Abeyta Paramedic
- Lauri Knowlton EMT B IV
- Natalie Watters EMT B IV
- Josh L. Herrera EMT B IV
- Michael Abeyta EMT B IV
- Victoria Sisneros EMT-I
- Dylan White EMT B IV
- Juan Palomarez EMT B IV
- Ashliegh Taylor EMT-I
- Maria Quezada EMT B IV
- Brandon Sowards EMT-I
- TJ Salazar CFRN/EMT B IV
- Kory Russel Paramedic
- Debra King Operations/Billing Office

Monte Vista Community Ambulance

- Andrue Valdez FF/Paramedic
- Gary Haverfield EMT-BIV
- Deb Haverfield License Paramedic
- Valarie Maestas EMT-I
- Juan Palomarez FF/EMT-BIV
- Evan Lopez FF/EMT-BIV
- Kenia Hostetler EMT-BIV
- Jamie Black EMT-BIV
- Carlos Lopez EMT-BIV
- Arlyn Oakes EMT- I
- Katie Tooley EMT-BIV
- Rafelita Atencio EMT-BIV
- Ellie Lancaster Paramedic

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- Asst. Chief Tim Ruggles EMT-IV
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Special prosecutor takes over Willett case

'Time is of the essence'

BY PRISCILLA WAGGONER
ALAMOSA — Former 12th Judicial District Attorney Robert Willett appeared in the court of Chief District Judge Michael Gonzales on Wednesday, May 11, related to charges of alleged embezzlement filed by current 12th Judicial District Attorney Alonzo Payne.

Willett appeared with his defense counsel, Joseph Maher.

Special prosecutor Henry Solano appeared for the state. Solano is the District Attorney for the Third Judicial District.

In the proceedings, Judge Gonzales reminded the court that Payne had indicated in the last hearing on April 12 that he intended to file a motion to appoint a special prosecutor. However, based on Gonzales' description of events, that motion to appoint did not get filed in a timely manner, prompting defense counsel to file a motion for the dismissal of DA Payne's charge against Willett.

According to Gonzales, the motion to appoint a special prosecutor was ultimately filed, and Solano was appointed to that role the day before court convened on Wednesday.

Given that defense counsel's motion to dismiss was based upon a non-appointment of a special prosecutor and, as of Wednesday, a special prosecutor had been appointed, Gonzales said he was going to deny defense counsel's motion to dismiss the charge.

Gonzales then asked special prosecutor Solano if he had anything to say in response to the decision to decline the motion to dismiss. Solano indicated that no, it would be faster to not dismiss the charges and keep him on as special prosecutor instead of the time it would take to refile the charge against Willett and start the process over.

"Then I am denying that motion to dismiss," Gonzales said, quickly clarifying, "based upon the non-appointment of a special prosecutor."

Gonzales bound the case over from county court to district court, where he will preside, as well. Maher indicted that Willett will plead not guilty.

In setting the date for the next court appearance, Maher requested a date in the first part of June, adding that he thinks "we can move through this pretty quickly."

Solano said he had spoken to Maher and understands that "time is of the essence." He also informed the court that he would be prosecuting the case instead of giving it to one of his deputy DAs.

The desire to move through the case in a timely manner is tied to events that happened before the charge was filed by Payne.

Following an appointment by Governor Jared Polis, Willett was the former District Attorney for the 12th Judicial District. Payne challenged him in the Democratic Primary in 2020 and, in what is described by some as a "surprise upset", received the party's nomination. As there was no Republican running, Payne was elected to office by the primary process.

Since being in office, multiple complaints have been filed against the district attorney and his office for violating the Victim Rights Act (VRA). At least four of those complaints have been confirmed by the Special Advisory Board charged with investigating VRA complaints, resulting in Payne being the subject of an investigation by the Attorney General's office for substantiated violations.

These complaints, plus allegations of failing to prosecute felony cases and "incompetence in fulfilling his duties", led to Payne being the subject of a current, intensive recall campaign organized by the Alamosa City Council with the public support of numerous other elected officials and organizations in the San Luis Valley.

Willett, who is now a deputy district attorney with the Fourth Judicial District, has indicated he is interested in running for district attorney of the 12th Judicial should the recall be successful.

Payne's allegation of embezzlement is related to actions Payne alleges the former district attorney took while in his last days of office. No specifics in the case other than a date and description of the statute are contained in the arresting documents maintained and made available to the public by the court.

Although the alleged offense is described by Payne as taking place in December of 2020, Payne did not file the charge until March of 2022, a day after Alamosa City Council passed an ordinance allowing the city to allocate \$10,000 of city funds to organizing the campaign to recall Payne.

After approval by the Secretary of State (SOS) of their petition to recall Payne, which was granted in the first part of April, the city has,

by law, 60 days to collect 4,000 signatures on petitions.

As of Thursday, 3,395 signatures had been collected.

Payne has potential legal troubles of his own as, on Friday, May 13, he was scheduled to appear in court related to a Contempt of Court citation issued by District Judge Amanda Hopkins related to failure to meet deadlines she set in her court as well as questions about potential violations of the Victim

Rights Act in a domestic violence case Payne dismissed.

That case is being prosecuted by Nancy Lake, county attorney for Rio Grande County. She has indicated that she is seeking a Punitive Contempt of Court ruling. If she is successful, that could potentially result in a six-month sentence for Payne in the county jail.

The date for Willett's next hearing is set for June 1 at 10 a.m.



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Sargent Character Counts! Essay and Artwork winners



Courtesy photo

Winners of the Character Counts! Essay and Artwork Contest from Rio Grande County were from Sargent Elementary. Macie Jones, left, was first, Zoey Barlow, middle, was second and Janessa Garcia, right, was third. Jones also placed third at the state level. National Family and Community Education (FCE) each year sponsors a literacy project called Essay and Artwork Contest. The idea is to encourage students to strive for excellence and creativity in reading, writing, and drawing skills. The National FCE contest Character Counts! follows one of the Six Pillars of Character. This year fairness was the emphasis for the essay. All fourth-grade students in public, private, and home schools were eligible to participate. The competition started at the county level. That winner goes on to be judged at the state level. The state winner then competes at the national level. The monetary awards for the local winners were donated by District V of the Colorado FCE and Friday Morning Club, one of the three clubs in the San Luis Valley.

Three areas identified as significant issues, needs in SLV Health Community Needs Assessment

By PRISCILLA WAGGONER

ALAMOSA — Substance abuse. Mental Health. Chronic illness.

Those were the top three issues facing communities and top three needs in health care services for people living in the San Luis Valley, according to data collected, analyzed and presented to a group of 40-50 people last week.

Emily Santich, who works for the Colorado Health Institute (CHI), shared the information during the third part of a Community Health Needs Assessment (CNHA) conducted by San Luis Valley Health with the assistance of CHI.

The assessment is required of all non-profit hospitals by the Affordable Care Act, must be conducted every three years. This is SLV Health's fourth such assessment, with the first conducted in 2013.

The assessment process initially kicked off with a gathering in early April where SLV Health managers and executive staff joined representatives of local agencies and service providers, health care and social service professionals, leaders with



Photo by Donna Wehe, Director of Communications, SLV Health

Community members and partners gather together for the first step in the three-part Community Health Needs Assessment conducted by San Luis Valley Health.

the city and county plus other civic leaders and advocates to discuss the broad topic of community health.

That meeting was followed with a written survey sent out to the community asking the same questions. How would people rate the San Luis Valley in terms of personal health? What are the top issues facing communities in the Valley? What are the greatest needs? There were also more service delivery related

questions, such as how easy is it to get an appointment; how easy is it to access needed services, such as dental services, behavioral or mental health care or specialty care; and what is the greatest barrier to receiving care.

The third part of the three-part assessment was conducted last week when the results of both the meeting and survey were shared.

Please see NEEDS on Page 3

Fire restrictions explained

Land, Water and People

BY GREGG GOODLAND

I've been seeing the smoke column from the large wildfire in New Mexico for several days. Unfortunately, the area is experiencing nearly unprecedented dryness and it appears that the fires there will be burning for quite some time. One hundred plus miles to the north of the nation's largest wildfire, it is also fairly dry here in the San Luis Valley and our surrounding mountains. Regardless of the fact that we are experiencing less drastic conditions than those south of us, the Rio Grande National Forest announced the initiation of Stage I fire restrictions on Friday, May 13. The intent of all fire restrictions, or "fire bans" as they're commonly called, is to prevent unwanted wildfires as a result of either carelessness or actions by people that didn't know of the fire risk and potential consequences. And the consequences can be high. The bottom line is that a "forest order" or special law is in effect and the intent is clear; be careful with activities that are known to start fires.

Navigating fire restrictions from the various agencies and governmental jurisdictions can be confusing for the public. I've worked diligently throughout my career to help coordinate the prohibitions that all of these organizations enact when it comes to fire restrictions. We've come a long way in the past

20 years, and now we find that, primarily, the only differences we see in the laws are attributed to variances that may not apply in each jurisdiction. To find information about fire restriction on a statewide basis, I invite you to visit the Fire Bans & Danger page hosted by the Colorado Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management: <http://www.coemergency.com/p/fire-bans-danger.html>. Let's take a closer look at what the various stages of fire restriction mean as they apply to the Rio Grande National Forest.

Stage I fire restrictions recognize that conditions are favorable for human caused fires to spread quickly out of control. There are several high-risk activities that are known to cause wildfires. Campfires in undeveloped areas are the most common problem faced on many public lands that allow fires. Users sometimes choose to not attend them or not properly extinguish them, allowing weather and adjacent fuels to influence the fire's ability to escape. And escape they do. Despite the high awareness of wildfires, we've experienced an increasing number of campfire-caused wildfires nationally. Restricting this activity regardless of who is being careful or not, is the best tactic to address the problem. It is ok to use gas or propane fueled stoves

to cook with.

Other activities that are prohibited under Stage I fire restrictions include smoking in hazardous areas, using a chainsaw without a functioning spark arrestor, and using welding, cutting or blasting tools in hazardous areas. Many people tell me that these activities are just so obvious that we shouldn't have to mention them, but we continually see these high-risk activities during times, and in locations where fires could easily spread out of control. Thus, the restrictions. And then the conditions get worse.

We enter Stage II fire restrictions when the risk of having campfires in those controlled developed sites becomes more dangerous. Should a fire escape the confines of the constructed fire ring, the risk to human lives is much greater since there are more people in a concentrated area. The risk of damage to the facilities and landscape is also higher. So, no more fires are allowed in these sites. We'll also restrict the use of any internal combustion engines without spark arrestors and vehicle

parking to areas clear of all vegetation. Yes, vehicles regularly start fires too. You still can cook with stoves that have a shut-off valve to the fuel source.

Finally, we have a Stage III fire restriction that would be the full closure of the National Forest. As of this writing, the Carson National Forest in New Mexico is moving to this extreme strategy. I don't even want to think about when we might have to consider that for the Rio Grande. But here we are, going into Stage I fire restrictions and, I suspect, we'll have the need to elevate them to Stage II in the future. As a resident of this fine area we call home, I'm pleading with you all to be very careful when conducting outside activities that could start a wildfire. It's a long time until the monsoon. If we all do our part, we'll make it there without a human caused wildfire.

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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Staying socially active after 50 can benefit the brain and even reduce a person's risk of dementia.

Memory loss is not an automatic side effect of aging

No one, regardless of age, is immune to random bouts of memory loss. While misplaced car keys or forgetting items on your grocery list are nothing to get worked up over, many men and women over 50 do start to worry about memory lapses, especially when they start to occur with more frequency than they might have just a few years ago. But while memory loss might be quickly associated with aging, increased forgetfulness is not an inevitable side effect of getting older, a fact that those at or approaching retirement age should find comforting.

When considering the relationship between memory and aging, it's important that men and women recognize the distinction between memory lapses and dementia, as the two are not one and the same. As a person ages, his or her hippocampus, the region of the brain involved in the formation and retrieval of memories, often deteriorates. This can affect how long it takes to learn and recall information. But just because this process is slower does not mean it's a warning sign of dementia, which is the loss of certain mental functions, including memory. Though taking longer to recall information can be frustrating, many people still retain their ability to recall information. In addition, while dementia brought on by conditions such as Alzheimer's disease or Parkinson's disease is untreatable, there are things men and women can do to strengthen their memories and reduce their momentary lapses in memory.

* Start playing games. Games that test the mind have long been believed to benefit the brain, though some remain skeptical about the true impact of brain games. However, a University of Iowa study funded by the National Institute on Aging found that brain games may in fact pay numerous and long-term dividends. In the study, 681 healthy volunteers over the age of 40 were divided into four groups. One group played computerized crossword puzzles, and three other groups played a brain training video game from Posit

Science designed specifically to enhance the speed and accuracy of visual processing. The volunteers showed less decline in visual processing as well as in other tests that measured concentration, memory and the ability to shift quickly between tasks, and the benefits from the training games lasted as long as seven years after training. Brain games are now more accessible than ever before, as players can access such games on their smartphones, tablets, ereaders, and computers. And in addition to being effective, the games also provide entertainment value.

* Alter your routine. Many working professionals recognize that each day tends to have its mundane moments. The brain can grow accustomed to these moments, which tend to be a routine part of the day. But altering your daily routine can jar the brain awake, forcing it to focus during those times that had become mundane but now present new challenges. Something as simple as alternating driving routes to work from day to day or preparing some new, yet healthy, breakfast each morning can help the brain stay alert and sharp.

* Become a social butterfly. Maintaining a social life as you age is a great way to keep in touch with friends and family. But there's another reason to continue to be socially engaged. A 2008 study spearheaded by the

clinical trials administrative director at Southern California Kaiser Permanente Medical Group and published in the American Journal of Public Health found that older women who maintained large social networks were 26 percent less likely to develop dementia than women with smaller social networks. In addition, those who had daily contact with friends and family cut their risk of dementia by nearly half. The study also noted that regular social interaction can delay or possibly even prevent cognitive impairment.

* Continue your career. While the idea of retiring poolside and watching the world go by might seem nice, such a scenario is not necessarily good for your brain. Numerous studies have shown the benefits that staying engaged in professional activities can have on brain health. The brain does not thrive if it's sitting on the sideline. Staying active in your career will continue to provide the challenges your brain needs to stay sharp and avoid memory loss and struggles with concentration. Men and women who want to leave office life behind can branch out on their own and work as consultants or put their years of experience to use by teaching at a nearby university or secondary school. But heading off for the hammock once you have hung up your briefcase can prove troublesome for your brain.



Courtesy photo

Although some seniors dread the conversation about leaving home and moving to a retirement community, there are many advantages, including improved safety, transportation and the chance to make new friends.

When is the right time to leave 'home'?

Few people like to admit their age is affecting them. However, as we age, certain abilities become compromised, and it may no longer be practical for aging men and women to remain in their homes, or at least live there alone.

Comfortable living alone may be a signal to an older adult that he or she still has independence. Taking away a license or suggesting a move may cause feelings of animosity. But at some point in time, friends or family members of an aging man or woman might need to broach the topic of moving to an assisted living facility. Such a discussion can be difficult, but having some evidence that a change is necessary may make the news easier to process. Sometimes the older adult may have already made the decision that a move is necessary, which will make the process even easier.

Moving should never be a knee-jerk reaction unless there is a sudden medical emergency that necessitates fast action. Under normal circumstances, moving should be a gradual process that begins even before a parent, grandparent or other relative really needs to change residences. Here are some steps to keep in mind.

* Make sure to develop a strong relationship with your loved one. This relationship should be consistent and keep you in frequent contact so

you can best assess his or her living situation.

• Talk things over with other siblings or relatives to see if others feel the same way you do. Perhaps they have a different point of view.

• If there are problems at home, make your case by pointing them out. Show the elder adult how day-to-day life has grown more difficult and how certain burdens may be lifted by changing living situations.

• Indicate that access to health care and a safe environment are some of the key benefits of moving to a senior community. Point out other benefits, such as companionship with similarly aged people, activities, transportation, and the presence of a maintenance staff to ensure nothing falls into disrepair.

• Do your research and have the names and amenities of different residences available to discuss. Request brochures from senior communities and offer to make trips to view the homes together with your senior relative.

• If the idea of a "home" is not what your loved one has in mind, discuss the options of moving in with a relative and if this would be a more comfortable situation.

Not every senior needs to leave home, but the topic should be broached if assistance with day-to-day activities is needed.

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NEEDS

Continued from Page 1

Of those who responded to the survey, 77% said that substance abuse (both legal and illegal substances) was the greatest issue facing communities in the valley and 60% identified behavioral and mental health as the greatest issue. 59% of respondents said that chronic illnesses (obesity, diabetes, heart disease) presented the greatest issues with suicide ranking fourth.

Substance abuse and behavioral and mental health concerns were also reflected as the greatest needs facing communities along with issues related to childcare and social services such as housing and food security.

The areas that surfaced as significant are not new to SLV Health as previous assessments have revealed similar concerns, but results from previous assessments indicated advancement.

"We were making progress," said Donna Wehe, Director of Communications with SLV Health, "but then the pandemic hit, and we've seen these areas re-emerge as significant concerns."

The progress Wehe refers to was reflected in information shared by Chris Hettinger-Hunt, Chief of Operations with SLV Health, who reviewed with the group what progress had been made in the past three years to meet areas previously defined as top priorities.

Since 2019, SLV Health has made deliberate efforts to integrate both mental health services and substance abuse services into their clinic and hospital operations. With the implementation of the "Zero Suicide Initiative", there has been significant staff training to increase general awareness around statements that may signal a response. In terms of substance abuse, SLV Health is now offering medicated assisted treatment-focused care coordination.

Even though SLV Health is largely considered to be the hub of health care delivery in the Valley, ongoing and long-term treatment for mental health and substance abuse issues falls more within the scope of other service providers in the San Luis Valley.

Toward that end, Hettinger-Hunt discussed how SLV Health has focused on growing their collaboration with both community partners in the Valley while also developing new and existing relationships with service providers outside of the valley, especially those providers who offer inpatient care and treatment.

Other progress included areas that, while not specifically listed as priorities in this most recent assessment, support the overall efficacy of health care operations serving patients.

Hettinger-Hunt mentioned the ability to transport patients via helicopter with a helipad now located on hospital property; extensive outreach during the pandemic with triage, information hotlines, testing and vaccine clinics; increased education on chronic illness management plus focused efforts on healthy eating and access to healthy foods; more than a half million dollars devoted to (as the largest employer in the valley) salaries of hospital employees as well as opportunities for additional training to lead toward potential career advancement; and a visible, ongoing effort at strong care coordination for patients and primary care providers plus those receiving services from specialists.

One concern was brought up by a participant related to inadequate access to "culturally competent care,"

including Spanish speaking medical and mental health professionals. That need was both recognized and echoed by CEO Konnie Martin who said providers had acknowledged the same challenge.

"We share in that struggle," Martin said, "and share in the goal to make that more available to the community."

In looking at the whole picture, Santich saw a congruence to what the data revealed, suggesting the assessment had highlighted areas

that were both valid and relevant.

That sense was also reflected in comments from those individuals in attendance, including executive staff with the city who confirmed they had seen the same issues raised among their employees.

Community member Matias Francisco Matias added that the impact of the pandemic and current financial stressors experienced by many may also contribute to mental and behavioral health issues re-emerging as a widespread concern.

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and District Board Members as a contract employee. The position is responsible for monthly accounting work and financial statement preparation, compliance with Colorado Sunshine Law, attendance at monthly meetings, preparation of agenda, meeting minutes, budgets and other administrative duties as required. The successful candidate must be able to work independently, using sound judgement in making decisions and maintaining confidentiality. High School diploma or equivalent and experience in governmental or special district accounting and bookkeeping is required. The ability to use QuickBooks, Excel, MSWord, the internet as well as the willingness to learn programs provided by the State for reporting and requesting funds is required. The applicant must provide an office area and necessary office equipment including computer with access to internet and e-mail. Compensation will be determined by experience and qualifications. To apply send a letter of interest and resume including 3 references to PO Box 556, Saguache, CO. 81149. Drug testing and Background checks will be completed on final applicants. Position will be open until filled. EOE. (6/8)

Instructional coach needed at Del Norte Jr/Sr High School. Candidate should be proficient in all areas of teaching and learning with an emphasis on professional practice and the teaching and learning cycle. The coach will be responsible for consulting with and supporting the instructional teaching staff in using resources that impact student learning. The coach will provide support and professional learning to instructional staff needed. Applicants must have a bachelor's degree or higher and possess or be able to obtain a Colorado Teaching License. Please submit your application, resume and cover letter to: David Grabowski, Principal at dgrabowski@urtigers.co or contact David at 719-657-4020. Applications can be picked up at the District Office or online at: urtigers.co.(5/25)

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

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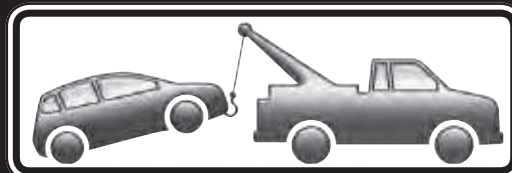
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The Del Norte High School Athletic Department is currently seeking High School football assistant coaches for the 2022 football season. Applicants must be able to meet all CHSAA and District certification requirements for coaching. If you are interested or have any questions, please email [Richie Madrid](mailto:RichieMadrid@urtigers.co), Athletic Director (rmadrid@urtigers.co) or Coach Henry Castillo (lcastillo@urtigers.co). (5/18)

Driveline is Hiring in our area. For more Information visit www.drivelinetail.com (6/25)

Bowen Community Church of Monte Vista, CO, is seeking a ¼ time Pastor. This Independent Christian Church seeks a Pastor to provide scripturally-based sermons, and other pastoral duties as time allows. For complete job description/application email: forage1@gojade.org. or call 719-580-2562 (6/8)

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17 Real Estate For Sale

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23 Lawn and Garden
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32 Fuel & Heating
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36 Miscellaneous
For Sale-Complete Welding Outfit Lincoln Eagle 10,000+ with Torch set. All on Trailer. 719-376-2596 (5/11)

Dining Room Furniture by American Drew, Large table 74X45 6 (padded chairs) with 2 14" leaves 2- piece hutch with beveled glass door 82" Tall x 60" wide doors. Show room condition call (719)580 4400. (5/11)

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CLUES ACROSS

1. Requests
5. Calendar month
8. Invests in little enterprises
12. Bird sound
14. S. American plant cultivated for tubers
15. Car
16. Bullfighter
18. Hill (Celtic)
19. Strong criticism
20. Detector
21. When you hope to get there
22. Having the skill to do something
23. Legendary MLB broadcaster
26. Vulcanite
30. C. Asian mountain range
31. In a way, healed
32. Midway between east and southeast
33. Small appendages of insects
34. ___ Greene, "Bonanza" actor
39. A place to bathe
42. Postal worker accessory
44. Classical music
46. A way of wrecking
47. Terminator
49. You eat three a day
50. Pointed end of a pen
51. NATO official (abbr.)
56. Genus of clams
57. Boxing's "G.O.A.T."
58. A colorless, odorless gas used as fuel

Solution to last week's puzzle

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

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11		
12				13					15					
16					17		18			19				
20							21			22				
				23		24			25					
26	27	28	29					30						
31								32						
33									34	35	36	37	38	
				39	40	41		42	43					
			44	45				46						
	47						48							
49					50				51		52	53	54	55
56					57				58					
59					60					61				
62					63						64			

59. Covered thinly with gold paint
60. Bachelor of Laws
61. Red fluorescent dye
62. Engineering group
63. Female sibling
64. Adjacent

CLUES DOWN

1. What a thespian does
2. Footwear
3. Adjust spacing between
4. Witnesses
5. Who shows excessive fondness
6. Distinct form of a plant
7. National capital
8. Hunting expedition
9. Related to medulla oblongata
10. European country
11. Cola
13. Excluded from use or mention
17. Speak
24. Bloodshot

25. Make better
26. Keyboard key
27. Type of degree
28. Paddle
29. Peacock network
35. Not young
36. Baseball stat
37. One's grandmother
38. Breakfast food
40. Bathroom features
41. Disease-causing bacterium
42. NY ballplayer
43. Got up
44. Prophet
45. Part of the mouth
47. Unnatural
48. Acronym for brain science study
49. Three are famous
52. Languages spoken in Patagonia
53. Freedom from difficulty
54. Widely used OS
55. Many people pay it

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38 Machinery, Tools, Equipment

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43 Farm Products

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51 Boats and Equipment

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65 Professional Services

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Charming country home and ranch! This 3 bedroom, 2 bath home is located on about 26 acres between Alamosa, and La Jara. The home offers baseboard heating, a fireplace, beautiful stainless steel appliances, and many built in additions. Attached to the garage is a 1 bedroom apartment with a newer refrigerator. There are additional out buildings and fencing on the property. Come and see this home if you are ready for some great country living! **NEW PRICE! \$399,900** MLS#790848

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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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