

Shorts

Food distribution event April 20 in La Jara

CONEJOS COUNTY — RMSER is partnering with Conejos County on a food distribution at 10 a.m. on April 20 at Town Hall in La Jara, 211 Broadway St. Everyone is eligible.

Colorado Congreso de Acequias May 21

SAN LUIS — 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.

Rep. Boebert's Office announces mobile office hours

Staff from Rep. Boebert's office will be available to help constituents in the San Luis Valley during the following mobile office hours.

• April 19 — Costilla County Mobile Office Hours, City Hall, 408 Main St., San Luis, 1:30-2:30 p.m.

• April 25 — Alamosa County Mobile Office Hours, The Depot, 610 State St., Alamosa, 2-3 p.m.

CORRECTION



Due to an editing error, the incorrect photo of new CSU potato breeder Jessica Chitwood-Brown ran on the front page of last week's edition. We apologize for the error. Factual errors can be reported to Editor Brian Williams at bwilliams@valleypublishinginc.com.

Saguache Planning Commission approves land-use recommendations

Guidelines will go to County Board April 19

BY MECHEL MEEK

SAGUACHE — The Saguache County Planning Commission held a work session on March 31 and approved land-use recommendations regarding accessory dwelling units and minimum square footage for residences.

Before the formal meeting, *Please see LAND on Page 7A*



Photo by Mechel Meek

The Saguache County Planning Commission held a work session on land-use recommendations on March 31.

Center School District names Teacher of the Year

BY MECHEL MEEK

CENTER — Center Consolidated School District Superintendent Carrie Zimmerman recently announced Alex Magness as the District Teacher of the Year.

"Alex is one of our amazing fifth-grade teachers and this is a well-deserved recognition," Zimmerman said. "Alex connects with her students and provides quality instruction in a fun, engaging way. She is a building leader and supports colleagues on a regular basis. She serves on the building leadership team and is also one of our resident experts in educational technology. Mrs. Magness comes to school daily with a positive attitude and sets a good example for her peers. She has helped to spread sunshine during this challenging time in public education. She is committed to being a life-long learner and participated in the cognitive coaching opportunity with a number of her peers. We are grateful to have her as part

Please see TEACHER on Page 7A



Photo courtesy of CCSD

Center Consolidated School District's Teacher of the Year was fifth-grade teacher Alex Magness.

Town of Center releases survey on community, recreation interests

BY MECHEL MEEK

CENTER — The Town of Center released a link to an online survey on Monday, April 11, via its Facebook page to learn what citizens would like to have in a Recreation Center.

"Center community, share your voice, answer our Community Center Survey," the Town of Center posted on its Facebook page. "The Town of Center is in the early stages of exploring a community and recreation center. Two junior capstone students at Center High School — Alexis Villagomez and Karina Maez, have

put together a professional survey to gauge interest and answer questions about a potential Center. These students are assisting the Town after being awarded Best and Brightest internships through the State of

Please see SURVEY on Page 6A

Town of Center is asking for the public's input on community and recreation interests via an online survey. Center Community Park could see changes due to the survey.

Photo by Mechel Meek



Long-time Monte Vista resident Ray Skeff dies at 83

Considered a 'pillar' of community by many

STAFF REPORT

MONTE VISTA — Long-time Monte Vista resident Raymond Nathan "Ray" Skeff, 83, passed away on April 7, 2022. Arrangements are pending and will be announced through Rogers Family Mortuary in Monte Vista.

A week ago, Ray and his wife, Colette Skeff, were cutting the ribbon on March 31 for a trail in Monte Vista named in their honor — the Ray and Colette Skeff Nature Trail.

Monte Vista City Manager Gigi Dennis spoke during the nature trail ribbon-cutting about the impact of the Skeffs.

"They have vested themselves in thousands of community hours donated countless dollars and have been a pillar to lean on

when our community needed a hand up," Dennis said. "This is so exciting to share this moment with them. Dedicate a nature trail that will be part of our community like the Skeffs have been for decades to come."

Mayor Dale Becker also spoke at the ceremony and presented a plaque from the city to the Skeffs commemorating the day.

"These folks are a pillar of this community," Becker said.

The couple has donated thousands of dollars to community projects and volunteered even more hours to worthwhile causes across the San Luis Valley.

Ray and Colette once owned the Skeff Service Center Appliance Store in Monte Vista as well as the Skeff Furniture Showcase.

The couple was considered "movers and shakers" within the SLV for many years. Ray served on the Rio Grande Hospital

Please see RAY on Page 6A



Photo by Brian Williams

Ray and Colette Skeff attended the Ray and Colette Skeff Nature Trail dedication ceremony on March 31 in Monte Vista. Ray Skeff passed away on April 7 at the age of 83.

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OBITUARIES

George Harry McDonald (Buster)

Born in Taos, New Mexico, Jan. 10, 1930, and he took his final breath on April 10, 2022

George lived his life to the fullest. Although very young he helped his grandfather make and deliver bootleg whiskey to various places in the San Luis Valley during the prohibition. Then he started working in the silver, gold and ore mines in Colorado, Utah, Wyoming and New Mexico with his father when he was 15.

At 22, he got drafted and for the next 3 1/2 years he served as a master sergeant in the Army during the Korean War in a mash unit. He had a fear of flying because two of the helicopters he was in were shot down and he almost lost his life.

He married at 26 and during that marriage he had six beautiful children.

He loved life and made sure he lived it to the fullest. Although he traveled between New Mexico, Colorado, California and Utah, he loved Colorado and made his home here for the last 50 years. He enjoyed Western and Mexican music and was avid to dance with the lovely ladies.

George was well known in the Del Norte school district, his voice echoed in the stands, when he got excited. He loved to support the Del Norte Tigers. He spent several years being a guide and a cook in a hunting camp, his love for the mountains resounded in him.

He had every one of the John Wayne movies in his memory. He also had the opportunity to be cast in one of those old western movies.

In addition, George loved working on cars. His specialty was restoring engine heads. He knew those like the back of his hand. He began restoring his own old cars and then started helping others with their restoration projects as well. In his 90's he still loved getting under those old cars.

He spent the last few years with his friends having lunch and talking over old times. His knowledge of history was astounding. He loved sharing his stories with everyone.

He loved to read. Louis L'Amour was one of his favorite authors. But his



passion was reading the bible. He was a faithful servant of his God, Jehovah. He loved to read and study the bible and share the truths from there, with others. He had full confidence in all that was written, would come true.

During his last days, he had his daughters, granddaughter's and grandsons read to him from the bible. He was confident about the words in Revelation 21:4, He will wipe out every tear from their eyes and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore... And Acts 24:15 ... there will be a resurrection.

He is survived by his brother Tommy (Stephanie) McDonald, his loving children: Rebecca McDonald, Maggie (Steve) Trujillo, Paul McDonald, Theresa Garcia and his loving adopted grandchildren Shawn (Kathy) McDonald, and Antoinette (Chris) Reed. In addition, he had 18 other grandchildren, 32 great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren, five nephews and four nieces and so many fine friends we cannot mention them all.

He was proceeded in death by his parents Ora and Margaret McDonald, brother, Buddy McDonald, sisters, Betty Armstrong and Carolyn Woodard, son, Matthew McDonald, daughter Elizabeth Salazar, granddaughter, Amanda McDonald; and great-grandson Kian McDonald.

He was loved by many, hated by few and admired by all. He will be missed. There will be a memorial and a celebration of his life on Saturday, April 16, 2022, at 2 p.m. at the High Valley Community Center, 595 Grand Ave., Del Norte, Colo.

Cheryl Candace (Pacheco) Garcia

Cheryl Candace (Pacheco) Garcia, 38, born Sept. 15, 1983 in Alamosa, Colo., died March 11, 2022 in Colorado Springs.

She is survived by her mother Pam Pacheco of Del Norte, Colo., grandmother Marilyn Stuever of Del Norte, Colo., estranged husband Tim Garcia of Center, Colo., and her seven children Max Garcia of Del Norte, Colo., Timeria Garcia of Pueblo, Colo., Timias Garcia of Del Norte, Colo., Timay Garcia of Del Norte, Colo., Maxwell Garcia of Del Norte, Colo., Timberlee Garcia of Del Norte, Colo., and Timone Dolan of Hooper, Colo., her brothers Neil Pacheco of Riveria Beach, Fla., and Kevin Pacheco of Aurora, Colo., and numerous uncles, aunts and cousins.



She was preceded in death by both

paternal grandparents Joe Pacheco, Alice Pacheco, maternal grandfather John Stuever and her father Vernon Glen Pacheco.

Cremation was chosen. A family and friends celebration of life will be held April 20, 2022, from 5 to 8 p.m. at the Del Norte Courthouse Annex.

Raymond Nathan Skeff

Longtime Monte Vista resident Raymond Nathan Skeff, 83, passed away on April 7, 2022. He was born on July 5, 1938, in Center, Colo., to Kelley H. and Margaret M. (Sawaya) Skeff.

Ray graduated from Center high School in 1956. He joined the United States Army in January of 1962 and was honorably discharged in December of 1963. In his younger years he worked for the family grocery store in Center, where he learned how to manage a successful business. In 1985, he joined hands with his brother Herbert to operate Skeff's Service Center and later he opened another store, the Skeff's Furniture Showcase in Monte Vista until he retired in 2002.

Ray was a very community-oriented person and that was reflected in his life, whether it was serving on a local board or donating his time or money to local community organizations. He served on the Rio Grande Hospital Foundation Board and the Adams State University Foundation Board.

He took pride in seeing the community of Monte Vista improve. Ray was awarded as Man of the Year in 2002. On March 31, 2022, a ceremony was held to dedicate the newly named Ray and Colette

Nature Trail. His legacy in Monte Vista will live on in the hearts of the community for years to come.

Ray was known for his generosity, his wit, and the ability to make people laugh with his wonderful stories. Also, he loved animals, especially his own (Mustard, Luke and Noah).

After his retirement he wrote a book of poems that were witty, amusing and so funny. He enjoyed sharing them, which brought him enjoyment and he always asked which one they liked the most.

Ray was also known for his collection of 13 classic cars. He loved the chance to enter them in local parades. He gifted some to family and friends and donated others to organizations for fundraisers. The one he especially loved was a 1981 Cadillac Eldorado which he donated to the Rio Grande Hospital. What a memory it was to have the experience of entering the car in the Barrett-Jackson Auction in Scottsdale, Ariz., where the proceeds were presented to the hospital.

He is survived by his wife Colette Skeff of Monte Vista, his brother, Kelley Skeff of Brookdale, Calif., and his sister Sadie Skeff of Center, Colo., nieces and their children.



Ray was preceded in death by his parents, his brothers, Herbert Skeff, Roger Skeff, Joseph Skeff and George Skeff as well as his sister Betty Skeff, nieces and their children.

Cremation was selected and a memorial service will be held at 11:00 am on April 14, 2022, at the Monte Vista United Methodist Church. Contributions are suggested to the Rio Grande Hospital and may be made in care of the funeral home office.

To leave online remembrances, words of comfort and tributes for Ray's family, please visit www.RogersFunerals.com.

Carolyn Jean Gray

the San Luis Valley Federal Bank in Monte Vista, Colo., and retired in 2016 after 40 years of service. Carolyn was an active member of the Monte Vista Rotary and served as secretary. Carolyn also served on the Board of the Creede Repertory Theatre for many years.

Carolyn is survived by her loving husband Mike Prentice of 39 years; sons, Warren (Malisa) Rytting, their children Zach and Sam, Charleston, Ark.; Joe (Maria) Rytting, their children Hayden, Mason and Chase, Gurnee, Ill., daughter Jennifer (Phil) Aderinto their children Miki and Landen, Mesa, Ariz., stepdaughters Anjanette (Devin) de Simone, their children Brandon and Dylan, Englewood, Colo.; Dayna Tremain and Denise Martinez, brother Ronald (Judy) Peterson and sister Darlene Miller, several nieces, nephews and many friends.

Carolyn also considered Kristy Miller and Brian (Tami) David and their children Heather, Alycia and Kristen in her extended family.

Carolyn was preceded in death by her parents Melvin and Goldie Peterson, Grandparents Albert and Bertha Eagles, Joe and Anna Peterson and her Nephew Greg Peterson.



Carolyn Jean Gray (Prentice), 71, passed away at her home on April 4, 2022, from a long battle with cancer. She was born Feb. 8, 1951, in Alamosa, Colo., to Melvin and Goldie Peterson.

Carolyn grew up in the Sargent area and attended Sargent School and Adams State College. She loved showing horses when she was young and found her way to the track to do some horse racing.

She had a love for skiing, traveling, watching football and basketball with her husband Mike and her dog Mitzy.

Carolyn was branch manager for

Cremation was selected and a Celebration of Life Service for Carolyn will be held at the First United Methodist Church, in Monte Vista, on Saturday, April 9, 2022, at 1 p.m.

Carolyn will be deeply missed by her friends, family, and all who knew her. Carolyn's family has requested that in lieu of flowers, donations be made to St. Jude's Children's Hospital, or a non-profit of your choice.

To express condolences to the family, please visit www.rogersfunerals.com.

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OPINION & EDITORIAL

Long live the Bunny

Since we last spoke, Miss Trixie and Ol' Dutch successfully navigated our way into Mexico.

We had a good, albeit long trip to see the dentist and, while we were there, poor Miss Trixie had to have a wisdom tooth pulled out.

Now while many a child has had four of those bothersome teeth removed with nary a complaint, Miss Trixie seems to be of a more genteel nature and so she was laid up somewhat.

Well at least she didn't eat like normal and when Ol' Dutch tried to initiate a conversation with her, she would respond with tight lips never even moving her mouth. It was an amazing display of ventriloquism.

Ol' Dutch was so impressed he asked her if she wanted him to get her a dummy. And with pursed lips she made some snide remark about already having one — me.

All went well and now we're back at the Texas farm in time for Easter, which is an important holiday for Christians and non-Christians around the world. For that is the day when stores stock up on all manner of chocolate candies to be severely discounted on the following day.

If that is not a reason to celebrate, I don't know what is. Nothing says happiness like day old chocolate bunnies, cream filled eggs, malted eggs, hollow eggs and the requisite dye-colored hard-boiled eggs we all make.

There is something about dying eggs that brings back such fond memories from childhood as we dipped the normally edible eggs in poisonous dyes so we could eat them with gusto.

For weeks after Easter, any potluck dinner at the church would include lots of deviled eggs in various hues as women tried to pawn off their oversupply of colored goodies on the rest of the congregation. Which brings to mind another thought: does bringing deviled eggs to church really make much sense?

Well, I guess that's a conversation for another day but certainly needs to be addressed in the next overview of church doctrine.

You may wonder just where the inclusion of eggs and especially that old rascally Easter Bunny began. It appears that none other than the Roman Emperor Constantine began including pagan symbols into the Christian church including the worship of fertility — hence eggs and those naughty, prolific rabbits.

Some churches still today seem to be caught up in the egg deal and try to include it in their services.

One pastor announced from the pulpit that "Miss Minnie will now come and lay an egg on the altar." I can guarantee you that all the old



Trout Republic
by Kevin Kirkpatrick

men that were asleep at the time suddenly bolted upright in the pews to see her do just that.

Heck even Ol' Dutch, as churched as I would pay good money to see any woman lay an egg in the sanctuary.

But today, we have seemed to have distanced ourselves far from those early pagan roots and simply have adopted the lowly hare and eggs for a fun time with the kids. For we gather in yards and public parks to hide eggs for all the local kids to find and enjoy.

Gone are the dyed eggs of my youth which were first replaced by solid plastic eggs purchased by parents and which were reusable year after year. Why, just finding one was the joy of the day and kids filled baskets to overflowing with the multi-colored petroleum manufactured oblongs.

But then someone came up with the idea that kids were not sufficiently spoiled and, in a way, to also make more money began making those two-part plastic eggs which required the insertion of candy into each one.

Not only did this require more work, but it also meant that parents can no longer just trot out the shells from year to year but now must purchase candy to put in each one. Great marketing if I must say so myself.

Ol' Dutch has long past the time when he had small children at home so hiding the eggs on Easter Morning is no longer needed around my house. However, Miss Trixie said that as old as I am getting that maybe this year, I can hide my own Easter Eggs.

And she may be right as I cannot even find the package I bought at the store last week. Long live the Bunny!

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.

Hidden tax increase in plain sight

(CENTER SQUARE) — Americans have less money than they had last year — though taxes haven't been raised. So what's the problem? Inflation, which has increased at a 40-year high annual pace of 7.9%. It acts as a hidden tax because we don't see it listed on our tax bills, but we sure see less money in our bank accounts.

In fact, inflation-adjusted average hourly earnings for private employees are down 2.8% over the past year. This means a person with \$31.58 in earnings per hour is buying 2.8% less of a grocery basket purchased just last February.

"For a typical family, the inflation tax means a loss in real income of more than \$1,900 per year," stated Joel Griffin, a research fellow at The Heritage Foundation.

The hidden tax of rapid inflation has been avoided for four decades. But that's understandable because we haven't seen these sorts of reckless policies out of Washington since the Carter administration.

The policies from the Biden administration's excessive government spending and the Federal Reserve's money printing must correct course now before things get worse.

What's causing inflation is being debated.

One claim is "Putin's price hikes" stem from the Russian president's invasion of Ukraine.

While this has contributed to oil and gasoline prices spiking recently, these prices — and general inflation — were already rising rapidly. This was because of the Biden administration's disastrous war on fossil fuels through increased financial and drilling regulations, cancellation of the Keystone XL pipeline, and more.

Specifically, the price of West Texas Intermediate crude oil is up about 110% since Biden took office, yet only up 21% since Russia invaded Ukraine. And to think, the U.S. was energy independent

OpEd By Vance Ginn and John Hendrickson

in the sense that it was a net exporter of petroleum products in 2019.

Another claim is the supply-chain crisis.

For example, the global chip shortage has contributed to a large shortage and subsequent increase in the average price of new vehicles — to a record high of \$47,000, up 12% over the past year. This contributed to buyers switching to used cars, which has pushed the average price up to nearly \$28,000, about 40% higher.

These two claims will likely be transitory price increases, though not sufficient to drive down overall inflation to what we've experienced for the last year-plus.

Inflation is persistent because of rampant government spending and money printing.

Larry Kudlow, who served as the director of the National Economic Council for President Donald Trump, stated that inflation "is destroying working folks' pocketbooks and devaluing the wages they earn, and the root cause of the inflation is way too much government spending, too many social programs without workfare, and vastly too much money creation by the Federal Reserve."

Both political parties share the blame for too much government spending, which has caused the national debt to balloon to \$30 trillion. Just over the last two years, the debt has increased by 25% or \$6 trillion.

While some of that may have been necessary during the (inappropriate) shutdowns in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, much of the nearly \$7 trillion passed in spending bills was not, especially the trillions by the Biden administration far after the pandemic had slowed and people were returning to work.

Laughably, Speaker of the House

Nancy Pelosi recently argued that government spending is helping inflation and President Joe Biden argued that he's cutting the deficit. Both are false.

Government spending doesn't change inflation because it just redistributes money around in the economy. And the deficit would only berising from Biden's big-government policies but he's taking advantage of an optical illusion: one-time COVID-19 relief funding drying up and tax revenues rising partially from the effects of inflation.

Ultimately, the driver of inflation is from discretionary monetary policy by the Federal Reserve as it monetizes much of the \$6 trillion in added national debt since early 2020.

The Fed did this to keep its federal funds rate target from rising above the range of zero to 0.25% by more than doubling its balance sheet to \$9 trillion. More money is fueling the ugly government spending and bubbly asset markets that's resulting in dire economic consequences.

Instead, we need to learn what Presidents Warren Harding and Calvin Coolidge realized a century ago. This would mean a return to sound fiscal policy, monetary policy, and the dollar that built on the principles of America's founding.

We need binding fiscal and monetary rules to hold politicians and government officials in check if we hope to tame inflation and return to prosperity.

Vance Ginn, Ph.D., is chief economist at the Texas Public Policy Foundation, and is the former associate director for economic policy at the White House Office of Management and Budget, 2019-20. John Hendrickson is policy director at the Iowans for Tax Relief Foundation.

LETTER

Phillips announces run for Saguache County Commissioner

Editor,

My name is Jeff Phillips and I am running for Saguache County Commissioner District 3. I am a native of Colorado and have lived in Saguache County for 15 years with my wife and family. I am a rancher and the manager and equipment salesman for Sharpe Equipment. I have been manager of Sharpe Equipment for 10 years and have been selling farm equipment for 15 years.

I know and understand farming and ranching in the Valley and all of the

challenges. I have a background in construction and understand this area as well. I know and understand the water issues of the Valley.

I belong to Northern Saguache County Fire District, EMS, and Search and Rescue. This experience helps me understand our emergency services.

I support law and order in the county. I know we need a new jail. I will work toward this goal.

I believe in transparency in our elected officials and I believe the statutes should be followed. I have good

communication skills and will listen to input from our residents. I want to see our county prosper while preserving our rich heritage.

I have spent the last several months attending all of the Commissioners meetings to see if I could work with the Commissioners and wanted to run for this position. I am now running for County Commissioner and believe I can work well with the other Commissioners. I am asking for your vote as County Commissioner.

Jeff Phillips, Saguache

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C-Town Show and Shine



The C-Town Classic and Custom Car Show, a Capstone project for some Center students, was held April 9 at the Center Community Park. All proceeds from the show went to support the downtown entrepreneur project.

Photos by Mechel Meek



Summer route closure of Lane 6 between Mosca and Great Sand Dunes NPP

STAFF REPORT

SANLUIS VALLEY — Alamosa County and the Federal Highway Administration Central Federal Lands Highway Division (FHWA-CFLHD) in cooperation with the

Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve will be constructing improvements to Lane 6 North between Mosca and the National Park.

The route is approximately 16

miles long and is an east-west connector between State Highways 17 and 150. The route serves the local community and region and provides access to Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve, San Luis State Wildlife Area, Zapata Falls, Bureau of Land Management lands, and Forest Service lands.

The proposed improvements include resurfacing, restoration, and rehabilitation of the roadway. The project will impact traffic on Lane 6 between Highway 17 and Highway 150 and eliminate through access beginning May 15 and continuing to Sept. 1.

The project is divided into East and West sections, and each will experience full closure of both lanes 24 hours per day. During this period, visitors to the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve should avoid Lane 6 and instead

detour south to US Highway 160.

The road will be completely open, 24 hours, from May 27 to June 5 to provide access for travelers accessing the national park unit and other public lands before, during and after the Memorial Day weekend. Partial route access will only be as far as the San Luis Lakes State Wildlife Area (an 8-mile stretch of the road) for travelers accessing the SWA and only accessible for local access. Local access is defined as local private property owners living along Lane 6 and federal property owners (areas not publicly accessible, administrative use only). All users (travelers and local access) accessing any portions of Lane 6 should expect delays of up to 30 minutes.

Travelers or local traffic using Lane 6 to access Great Sand Dunes, businesses along Highway 150, and

Highway 17, Zapata Subdivision homeowners, and other public lands along Highway 150:

- April 1-May 15 — Shoulder work/single-lane closures allowed (minimal delays anticipated but 30-minute max allowed)

- May 27-June 5 — Lane 6 open 24 hours, no construction occurring.

- May 15-Sept. 1 — Lane 6 closed 24 hours and detour in place via Highway 160, approximately 13 miles south from the intersections of Lane 6 with either Highway 17 or Highway 150. Access to San Luis State Wildlife Area (SWA):

- May 15-July 20 — West section full closure (8 miles) — access to San Luis Lakes SWA from the east via Highway 150.

- July 20-Sept. 1 — East section full closure — access to San Luis Lakes SWA from the west via Highway 17.

Valley-Wide Counseling Center and Alamosa WIC have moved

STAFF REPORT

ALAMOSA — The Valley-Wide Counseling and Support Center at 204 Carson St. and Alamosa WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) programs at 128 Market St., both in Alamosa, have swapped buildings and were open for normal business hours on Monday, April 11.

The Alamosa WIC program is now located at 204 Carson St., where staff will be able to work closely with our Nurse Family Partnership Program.

The Valley-Wide Counseling and Support Center's move to 128 Market St. will give its outpatient behavioral health team the additional space it need and the ability to expand even more when the time comes.

"We are super excited about this move and believe that it will meet the current needs of both our WIC program and Counseling and Support Services program," says Jania Arnoldi, Valley-Wide President/CEO.

The Valley-Wide Counseling and Support Center will continue to focus on wellness, recovery, and resilience by providing traditional, longer-term counseling needs that may include anxiety, depression, trauma, and substance use.

Staff at Alamosa WIC will continue to provide nutrition education, breastfeeding support, healthy foods, and other services free of charge to Colorado families who qualify.



THE SOUTH FORK MINISTERIAL ALLIANCE WILL BE HOSTING A COMBINED GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE AT THE NEW HOPE CHURCH ON 4/15/22, 12:00-1:00. THERE WILL BE MUSIC AND PREACHING. PLEASE JOIN US IN THIS SPECIAL TIME OF PASSION WEEK. THERE WILL ALSO BE A SUNRISE SERVICE AT THE CROSS ON AGUA RAMON, COUNTY ROAD 63, AT 6:30 A.M.



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Palm Sunday, April 10. Sunday school 9:30am,

Fellowship hour 10:30 - 11am, Worship Service 11am

Community Good Friday service, April 15 10am -12pm.

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Easter Sunday, April 17. Sunrise Service 7:30am,

Fellowship Brunch 9:00-10:30, Worship Service 11am

Sunrise Service will be at Lloyd & Judy Wright's home,

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Cortez sworn in as 30th district judge in San Luis Valley

BY PRISCILLA WAGGONER
ALAMOSA — Conejos County Judge Kim Cortez was sworn in as the 12th Judicial District's new district judge last week following the retirement of District Judge Martin Gonzales. Chief Judge Michael Gonzales officiated the proceedings in a courtroom that was packed with family, friends and colleagues.

As is customary, Judge Michael Gonzales began with a brief history of the judicial system in Colorado and, specifically, the San Luis Valley. As is also his tradition, Michael Gonzales gave a warm and sometimes humorous introduction of Cortez, painting her as a whole person — daughter, wife, mother of three children and ultimately judge — and tying her background of experiences to her personal attributes and characteristics and then applying those aspects to her performance on the bench.

Cortez grew up as one of four children born to a farmer and elementary school teacher. Michael Gonzales said that Cortez, who grew up on the family farm, "happily recalls hard work and family" and a life that taught her important lessons. Michael Gonzales cites the example of Cortez, as a little girl, being given the job of scooping out the livestock trailer.

"Even on the family farm, she learned she wasn't going to get a break and had to start at the bottom and work her way up," he said.

Cortez graduated from Centauri High School in 2002 — the place where she first met the man who would later become her husband — and went on to attend Colorado State University with her focus firmly fixed on being a lawyer. After graduating in 2006, Cortez graduated from the University of Colorado Law School in 2009.

While in law school, Cortez gave birth to Diego in 2008.

"Giving birth and raising a son in law school is a sign of her dedication and determination," Judge Michael Gonzales said. "When I was in law school, I could barely take care of myself," he added to much laughter in the courtroom.

Cortez worked with the Greeley Water Department and interned with county judges, and it was during this time that she realized the importance of county judges in a community. She also recognized the importance of "being the bearer of information between the system and people served by the system."

"Kim Cortez understood that judges serve the people and she made it her goal to make laws more understandable and approachable," he said.

After graduating from law school, Cortez and her husband made the decision to return to the San Luis Valley where she "wanted to serve the people of the Valley" and be in the presence of family and the community she loved.

Cortez went to work with Colorado Legal Services in 2009, followed by a position with a private law firm. But, in a move that Michael Gonzales said was testimony to her dedication to serving the community, Cortez left the law firm to work in the newly formed "Self-Represented Litigants Project" which was created to help those individuals who could not afford an attorney to understand the judicial system as part of representing themselves.

In 2017, Kim Cortez was appointed to be the County Judge for Conejos County. Even in that position, she has continued to commit herself to self-represented litigants in working

with the 12th Judicial District and the Access to Justice Committee.

Chief Judge Michael Gonzales concluded his introduction with a list of qualities describing the new District Judge Cortez, many compiled from endorsements by colleagues, mentors, former judges and individuals who have known Cortez all her life.

Chief Judge Michael Gonzales specifically cited 12th Judicial District Former Chief Judge Patti P. Swift, who described Cortez as "honest, fair, hardworking, intelligent and good at legal analysis in announcing a decision from the bench in both spoken and written form."

Michael Gonzales closed by saying, "We are pleased to have a person of Kim Cortez's caliber serving as a new colleague on the district court bench."

When District Judge Cortez addressed the group, she started with recognition of her predecessor, District Judge Martin Gonzales, whom she said, "demanded a level of professionalism that brought out the best in others."

She then went on to acknowledge the family and community who "has given me so much and has shaped my goals and the kind of person and the kind of judge I want to be."

Cortez went on to express her deepest gratitude to her parents who enabled her to pursue her dreams as well as her children and husband who remind her of the "good things" in life and ultimately her thanks to the community.

"I am honored for the opportunity to serve you all as county judge," Judge Cortez said.

District Judge Kim Cortez will serve as the 30th district judge in the San Luis Valley.



Photo by John Waters

On April 7, after being sworn in as 12th Judicial District Judge, Kim Cortez is surrounded by family.

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Valley Publishing will be printing the annual San Luis Valley Graduation edition on April 27th... don't miss this opportunity to wish the Class of 2022 congratulations!

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Maestas Case tribute tour begins April 14 at State Capitol

SUBMITTED ARTICLE
DENVER — The Maestas Case Commemoration Committee unveils Cruzando Los Traques (Vias) (Crossing the Tracks) at 1 p.m. on Thursday, April 14, on the ground floor of the Colorado State Capitol.

Colorado Senators Cleave Simpson and Robert Rodriguez and Colorado Representatives Donald Valdez and Alex Valdez will deliver a joint tribute in chambers.

The traveling art history exhibit honors the Maestas Case, believed to be America's first successful Hispanic education desegregation lawsuit taking place in Alamosa from 1912 to 1914.

SAGUACHE COUNTY SHERIFF'S REPORT

SAGUACHE COUNTY — The following information was provided by the Saguache County Sheriff's Office for the period between Monday, April 4, 2022, and Sunday, April 10, 2022.

The Sheriff's Department's activity on the road included:

Five traffic stops, two crashes with property damage, two injury crashes, one stolen vehicle report, and two traffic complaints. They also patrolled the Town of Saguache nine times, conducted one VIN inspection, responded to one lockout and assisted a motorist.

In addition, there was one warrant check, one report of burglary, one report

video display honoring the judge's historic desegregation decision will remain at the Capitol for the remainder of the legislative session before traveling to other Colorado and New Mexico locations.

The exhibit tour culminates with a celebratory event honoring the Maestas Case in Alamosa on Oct. 8.

The Maestas Case Committee is forging awareness of this important time and experience in American history, tied deeply to the regionalism of southern Colorado's Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area.

Better known as home to Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve, the San Luis Valley includes Colorado's

oldest towns, water rights, and Hispanic pastoral communities, whose cultures date back centuries to origins in New Mexico's adjoining Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area.

Alamosa (Spanish for Cottonwood), the largest town in the San Luis Valley, is tucked away in the trees that line the Rio Grande. Founded as a railroad town two years after the State of Colorado was formed, it was here in 1912 that Hispanic community members came together to fight separation of schools based on race.

After failed attempts including petitions, unions, resolutions, contacting the Colorado State Superintendent and an educational boycott, Francisco

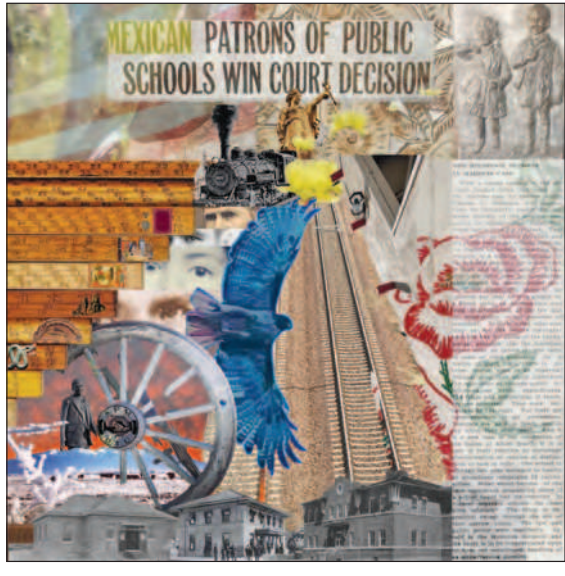
Maestas sued the Alamosa School Board in 1913 on behalf of his young son, Miguel, who crossed the busy railroad tracks twice daily to attend the "Mexican School" across town, passing the "White School" on his way.

In a lengthy trial, prosecuting attorney Raymond Sullivan contended racial prejudice was a driving force behind the school's segregation efforts.

The Colorado Constitution prohibited discrimination based on race, and therefore, Sullivan argued, the district could not deny Miguel access to the other school because of his race.

The school district argued that the Hispano students were Caucasian and therefore the district was not discriminating based on race. Instead, they said, students were put in a separate school to support an English language deficiency.

Raymond Sullivan proved them wrong when he put students on the



stand, and they answered questions in English. District Court Judge Charles Holbrook ruled in favor of Francisco Maestas.

"In the opinion of the court ... the only way to destroy this feeling of discontent and bitterness which has recently grown up, is to allow all children so prepared, to attend the school nearest them," Holbrook stated in his 1914 decision.

To learn more about the Maestas Case, visit www.Maestascase.org or follow along on Instagram @maestascase.

of threatening, one report of stolen property, one report of assault, and one report of trespassing,

They also responded to one civil dispute, four ambulance calls, three animal problem reports, two alarms, one welfare check, one citizen assist, 10 controlled burns, one fire (other), one structure fire, one search and rescue call, provided information seven times, and assisted nearby agencies twice.

ARRESTS
• 32-year-old Canon City man was arrested on suspicion of unlawful possession of a controlled substance and violation of protection order charges.

• A 31-year-old Center woman was arrested on an outstanding warrant.

• A 33-year-old Crestone man was arrested on an outstanding warrant.

• A 40-year-old Center woman was arrested on an outstanding warrant.

• A 32-year-old Center man was arrested on suspicion of stalking, intimidating a witness, violation of a protection order, harassment, unlawful possession of a controlled substance, resisting arrest, domestic violence, attempted first-degree murder, first-degree kidnapping, first-degree assault to cause serious bodily harm, and sexual assault against the victim's will charges.

SURVEY

Continued from Page 1A

Colorado's Department of Local Affairs. The Town has made no commitment to building a Center, however, demonstrated interest like survey results would be vital in making a potential space a reality."

The survey asks people what

they would like to have available in a recreation center. Included in the survey were questions asking if people would like a theater or spaces to hold gatherings like parties. Other options included a swimming pool and a gym facility.

According to officials, the Town has been considering rehabilitating Center Community Park to make it a better place for citizens to enjoy the outdoors and fitness. The link to the survey is on the Town of Center Facebook page.

RAY

Continued from Page 1A

Board for 15 years providing the vision and leadership to implement the building of Rio Grande Hospital in Del Norte.

Ray and Collette were extremely active in the Upper Rio Grande Animal Society in Monte Vista. They were instrumental in upgrading and expanding the shelter, and almost single-handedly financed and built the pet crematory which today is used to help financially sustain the shelter.

For nearly 20 years, Ray and Collette have provided scholarships

to graduating seniors at both the Monte Vista and Center high schools. The couple has supported all youth groups in the Valley in some manner or another.

Ray graduated from Center High School.

They have been extremely supportive financially to Monte Vista Kids Connection which serves young children in after-school programs, as well as providing summer programs for underserved families.

Obituary can be found on Page 2.

To express condolences, please visit www.rogersfunerals.com.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Colorado Gators Inc., 9187 Pyrite Circle, Mosca, Co, 81146, (719) 580-2306, has filed an application for a Construction Materials (112) Reclamation Permit with the Colorado Mined Land Reclamation Board under provisions of the Colorado Mined Land Reclamation Act. The proposed mine is known as Mystic Soil, and is located at or near Section 22, Township 41N, Range 10E, 6th Prime Meridian.

The proposed date of commencement is Summer 2022, and the proposed date of completion is, Fall 2032. The proposed future use of the land is industrial/commercial and rangeland.

Additional information and tentative decision date may be obtained from the Division of Reclamation, Mining, and Safety, 1313 Sherman Street, Room 215, Denver, Colorado 80203, (303) 866-3567, or at the Saguache County Clerk and Recorder's office; 501 4th St. Saguache, CO, 81149, or the above-named applicant. A complete copy of the application is available at the above-named County Clerk and Recorder's office and at the Division's office.

Comments concerning the application and exhibits must be in writing and must be received by the Division of Reclamation, Mining, and Safety by 4:00 p.m., 20 days after the publication of this notice.

Please note that under the provisions of C.R.S. 34-32-101 et seq. Comments related to noise, truck traffic, hours of operation, visual impacts, effects on property values and other social or economic concerns are issues not subject to this Office's jurisdiction. These subjects, and similar ones, are typically addressed by your local governments, rather than the Division of Reclamation, Mining, and Safety or the Mined Land Reclamation Board.

No. 1632 published in the Center Post Dispatch, Thursday, April 7, 14, 21 and 28, 2022.

The Truth About Who You Really Are

In today's society, insecurity and self-rejection have reached an all-time high. More than ever before, so many people simply don't like themselves.

Over the years, I have met countless people who believe God is angry with them because they haven't "arrived" at the place of perfection. As a result, they live in a state of perpetual frustration—continually rejecting themselves and feeling bad every time they make a mistake.

But Jesus didn't give His life for us to walk around feeling guilty and condemned. He wants us to feel good about ourselves and our relationship with Him. And it all starts with discovering our true identity in Christ.

Are You a Believer or an Achiever?

For many years, I tried to please God with my works. It seemed as if I was living on a performance treadmill—always trying to do something to feel good about myself and *feel* like I was in right standing with Him. In the process, I became weary, worn-out, and unhappy. I would think, *Something is just not working.*

I was right. No matter how much we love God and choose to do what's right, we will always be frustrated until we understand this life-changing truth: "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God" (Ephesians 2:8 NIV).

There is nothing we can do to earn our salvation or right standing with God; we have been made right with Him *through our faith in Jesus Christ*. A believer that is lacking this understanding is like a jumbo jet on the runway with no gasoline—he has all the equipment but is going nowhere!

In His mercy, God allowed me to see that there was absolutely nothing I could do to make Him love me any more or less than He already did. All He wanted was for me to believe in Jesus, "the one he has sent" (John 6:29 NIV) and receive the righteousness He has provided.

See Yourself Through God's Eyes

In order for us to experience true freedom and grow in our relationship with God, we must learn to accept ourselves right where we are and see ourselves the way God sees us. As we do, we will begin to understand that becoming like Christ is a process that takes time...and God will be faithful to finish the good work He has started in us (see Philippians 1:6).

Second Corinthians 5:21 (NIV) says, "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."

This is the basis of self-acceptance—knowing that God accepts us through Jesus and sees us as totally righteous. This does not mean that we don't sin anymore or that we can dismiss it like it's no big deal. It simply means that God loves us even while we are in the process of becoming like Christ—before we have "arrived."

For example, when she was two years old, one of our granddaughters would throw fits when she didn't get her way. She'd throw herself on the ground and scream uncontrollably. Now, even though I disliked her behavior, I still loved her tremendously. I don't stop loving my grandchildren or kick them out of the family because they do wrong things. I love them and work with them to develop the good character I know they need to succeed in life.

The same is true with God, our heavenly Father. He doesn't love our wrong behavior, but He certainly loves us. Romans 5:8 says that He proved His love for us by sending His Son "while we were still sinners." In other words, He didn't wait until we were righteous to send Jesus—He sent Jesus because we would never be righteous without Him!

Put On Your Robe

Isaiah 61:10 (NIV) says, "I delight greatly in the Lord; my soul rejoices in my God. For he has clothed me with



garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of his righteousness...."

What does this mean for us? It means when we make mistakes, God literally has us covered with His robe of righteousness. So when the enemy comes against us with thoughts of guilt or condemnation, we can stand firm against his accusations. We can stand on God's Word and say...

"I am the righteousness of God in Christ. I am clothed in His righteousness—not mine. The Bible says that if I confess my sin, God is faithful to forgive me and cleanse me from all unrighteousness. I am loved!" (See 1 John 1:9)

God is on your side, and He wants you to feel good about yourself and the progress you are making. So don't spend your time frustrated because you haven't "arrived." God is not mad at you because you aren't perfect—He is only disappointed if you quit running the race!

For more on this topic, order Joyce's teaching resource *Knowing Who You Are in Christ*. 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.

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Sexual Assault Awareness: Building Safe Spaces together

By JENNIFER HANNA

Every 68 seconds, someone is sexually assaulted in the United States, and every 9 minutes, the person who experiences the assault is a child (Rape Abuse and Incest National Network).

Take a moment to digest these numbers; this means just in the US, over one minute of every single day a person over the age of 18 is sexually violated, and more than 6 children every hour experience sexual violence.

With the staggering statistics, it's safe to conclude that everyone has someone in their life who has experienced sexual violence.

Unfortunately, the experience is often more complex than a one-time horrific isolated incident, demonstrated in findings such as, "girls who have been sexually abused are more likely to experience additional sexual violence and violence types, and becomes victims of intimate partner violence

TEACHER

of our Viking team! Congratulations Mrs. Magness."

Also honored was Vikings wrestling coach Rodney Mondragon, who was invited by the Colorado High School Coaches Association to participate in the All-State games in June. Mondragon was named Coach of the Year for wrestling earlier this year.

The Center Consolidated School District was also recognized on the Immunity Community Honor Roll. The Immunity Community Honor Roll, created by Immunize Colorado using

LAND

Continued from Page 1A

a presentation was given to the Commission regarding square footage and the original recommendation of a 900 square foot minimum for a residence in Saguache County.

After the presentation, the people in attendance were allowed to speak on why they believed that the regulation should be different than the proposed 900 square feet.

One resident of Saguache County spoke passionately regarding the proposed minimum square footage.

"How does changing the square footage change the blight and crime," the person said. "Other than pricing out people who cannot afford those homes. You have to have electricity, plumbing and a foundation. A 1,000 square footage home is as susceptible to blight as a small home. Other counties have driven out their citizens because they have been priced out."

Other people expressed similar sentiments regarding this issue. No one spoke in favor of a 900-square-foot minimum. The Planning Commission voted, 5-3, to adopt the State of Colorado's minimum square footage guideline of 150 square feet. A 10-foot by 15-foot room is 150 square feet.

The second land-use code discussed was another controversial topic, that of accessory dwelling units (ADU), which are defined as greenhouses, hoop houses, garages, storage sheds, shipping containers, and outbuildings of any type such as studios or carpools to name some of the structures that fall under this regulation.

The proposed regulation would not allow structures of this type to be permitted on vacant parcels until a permitted residence is completed. The Planning Commission voted unanimously to change this to allow accessory structures with a permit after construction and sewage disposal permits are in place.

The final issue was regarding composting toilets, incinerating toilets and vault toilet systems, which are not permissible or allowed in Saguache

in adulthood" (Center for Disease Control). And the avenues by which someone can be sexually harassed, assaulted or abused can be anywhere, including online.

The National Sexual Violence Resource Center says, "For too long harassment, cyberbullying, and sexual abuse and exploitation have come to be expected as typical and unavoidable behaviors online."

NSVRC is the nation's largest sexual assault resource, and they encourage us to engage in this year's theme of prevention for Sexual Assault Awareness Month, which is Building Safe Online Spaces Together.

"Building Safe Online Spaces Together is possible when we practice digital consent, intervene when we see harmful content and behaviors, and promote online communities that value respect, inclusion, and safety," NSVRC says.

Always remember, when considering

Continued from Page 1A — the school district vaccination data from CDPHE, acknowledges K-12 schools and school districts that have achieved outstanding vaccination rates.

For a school district to be listed on the Immunity Community Honor Roll, all schools in the district must report vaccination rates that meet the Healthy People 2030 goals; vaccination coverage of 95 percent or above for DTap, HepB, MMR, Polio, and Varicella, and 80 percent for Tdap for schools with students in sixth grade or higher.

County according to the Planning Commission recommendation.

At this time, the State of Colorado does not allow these types of systems unless there is an Onsite Wastewater Treatment System (OWTS) in place, in order to install alternative waste systems. These types of systems are only allowed in rare circumstances.

This issue may be discussed at the state level in the future, as water usage concerns continue to be a priority throughout the state and alternative systems use less water than traditional septic or sewage systems.

The proposed minimum square footage of 150 square feet, which is the state minimum, will be presented to the Saguache County Commissioners on Tuesday, April 19, along with the other recommendations regarding ADUs and sewage disposal.

the impact of trauma, every person reacts differently to experiences and therefore there are no "levels" of victimization (as in, no one type of experience should be considered "more traumatic" than another), and there is no certain "formula" for healing.

If someone tells you they have experienced a violation of sexual consent, allow them the space to have autonomy over their story and their healing, and refer them to a community based Sexual Assault resource such as Tu Casa, Inc. for confidential, free and 24-hour specialized support.

Tu Casa, Inc. has Advocates who are highly skilled at meeting a client where they are and reflecting and building upon the survivor's strengths, to walk alongside them in their journey towards empowerment.

Tu Casa, Inc. Advocates have both internal and external resources to offer clients safety physically and emotionally, and to provide the space for survivors to harness their inherent capacity to heal.

"The roots of resilience...are to be found in the sense of being understood by and existing in the mind and heart of a loving, attuned, and self-possessed

other," says Diana Fosha, founder of Accelerated Experiential Dynamic Psychotherapy (AEDP).

If you, or someone you know has been impacted by child sexual abuse, sexual violence, or sexual assault you can call Tu Casa, Inc. and the Children's Advocacy Center of the San Luis Valley at 719-589-2465 to speak with an Advocate.

If the victim is a child, you must report the abuse to both the Colorado Child Abuse Hotline 844-CO-4KIDS (844-264-5437) and or law enforcement in your local area.



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Paleo Bread Baking with Natural Leavening *August 6-7*
Survival Plants of the Rocky Mountain West *August 11 - 12*

Center Police arrests Lopez on multiple charges

STAFF REPORT
CENTER — A busy two days for the Center Police Department ended Friday afternoon, April 8, with the arrest of Jonethan Lopez on several charges, including attempted murder, kidnapping and sexual assault.

Center Police Department Police Chief Dale Meek sent out a release Friday detailing the investigation and subsequent arrest of Lopez.

Meek said officers were informed of a missing female who had been allegedly abducted and beaten by Lopez, on Thursday, April 7, during the afternoon.

Officers began searching all the known hang outs, friends and family of the woman, Meek said. The alleged assailant, Lopez, was known to stay at an abandoned trailer that was in disrepair on Washington Street in Center.

Officers found the door to the trailer open and made entry for a welfare check on the female. Clothing items of the victim were found but not the victim. Suspected narcotics were found in two separate rooms. The trailer was secured, and a search warrant was obtained.

Authorities learned that Lopez just had a warrant issued on April 7 for missing court on multiple domestic violence related felonies while executing the first search warrant.

His grandmother lived on the other side of the fence from the trailer, Meek said. Officers went to that location to look for the victim and suspect. Lopez came out of an RV parked in the yard as officers were at the grandmother's residence.

Lopez was immediately placed under arrest. He resisted arrest, Meek said. Almost 20 grams of heroin and methamphetamine were found on

Lopez.

The victim was not found that evening, Meek said. Other San Luis Valley law enforcement agencies were notified to watch for her. Friday morning, April 8, the victim was located and reported she was kidnapped, strangled, raped, and beaten. The victim was transported to an area hospital.

Subsequent search warrants for the original trailer, the grandmother's house and the RV were written to look for evidence of the sexual assault and for drug activity. Evidence supporting the crimes were located, Meek said.

Lopez has had multiple charges over the last few months. He was previously arrested on suspicion of harassment of his ex-wife. He was subsequently arrested for a warrant for harassment, possessing a felony amount of narcotics, assault on a police officer and resisting arrest.

After being released, Lopez stabbed his girlfriend in the face and attempted to run from officers who had a warrant for his arrest for those previous offenses. Lopez was released again, and information came from several sources that he was selling drugs again.

An ongoing investigation was being carried out into his narcotics sales when this incident occurred. Lopez's charges from April 7 and 8 are:

- Warrant for harassment, stalking, and intimidating a victim.
- Felony possession of controlled substance (heroin 5.63 grams)
- Felony possession of controlled substance (meth 10.34 grams)
- Violation of a protection order
- Resisting arrest
- Attempted murder
- Assault first degree
- Kidnapping first degree
- Sexual assault



"I appreciate the extra hours of work and dedication of our officers in working this complex case," Meek said. "Additionally, the Saguache County Sheriff's Office is continuing its close working relationship with the Center Police Department with dedicated support in critical cases."

CDA issues animal health alert for all backyard, 4-H, and commercial poultry producers

By LARRY BROWN
CSU Extension
VALLEY — Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza, HPAI for short, is a deadly virus for domestic birds. It has been detected in wild birds in Colorado in the past few weeks, so we are at risk.

As of Wednesday, April 6, it has not been detected in any domestic flocks in Colorado this year. There was an outbreak of HPAI in Colorado domestic flocks in 2014-2015, which proved deadly.

So far, there is no record of any humans in the United States contracting this disease.

The virus infects wild birds, especially waterfowl. It can kill wild birds, but it is much less deadly to them than it is to domestic poultry. Therefore, wild birds are carriers of the virus and are the primary way

in which the virus can be directly transmitted to your flock. Smaller wild birds, comingling with waterfowl, can also transmit the disease to your flock.

The virus is transmitted from bird to bird through feces and saliva.

The most effective way for you to protect your flock is to modify your coop and runs so that no wild birds can mingle with your flock, enter their area, or share feed or watering equipment. At this time, it is highly advised to keep your flock closed, meaning do not bring new domestic birds in. If you have recently brought new birds into your flock, it is advised to separate and quarantine the new birds for 21 days.

The virus can also be transmitted indirectly by humans, simply by stepping on the feces from a wild bird that is a carrier and then walking into your own poultry housing. In this same

way, the virus can be transferred by automobiles, tractors, wheelbarrows, and feeding and watering equipment. So be very aware of cleanliness practices.

Cleaning and even sterilizing your boots with bleach prior to entering your facilities is recommended. Keep your feeders and waters clean. Wash your hands well before and after handling birds or equipment. All these preventative measures are called biosecurity.

During the 2014-2015 outbreak, it was determined the initial infections came from direct contact with wild birds, but the spread was caused more by indirect transmission by humans from farm to farm. Because of this, the Colorado Department of Agriculture has passed an emergency rule, effective now through June 30,

suspending any events like shows or sales where birds from different flocks would be brought together and comingled. Limit who comes into your pens, and don't be visiting your neighbor's flock at this time.

Once the virus is transmitted into a domestic flock and the birds begin to show any signs of sickness, it progresses rapidly and is fatal, with 90%-100% of the birds dying within 24 to 48 hours. There is no treatment and there is no vaccine. The only way to protect your flock is through preventative biosecurity measures.

This is a reportable disease. This means if you have sick or dying birds, you are to call your veterinarian or the Colorado Department of Agriculture immediately. If you notice your birds going off feed or water, having difficulty breathing, swollen eyes,

having diarrhea, having tremors, or twisted neck, call your veterinarian or the CDA immediately so your flock can be properly diagnosed. Be proactive. This is not only about trying to save your own flock, this is about everyone doing their part to control the disease from spreading.

If you suspect your flock may be affected, call your veterinarian, the CDA State Veterinarian at 303-869-9130, or the CSU Avian Health Team at 970-297-4008. If you see three or more wild birds sick or dead in a two-week period, call the Colorado Parks and Wildlife office.

For more detailed information on the disease, reporting, and biosecurity measures, go to <https://ag.colorado.gov/press-release/cdas-emergency-rule-temporarily-suspends-all-colorado-poultry-events>.

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CSU announces new potato breeder for SLV Research Center

By MECHL MEEK

CENTER — According to Colorado State University’s San Luis Valley Research Center welcomed a new potato breeder — Jessica Chitwood-Brown.

“We are pleased to have her join the potato research team as the new potato breeder,” CSU San Luis Valley Research Center officials stated.

Chitwood-Brown will be working closely with David Holm on the transition of the important and impactful breeding program.

This transition will happen over the next several months. Holm retired after almost 44 years as the head of the potato breeding program at the SLV Research Center.

Chitwood-Brown is formerly a research scientist from the University of Florida and is

originally from Arkansas.

Chitwood-Brown earned a doctorate in horticulture from the University of Florida and specializes in implementing molecular tools in a breeding program.

While her focus in Florida was mainly on tomato crops, she stated that she was excited to focus on potato disease resistance, water use efficiency, and the impact of genomics on breeding.

“We wouldn’t have civilization in the way that we do without established agriculture. For thousands of years, people have been selecting plants that make better crops to feed and clothe people. Genetics are the underlying cause, the blueprint,” stated Chitwood-Brown in an interview by Sarah Ehrlich in the March issue



Jessica Chitwood-Brown

of Potato Grower Magazine.

The SLV Research Center has been searching for a successor to Holm since he announced his decision to retire last year.

CPD recognizes achievement of Sgt. Aaron Fresquez

By MECHL MEEK

CENTER — In a press release Center Police Department Chief Dale Meek recognized the achievement of CPD Sgt. Aaron Fresquez.

“I wanted to take this moment to recognize Sgt. Aaron Fresquez,” Meek stated. “He recently completed his ‘Trilogy’ with the FBI Law Enforcement Executive Development Association (FBI LEEDA). This is three separate courses in Supervisory Leadership, Command Leadership and Executive Leadership. When these courses are completed, a person receives their Trilogy recognition. I am proud of how Sgt. Fresquez has applied these courses to his leadership within the department and for the professional standards these courses represent to our department.”

Chief Meek explained that he requires each of the officers in the CPD to take advanced training courses and to pick a specialty that the officer finds interesting and furthers their career.

Examples of specialties for the officers include investigative techniques, school resource officer, K-9, and investigations.

It has been shown that officers who receive specialized training are more engaged with their community and it increases officer



Courtesy photo

Center Police Department Sgt. Aaron Fresquez recently completed specialized training with the FBI Law Enforcement Executive Development Association.

Please see FRESQUEZ on Page 8



Photo courtesy of Adams State University

Adams State was well represented at the national Farm Bureau conference. Pictured, Agribusiness Club members Wyatt Barton, advisor Zena Buser, Mattea Klein, Taylor Lewis, Chasey Blach, Katie Dalsaso, and Christian Santistevan.

Adams State agribusiness students attend conference

STAFF REPORT

ALAMOSA — Adams State University agribusiness students attended the American Farm Bureau Federation Young Farmers and Ranchers Conference from Feb. 24 through March 1, in Louisville, Ky.

ASU senior Mattea Klein competed in the collegiate discussion meet. She represented the state of Colorado at the national meet after placing first at the state conference in November.

ASU sophomore Taylor Lewis served as the social media ambassador for the conference. Adams State Agribusiness Club members Wyatt Barton, president; Chasey Blach, vice president; Christian Santistevan, Katie Dalsaso, and club advisor Zena Buser, professor of business, also attended the national conference.

The club attended group dinners, conference break-out sessions, visited Church Hill Downs, Kentucky horse farms,

and job fairs.

“As we reflect on our trip, with new experiences and knowledge from the agriculture industry, we strive to develop our future goals in continuing our passion for agriculture,” Lewis said.

The Adams State Agribusiness Club meets biweekly throughout the academic year. Currently, the club is hosting a drawing for a side of beef and selling hats with the club logo as fundraisers.

For more information about the club or the fundraisers, contact Barton at 970-520-9679, or email Bartonwc@grizzlies.adams.edu; Lewis at 970-759-8673, or email Lewistl@grizzlies.adams.edu; or Blach 970-630-5566, or email blachc@grizzlies.adams.edu.

“We are always finding ways to promote and expand our small but mighty club around campus and participate in campus activities while, having many of our members doubling as student-athletes, or having full-time jobs,” Lewis added.

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Resurfacing project begins on US 160 east of Monte Vista

Work also includes repaving of CO 370 and pedestrian improvements in Alamosa, Monte Vista

highway,” said CDOT Regional Transportation Director Julie Constan. “When this project is completed, motorists will find a smoother roadway surface with high visibility markings and stabilized shoulders. The pedestrian improvements will enhance safety for those walking or biking within the Monte Vista and Alamosa communities.”

The project was contracted to APC Southern Construction, of Golden, for \$10.4 million and is expected to be completed in October 2022.

Travel Impacts

Project work will take place during daylight hours, Monday through Friday. No weekend work is currently anticipated. Motorists will encounter brief closures with single lane alternating traffic and should allow for travel delays of up to 15 minutes. Flagging personnel will be on sight to direct travelers. Speed limits will be reduced to 40 mph in the project work area. During work hours motorists are asked to use caution when approaching and driving through the work zone.

Project Contact Information

For additional information about this project, contact the project team.

- Project Hotline — 719-480-9890
- Project email — jlopez@apc.us.com
- Project website — www.codot.gov/projects/us160-co370-resurfacing

STAFF REPORT

RIO GRANDE and ALAMOSA COUNTIES

The Colorado Department of Transportation announced work on US Highway 160 and Colorado Highway 370 in Rio Grande and Alamosa counties began this week. The project will improve US Highway 160 for approximately 16 miles east of Monte Vista from mile point 215 to 226. Additionally, four miles of Colorado Highway 370 will be improved between MP 4 and MP 8. CO 370 is located south of the US 160 corridor.

The project includes resurfacing the roadway and will incorporate shouldering improvements, erosion control, guardrail replacement, concrete curbing, signing, and final striping. Pedestrian features will also be constructed at intersections within the communities of Monte Vista and Alamosa. Enhancements include the construction of new concrete curbs and Americans with Disabilities Act-compliant ramps in both communities, as well as the installation of reflective flashing beacons at Lyell Street in Monte Vista.

“The project will enhance safety for San Luis Valley travelers on this busy two-lane

What is a SART?

SUBMITTED ARTICLE

ALAMOSA — A Sexual Assault Response Team, or SART, helps minimize the retraumatization of a survivor when engaging with the criminal justice system. SARTs initiate a collaborative response to provide support, information, and resources. This trauma-informed response not only benefits survivors but the agencies survivors engage with as well. For example, SARTs have identified many improvements to victims’ participation in the criminal justice system, including:

- Increasing likelihood of receiving referrals to advocacy services
- Increasing likelihood of receiving referrals to medical services
- Increasing the number of assaults reported to law enforcement
- Increasing clients’ engagement with investigation and court prep

SLV Rattlers are looking for a Mountain Bike Team

MONTE VISTA — The San Luis Valley Rattlers are currently looking for bicycle riders and coaches to join the SLV mountain bike team for the fall season. The Rattlers are looking for interested riders, grades 6 through 12.

The Rattlers are a group of bikers who hold races and special events. If you do not have a bike but would like to join the team, the Rattlers can lend you a bike. You can also join the team without being required to race.

The riders are also looking for adult coaches. Practice for the riders will begin July 15. To sign up, email slvrattlers@gmail.com or call Larry Roberts at 719-580-0129.

partnerships to more formal and coordinated responses on local, regional, state, tribal, or territory levels. SARTs typically include law enforcement investigators, advocates from community based sexual assault organizations, forensic examiners/nurses, and prosecutors.

In general, SARTs are committed to victims’ rights and needs, organize their service delivery to aid evidence collection, and educate the community about services available for intervention and prevention of sexual assault.

Unfortunately, sexual assault happens in all communities and not all communities are equipped with a SART. The earliest SARTs date back to the early 1970s, including one started by sexual assault advocates at Colorado State University in Fort Collins in 1974. Later, the Pueblo Rape Crisis Center initiated a SART to provide a more comfortable, less traumatic environment for forensic evidence collection and law enforcement investigation in 1998.

Our very own SART, serving the entire San Luis Valley, has been

persisting through funding hardships for almost a decade. Tu Casa Inc., the organization charged with SART coordination, remains committed to serving survivors of sexual assault, strengthening relationships with other agencies, and encouraging growth in the realm of trauma-informed sexual assault response. Tu Casa Inc.’s new SART coordinator, Amanda McClanahan, has a background in helping professions and is excited to start working towards increasing the number of agencies participating in SART meetings.

Tu Casa, Inc. is committed to empowering all children and adults to live healthy, violence-free lives. Their services are free, voluntary, and confidential and can be accessed through a 24-hour hotline at 719-589-2465. Throughout April, known as Sexual Assault Awareness and Child Abuse Prevention Month, you can stay updated on events and activities by following our Facebook: www.facebook.com/TuCasaInc and Instagram: www.instagram.com/slvluca.

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FRESQUEZ

Continued from Page 1

professionalism. “If you see Sgt. Fresquez over the next couple of weeks, please make sure to congratulate him for his award and hard work,” Meek added.

The FBI LEEDA Trilogy is intended to advance the science

and art of law enforcement leadership and promote the discussion of knowledge to improve law enforcement management procedures through training, education and networking among police professionals, according to FBI LEEDA.

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Boebert highlights 2022 Congressional Art Competition

STAFF REPORT
COLORADO — Congresswoman Lauren Boebert (R-District 3) recently announced that high school students can participate in the 2022 Congressional Art Competition. The winning artist will receive roundtrip tickets to attend a special national reception in Washington, D.C., and his or her artwork will be on display for one year in the U.S. Capitol.
 “Each Spring, I’m always amazed at how incredibly gifted Colorado’s Third Congressional District’s students are,” said Congresswoman Boebert. “Colorado has some of the most talented artists in the nation, and I encourage them to take advantage of this remarkable opportunity to showcase their work in a national exhibit.”

The Congressional Art Competition began in 1982 to provide an opportunity for members of Congress to encourage and recognize the artistic talents of their

young constituents. Since then, over 650,000 high school students have been involved with the nationwide competition.

Last year, Arianna from Centennial High School in Pueblo won Colorado’s Third Congressional District’s 2021 Congressional Art Competition.

Interested students should review 2022 Rules for Students and Teachers and complete the 2022 Student Release Form.

- **Qualifying Students:** Any High School Student in Colorado’s Third Congressional District.

- **How to Submit Artwork:** Students must mail or deliver their artwork to their respective Third Congressional District Regional Office by April 27, 2022. (Mailing addresses available at Boebert.house.gov)

- **Grand Junction Regional Office** includes schools in: Mesa, Delta, Montrose, Ouray, Gunnison, Pitkin, Lake, Eagle, Jackson, Routt, Garfield,

Rio Blanco, and Moffat counties

- **Pueblo Regional Office** includes schools in: Pueblo, Huerfano, Costilla, Conejos, Alamosa, Rio Grande, Mineral, Saguache, and Custer counties

- **Durango Regional Office** includes schools in: La Plata, Archuleta, Montezuma, San Juan, Dolores, San Miguel, and San Juan counties

- **Winners:** Winners will be announced in early May. The winning artist will receive roundtrip tickets to attend a special national reception

in Washington, D.C., and his or her artwork will be on display for one year in the U.S. Capitol.

- **Artwork Requirements:** Artwork must be two-dimensional. Each framed artwork can be no larger than 26 inches high, 26 inches wide, and 4 inches deep. If your artwork is selected as the winning piece, it must arrive in Washington, D.C., framed. Even when framed, it must still measure no larger than the above maximum dimensions. No framed piece should weigh more

than 15 pounds.

Each entry must be original in concept, design, and execution and may not violate U.S. copyright laws. Any entry that has been copied from an existing photo or image (including a painting, graphic, or advertisement) that was created by someone other than the student is a violation of the competition rules and will not be accepted.

For questions, or to make in-person delivery arrangements, call Naomi Dobbs at 970-317-6130.

Mineral County moves forward on project with SLV Housing Coalition

BY LYNSIE FERRELL
MINERAL COUNTY — Dawn Melgares, San Luis Valley Housing Coalition executive director, and Andrew Atchley, with the Department of Local Affairs Housing Division, met with Mineral County Commissioners for a public question-and-answer meeting on Monday, April 4.

It was recently announced by the SLV Housing Coalition that Mineral County would help with a grant that would aid in costs associated with the purchase of property in Creede that would be later used to create affordable housing in the area.

Mineral County Commissioners and the general public on Monday asked several questions about the proposed project and grant process, including how long it would take to finalize rentable housing in Creede.

Melgares began by explaining that the SLV Housing Coalition was working together with the Department of Local Affairs on a Community Development Block Grant that would be used to obtain property located south of Creede near Hargraves Park. The land has two vacant lots that would be used to build rentable housing and an existing building that will be used for the same.

The total cost of the purchase will come close to \$700,000 with \$400,000 being filtered through the county which would serve as a fiscal agent for the Community Development Block Grant. The remaining \$300,000 will come through the SLV Housing Coalition which has already started the process of applying for low-interest loans to make up the difference.

Atchley stated that from start to finish, once the grant application is submitted at the beginning of May, the housing coalition should be able to close on the property as soon as September.

Melgares stated that once the property was purchased by the housing coalition, they would seek further funding to start construction of the housing itself. Melgares stated that some funding through a Colorado Housing and Finance Grant was already in the works.

Though it is a time-consuming project, it is a step in the right direction for Creede and Mineral County. Like many communities throughout the San Luis Valley, Mineral County and Creede proper are struggling with the lack of affordable housing that is needed to strengthen their workforce and the local

economy.

The new housing property would have income-based rentals that will include single and family units. Melgares stated that the housing authority is hoping to have the project complete and units ready for rent in about 12 to 24 months depending on several factors including supply demands and weather. The price of rent would be based on the Annual Median Income in Mineral County which was determined to be about \$40,000.

In addition to the affordable housing project, the housing coalition has also completed its housing survey on the San Luis Valley and will be working with local officials to present the findings in the coming weeks. The City of Creede is also part of the conversation and will be working with the housing coalition to help with this project or future projects as time and resources allow. It was also stated that the housing coalition will be paying property tax on the units once they are finished and rentable.

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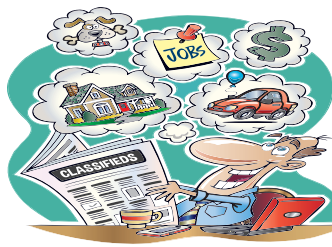
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05 Notices

Saguache County Landfill – Free Landfill Dump Days! 2022 Landfill Dump Days Schedule Friday, April 22nd from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. EXTENDED HOURS on Saturday, April 23rd from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Who Can Participate Saguache County residents can bring most large items, debris, and recyclables to the Saguache County Landfill AT NO CHARGE. **IMPORTANT:** Be ready with valid identification to show proof of residency to cashier (driver's license with picture ID or utility bill); NO ELECTRONICS (computers, monitors, TV's etc.) are accepted at the landfill; APPLIANCES will only be accepted with proof or certification that Freon has been removed; All Burnable, (untreated wood, branches, etc.) Tires*, and Metals must be separated from other debris; **ABSOLUTELY NO HAZARDOUS MATERIALS;** All loads are subject to inspection; All loads must be covered and secured for transport. *CRS 30-20-1408 – Saguache County Residents will be permitted to dump NO MORE than 9 tires per load – ALL COMMERCIAL HAULERS will be charged at the regular per tire rate. **Saguache County Landfill Location, The landfill is located off of County Road 55 on 25125 Kelly Road, Saguache, CO. Telephone: 719-221-1956 Hours: Sunday and Monday – Closed Tuesday: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Wednesday, Thursday and Friday: 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**

Saturday: 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. (4/20)

Saguache County Government is accepting bids for a 30'x8' office building for the Saguache County Landfill. This office type building will be used to for an office building for our Landfill. This bid request will also require the installation of a sewage disposal system and solar system for electric. For specific specifications of the building please contact Wendi Maez at wmaez@saguachecounty-co.gov or Randy Arredondo at rarrredondo@saguachecounty-co.gov. Bids must be submitted in a sealed envelope with "Saguache County Landfill Office" written on the front of the envelope which contains the sealed bid. Bids must include proof of liability and 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, April 14, 2022 at 3pm. **For further information you can also call Wendi Maez at 719-655-2231 or Randy Arredondo at 719-655-2554.(4/13)**

Saguache County Government is accepting bids for a 60'x26' equipment shop in the Town of Sargent. This shop will be used to house Road and Bridge equipment with a monolithic 6000 PSI concrete pad. For specific specifications of the building please contact Wendi Maez at wmaez@saguachecounty-co.gov or Randy Arredondo at rarrredondo@

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, April 14, 2022 at 3pm. **For further information you can also call Wendi Maez at 719-655-2231 or Randy Arredondo at 719-655-2554.(4/13)**

For information on meetings for ALANON NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS AND ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS Please visit slvaa.

org or call 719-937-5083.

07 Help Wanted

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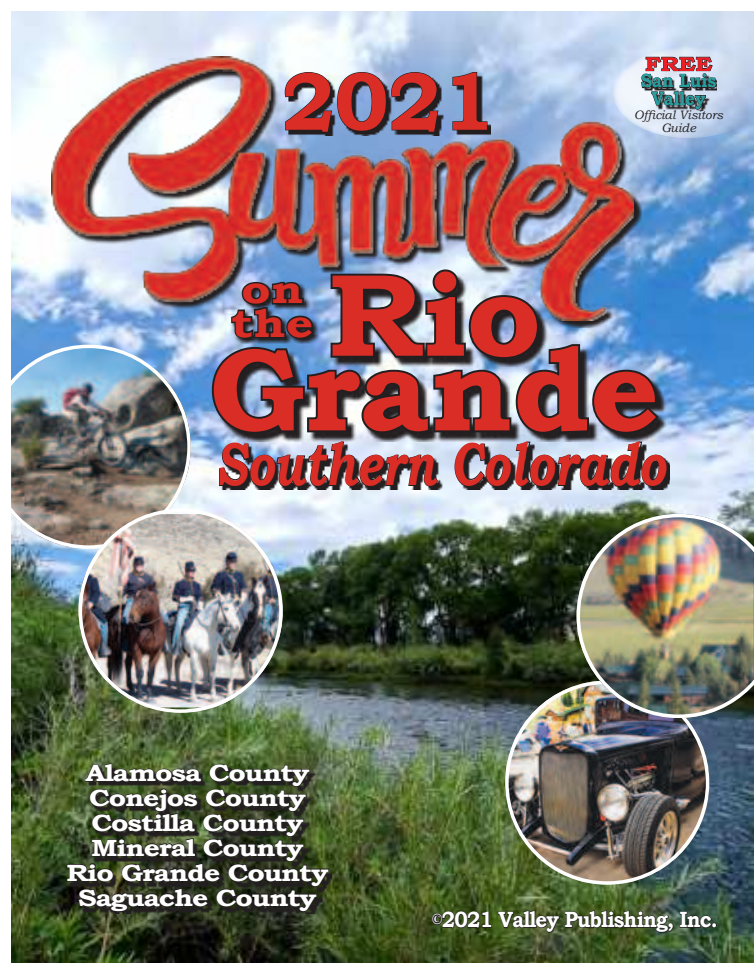
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Valley Wide Classifieds

City of Monte Vista seeks two citizens with a desire to volunteer and serve the Monte Vista One Cent Oversight Committee. The One Cent Oversight Committee consists of persons residing in the City of Monte Vista who have been appointed by the Monte Vista City Council. One Cent Oversight Committee members serve in an advisory capacity to the City of Monte Vista Council in matters relating to the appropriation of funds on the 1-cent tax passed in 2019. Interested applicants please send letter of interest to uvance@ci.monte-vista.co.us or 95 West 1st Street Monte Vista, CO. 81144 no later than April 28, 2022. Please make sure that your letter of interest contains your email address, as this will be a main source of communication. City Council will appoint members at the May 19, 2022 City Council Meeting. (4/20)

RG BANK is now accepting applications for the position of FULL TIME TELLER. The job is primarily in Monte Vista, but work in Alamosa is also required at times. Interested parties can see more and download an application at: <https://rgbank.bank/contact-us/#employment> (4/27)

IMMEDIATE OPENINGS: Laborers & sorters needed for potato packing warehouse. Mountain King Potato has positions available. Experience preferred but willing to train. Applications can be picked up @ Mountain King Potato 0840 N Hwy 285 Monte Vista, CO Monday - Friday 8am -4pm. Benefits include paid vacation, paid sick days, health insurance available & 401-K benefits. (4/14)

Elementary Special Education Teacher needed at Del Norte Elementary School. We are seeking an experienced, hardworking and enthusiastic teaching professional to join our dynamic, vibrant and fun-loving team. Please submit your application, resume and cover letter to: Amy Duda, Principal at aduda@urtigers.co or contact Amy at 719-657-4050. Applications can be picked up at the District Office or online at: urtigers.co.(4/14)

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)

MONTE VISTA HEAD START is accepting applications for a Family Services Manager. This position is a year-round 40 hours/week. Must have a baccalaureate degree preferably in an area related to social work, human services, counseling or family services. The Family Services Manager is responsible for Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, Attendance, and Communication. The FSM serves as a liaison between Monte Vista Head Start and agencies with whom we have or will establish a Community Partnership. Applications are available at Monte Vista Head Start, 2863 Sherman Ave., Monte Vista, Colorado. For more information, you may contact the director by email, director@mv-headstart.org or call 719-852-3215. An employment application must be complete. Position open until filled. (4/14)

MONTE VISTA HEAD START is accepting applications for a Program Assistant. This position is part-time, 20 hours/week. The Program Assistant must have a High School diploma or equivalent. The Program Assistant will assist in the recruitment of children and serve as a link between families, staff, and community, data entry, and other office duties. Applications are available at Monte Vista Head Start, 2863 Sher-



Congratulations Class of 2022!

Valley Publishing will be printing the annual San Luis Valley Graduation edition on April 27th... don't miss this opportunity to wish the Class of 2022 congratulations!

This special edition will be included in the Center Post Dispatch, Conejos County Citizen, Del Norte Prospector, Mineral County Miner, Monte Vista Journal, South Fork Times and SLV Lifestyles.

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Driveline is Hiring in our area. For more Information visit www.driveline-retail/careers.com (4/27)

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. Call 719/852-2662 for more info, prefer drop off of resumes in person at 5492 US Hwy 160 E, east of Monte Vista.(4/27)

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 or pick up and submit to Human Resources 925 6th Street, Room 200, Del Norte, CO 81132.

Rio Grande County is looking for a Health Equity Program Specialist who can commit to 40 hours/week. This is a time-limited position through June 30, 2023. This position will involve a wide range of activities to support racial and health equity-focused work, some of which will be rapidly moving and partnership-driven, and other activities that will necessitate attention to detail and strong organizational skills. The main responsibilities will be to provide logistical and materials development support to COVID Response Coordinator. Pay range is \$20.55 - \$21.28. Associate (preferred Bachelor)’s degree in a public health or related field. Experience in community-based program development, grassroots organizing, and knowledge of racial/ethnic minority groups preferred. Must have excellent interpersonal skills and ability to communicate effectively including good group process, facilitation, negotiation and presentation skills. Pre-employment drug screening, including testing for marijuana, will

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Work on the Nelson Tunnel continues

STAFF REPORT
MINERAL COUNTY — Work continues on the Nelson Tunnel project located north of Creede as spring makes its way to the high country. Dania Zinner, U.S. EPA Region 8 Remedial Project Manager with the Environmental Protection Agency, stated in an interview Tuesday, April 5, that the project is on schedule and going well.

“The Nelson Tunnel is the lowest level of a mine complex including, but not limited to, the Nelson Tunnel, the Commodore Mine, the Amethyst Mine, the Happy Thought Mine, and the Last Chance Mine,” Zinner said. “The Nelson Tunnel was driven to serve as a drainage and haulage tunnel for the complex in the 1890s. Shortly after that, the owner of the Commodore Mine drove the Commodore Level 5 Tunnel to serve as a haulage tunnel for Commodore ore and to compete with the Nelson Tunnel.”

While work was being completed on

level 5 of the Commodore Mine, the EPA noticed significant rock fall which signaled a need to work on releasing the pressure built up by water coming through the Nelson Tunnel which is located below the Commodore Mine.

“The Commodore Level 5 Tunnel is located above Nelson Tunnel and is connected by vertical mine workings,” Zinner said. “As the water levels periodically fluctuate in the largest mine pool of the Nelson Tunnel, water flows into the Commodore Level 5 Tunnel, allowing pressure relief on the largest impoundment before water returns to the Nelson further down gradient. In this way, the stability of the Commodore Level 5 Tunnel is critical to the stability of the largest Nelson Tunnel impoundment. The Nelson Tunnel mine pools are heavily mineralized with elevated levels of zinc and cadmium.”

It is further explained by Zinner that through the process, “DRMS monitored water levels and condition

of the workings in 2016, 2017, and early 2018 and reported that conditions in the Commodore Level 5 Tunnel were deteriorating at an increasing rate. As the workings continue to deteriorate without intervention, further rockfall could completely block the flow path of water between the two tunnels, hindering the pressure relief that the Commodore Level 5 Tunnel currently provides. Such a blockage would also prevent any inspections of water levels beyond it, eliminating all knowledge of the amount of water impounded within the system.”

According to Zinner, the project is in the last phase of the removal process which included stabilizing areas of Commodore Level 5 Tunnel to prevent further deterioration. Clearing much and debris such as rock fall from the tunnel roof or walls from the floor of the tunnel to prevent water from impounding. Maintaining and keeping vertical connections from Commodore Level 5 to the Nelson Tunnel Maintaining physical access between Commodore Level 5 Tunnel and Nelson Tunnel. Rehabilitating the portal gate structure and maintaining Commodore Level 5 Tunnel; walls and roof for worker access.



Photos courtesy of EPA

Remedial work continues on the Nelson Tunnel near Creede as part of a process that will help ensure minimal leakage of contaminated water. The next steps for Nelson Tunnel site are remedial design of the planned bulkhead in the Nelson Tunnel to reduce the likelihood of a large and sudden release of mining-influenced water.

“This removal effort will contribute to any future remedial effort at the Superfund Site by ensuring continued access to key portions of the Nelson Tunnel for remedial design and water level monitoring purposes. It is also intended to keep the Commodore Level 5 Tunnel open so it can relieve pressure on the Nelson Tunnel impoundments

and thereby reduce the likelihood of a large, sudden, uncontrolled release of the Nelson Tunnel,” Zinner said.

The next steps for the Nelson Tunnel site are the remedial design of the planned bulkhead in the Nelson Tunnel to reduce the likelihood of a large and sudden release of mining-influenced water.



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		H	W	E	I		A	L	I	A	S				
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