

## Shorts

### Ribbon cutting for building at Ski Hi Complex is Feb. 25

**MONTE VISTA** — The Outcalt Event and Conference at SLV Ski Hi Complex ribbon cutting is Friday, Feb 25, from 4:30-6:30 p.m. The public is invited to come celebrate and tour this wonderful San Luis Valley community project. Light refreshments will be served.

### County Road 38 near MV Coop will be closed Feb. 25-28

**MONTE VISTA** — County Road 38, just east of the Monte Vista Coop at 1901 E. U.S. Highway 160 will be closed Friday, Feb. 25 through Monday, Feb. 28. People are being advised to use an alternate route.

### Adult Basketball League registration is underway

**MONTE VISTA** — Registration for Adult Basketball League Men's and Women's through the City of Monte Vista is open Feb. 14-28. The league is open to people 15 years old and older. It runs from March through May. Cost is \$350 per team and \$35 per player. Register online at [cityofmontevista.colorado.gov/pay-bill](http://cityofmontevista.colorado.gov/pay-bill) then click on the "sports" tab.

### Youth Basketball Camp registration is open

**MONTE VISTA** — Registration for Youth Basketball Camp through the City of Monte Vista is open. The camp is Aug. 2-4 at Monte Vista High School gymnasium and is for boys and girls in grades 7-12. Register now and save 20 percent by calling 719-852-8287.

### SF Fire Ladies Auxiliary offering two scholarships

**SOUTH FORK** — The South Fork Fire Rescue Ladies Auxiliary is offering two scholarships in 2022. The South Fork Fire Rescue Ladies Auxiliary Scholarship is awarded twice a year to individuals looking for a career in EMS, paramedic, fire or rescue.

To apply, you must be a resident of Alamosa, Rio Grande, Conejos, Costilla, Saguache, Mineral, Archuleta or La Plata counties and be a high school graduate or possess a G.E.D. For more information and application visit online [www.southforkfirerescue.com/scholarship](http://www.southforkfirerescue.com/scholarship).

## Mountain Valley School District chooses new mascot — Wolves

BY MECHEL MEEK

**SAGUACHE** — Mountain Valley School District has a new mascot — the Wolves.

On Feb. 15, the school district's Board of Education held its regular meeting. On the agenda was the selection of a new mascot for Mountain Valley Schools in Saguache. The original mascot — the Indians — was deemed inappropriate under Colorado Statue. Senate Bill 21-116 was signed into law on June 28, 2021, by Gov. Jared Polis.

According to Mountain Valley School District, "The act prohibits the use of American Indian mascots by public schools, including charter and institute

charter schools, and public institutions of higher education as of June 1, 2022. The act imposes a fine of \$25,000 per month for each month that a public school continues to use a mascot after such date, payable to the state education fund."

American Indian mascot refers to any name, image or symbol that refers to any tribe that is used as a nickname, logo, mascot, or team name. Since the current mascot was unacceptable under S.B. 21-116, the district asked for input from the community, students and teachers as to what the mascot should be.

The choices of mascot were Mavericks, *Please see MASCOT on Page 2A*



Photo by Mechel Meek

Saguache County Board of County Commissioners heard concerns from residents about proposed land-use code changes during their Feb. 22 regular meeting. A major point of contention was setting the minimum square footage for residential construction at 600.

## Saguache Commissioners hear concerns regarding land-use changes

*People contend they were not part of the process*

BY MECHEL MEEK

**SAGUACHE** — Land-use changes continue to be a concern

for Saguache County residents and the Saguache County Board of Commissioners are making it a point to have the Land Use Planning Commission get their input.

During the portion of the regular Board of Commissioners meeting on Feb. 22, regarding land-use

changes, the public was allowed to speak for 3 minutes per person. More than 10 people from various areas of Saguache County spoke about the proposed land-use changes submitted by the Land Use Planning Commission.

*Please see LAND on Page 2A*

## Great Sand Dunes begins recruitment for the 2022 Conservation Internship Program

STAFF REPORT

**GREAT SAND DUNES NATIONAL PARK** — Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve is actively recruiting young adults interested in a career with a federal land agency for this year's Conservation Internship Program.

The internship program seeks young adults from San Luis Valley communities to work at Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve to learn skills, contribute to meaningful park projects, and create experiences that will make them marketable in a career with a public land agency.

*Please see PROGRAM on Page 2A*

Photo by Caden Alonzo



## RGNF seeks public input on Cantonment Vegetation Project

STAFF REPORT

**SAGUACHE** — The Rio Grande National Forest's Saguache Ranger District is asking the public for input on a proposal for the Cantonment Vegetation Management Project. The 30-day public scoping period began on Feb. 11. Comments will be accepted until March 14.

Written comments should be submitted to the responsible official, Tristram Post, District Ranger, at: Saguache Ranger District, Attn: Cantonment Vegetation Management Project, 46525 State Hwy 114, Saguache, CO 81149

Written comments may also be sent via email to [comments-rocky-mountain-rgnf@fs.fed.us](mailto:comments-rocky-mountain-rgnf@fs.fed.us). *Please see RGNF on Page 6A*

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# OBITUARIES

## Rey Simon Sisneros

Rey Simon Sisneros, 62, passed away too soon on Jan. 28, 2022, in Colorado Springs, Colo., after complications from an illness. He was born on Feb. 18, 1959, in Espanola, N.M., to Simon Sisneros and Corine Sisneros.

Preceding Rey in death is wife Susan Sisneros, brothers, "Eppie" Jose Sisneros and Joe Lee Sisneros.

Those left to cherish the memories of Rey are both his parents, Simon and Corine Sisneros of Monte Vista, Colo., children, Shari and Rutilio Lobatos of Pueblo, Colo., David and Christina Sisneros of Clayton, N.M., Catrina Sisneros and Walter Williams of Dalhart, Texas, Robert and Melissa Sisneros of Tennessee, grandchildren, Anastasia Sierra of Denver, Colo., Jacob Reyez, Lorena Lobatos, Lily Lobatos and Arianna Sisneros of Pueblo, Colo., Elijah Sisneros and Natalie Sisneros of Clayton, N.M., Brianna DeHerrera and Darius Williams of Dalhart, Texas, Maya Sisneros of Tennessee and siblings, Dean and Louise Sisneros of Monte Vista, Colo., Eleasar and Rosalina Sisneros of Midland, Texas, Derrick Sisneros of Colorado Springs, Colo., Glen and George Sisneros of Midland, Texas, and Jeffery and Marla Sisneros of Alamosa, Colo. Rey also had Uncle Richard and Aunt Rose Madrid of



Monte Vista, Colo., Aunt Susie Lopez of El Rito, N.M. and cousins on both sides.

Rey bravely and proudly served his country and joined the United States Army in 1978 until being honorably discharged in 1983, then went on to join the National Guard from 1984 to 1991.

A memorial service was held on Feb. 4, 2022, at Strohmayer's Funeral Home in Monte Vista.

Arrangements in care of Strohmayer's Funeral Home.

## William Joseph Haberlein

William Joseph Haberlein, experienced gatherer and lifelong learner, died Wednesday morning Feb. 16, 2022, at his home in El Paso, Texas, after a two-year battle with esophageal cancer. He was 74 years old.

Bill was preceded in death by his parents Jack and Marty Haberlein, and by his brother Fred Haberlein, famous artist and muralist.

Bill is survived by his wife Benja Gayle Gaines, his son, Gene Wesley, and two children by a previous marriage, Jennifer Wilson and Dr. Larry Wilson, who live in Tampa, Fla.

Bill was born on Nov. 14, 1947, in Tulsa, Okla., where his father worked as a petroleum engineer. When Bill was 12 years old, on April 8, 1960, his family moved to Antonito, Colo., where they lived and ran the Conejos Ranch for many years.

Bill was a Renaissance man. He assisted many with his legal knowledge as an experienced paralegal, Real Estate Broker, and contractor. He was an amateur pilot, Taekwondo red belt, and shared a birthday with his greatly respected Shotokan Karate instructor in Denver, Sensei Yutaka Yaguchi.

In his youth, Bill was also



Deputy Sheriff in Antonito. Bill was known for his helpfulness, honesty, integrity, and brilliance.

Bill will be greatly missed by all those that relied on him for wisdom, humor, and companionship. He was a loyal friend and most loving husband and father.

A Celebration of Life will be scheduled in Antonito, Colo., sometime in the summer of 2022 to ensure the safety of the attendees. In lieu of flowers, please donate to the American Cancer Society.

# LAND

 Continued from Page 1A

There were several suggested changes to the land-use code from the Land Use Planning Commission but the areas of contention centered around the minimum square footage for residential building permits.

Last year, several people were concerned with the proposed 900 minimum square footage and as a result, the commissioners asked the Land Use Commission to revisit this and other issues from people.

The Land Use Planning Commission returned a recommendation that the minimum square footage be set at 600 square feet for residential construction.

The other two points of contention from people were a minor change to the marijuana excise tax code and accessory dwelling units could not be placed on a property without a residence.

There would be a process for agriculture to receive a variance for the placement of agriculture-specific buildings.

Lisa Bodey, a Saguache County resident and member of the Crestone Energy Exchange, said she wanted to share ideas, education and innovation with the Land Use Commission.

"When can we actually work together to address land use issues," she asked.

She added that she felt there had been too many barriers for the public to be heard by the commission.

In response, County Commissioner Tom McCracken said, "If the planning commission cannot have input from the public then we have a problem."

Other people who spoke at the meeting echoed the sentiments of Bodey.

The Commissioners unanimously approved sending back the issue of minimum square footage to the commission.

The Land Use Planning Commission's next work session is at 3 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 24 at the Saguache County Road and Bridge Building, with minimum square footage on the work session agenda.

Commissioner Lynne Thompson said, "I think that they should have been allowed to give their presentation. I think all these people need to be heard."

People are asked to contact the Land Use Planning Commission to speak at the Feb. 24 work session.

# MASCOT

 Continued from Page 1A

Bison, Wolves and Mammoths. The top student choice was Wolves, the top community choice was Mavericks, and the top staff choice was Bison. The Board voted first on the name

Mavericks, which did not pass. The second vote was to name the mascot the Wolves. The vote for Wolves passed. The mascot graphics and other logistics will be set at a later date.

# PROGRAM

 Continued from Page 1A

Since the program was piloted in the summer of 2019, the park has hired 15 interns to support resource management projects, work alongside rangers in the visitor center, and complete important facility management projects. The program is administered in partnership with Conservation Legacy, an organization committed to fostering conservation service in support of communities and ecosystems.

This year, the park will offer multiple internship positions working with the Interpretation and Visitor Services Program.

The Park will select candidates for the following opportunities:

- Two 12-week (3 months) internships, starting mid-May and ending in mid-August receiving a weekly stipend of \$520. This internship is ideal for a recent high school graduate or degree-seeking college student. Interns will provide customer service at the visitor center, make connections with visitors on park trails, and assist with event

planning and social media posts.

- One 26-week (6 months) internship, starting mid-April to mid-October receiving a weekly stipend of \$634. This internship is ideal for current college students or college graduates. The intern will provide support to the park's educational program during on-site field trips or distance learning programs and other youth engagement activities. The intern will also provide customer service at the visitor center, make a connection with visitors on park trails, and assist with event planning and social media posts.

Upon completion of the program, interns will receive an educational award, varying in amounts and based on the length of their term. The Park will cover uniform and training costs.

The intern completing a term of 18 weeks or more will also qualify

for Direct Hire Authority. Direct Hire Authority allows students who excel in their internships and meet any other job-specific education or training requirements to be hired without competition into permanent positions within the National Park Service and other select bureaus of the Department of the Interior for which they are qualified.

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Image of a family in a kitchen.

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# OPINION & EDITORIAL

## LETTERS

### RGC Republican Precinct Caucuses March 3

Editor,  
 Rio Grande County Republican Central Committee would like to invite you, Republican and unaffiliated voters of Rio Grande County, to the upcoming RGC Republican Precinct Caucuses.

Are you concerned about global threats? Are you concerned about national security? Are you concerned about your freedoms as Americans being taken away? Our military? The economy? Your family's future? Election integrity? Religious Liberty and more?

We are too! It all starts with participating in your local precinct caucus. Caucus is where your concerns are put into resolutions that go to the county assembly, on to state assembly, then to the Republican National Committee.

Where and when will the Rio Grande County Republican Precinct Caucuses be held?  
 Rio Grande County Republican Precinct Caucuses on March 3 at 7 p.m.

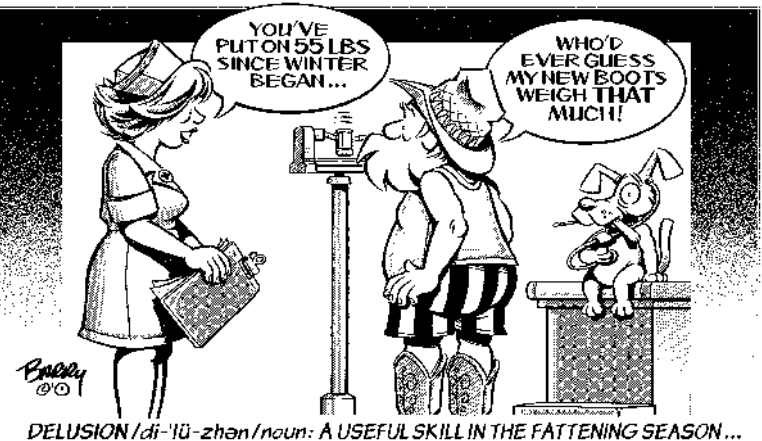
If you don't know what precinct you are in visit, online [www.caucus.cologop.org/](http://www.caucus.cologop.org/)

- Precinct 10 — meet at South Fork Fire House, 28 Mall St., South Fork
- Precincts 2, 3, 11, 13 — meet at Rio Grande County Courthouse Annex Building, 965 6th St., Del Norte
- Precincts 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 14, 15 — meet at Nazarene Church Gym, 228 Madison St., Monte Vista.

Who is eligible to participate in the Rio Grande County precinct caucuses?  
 All registered Rio Grande County Republican voters:

- Who have lived in the precinct for at least 22 days before the caucus — Feb. 9, 2022
- Who have been registered to vote no later than 22 days before the caucus — Feb. 9, 2022
- Who have been affiliated with the Republican Party for at least 22 days — Feb. 9, 2022
- Anyone who turns 18 or becomes a naturalized citizen less than 22 days before the caucus may participate — Feb. 9, 2022
- A pre-registrant who is 17 years of age at the caucus but will be 18 years old on the date of the next general election — Nov. 8, 2022

No voting by proxy or absentee permitted at caucus  
 Unaffiliated voters in Rio Grande County, you are welcome to attend and observe the Republican caucus for your precinct.  
*Rio Grande County Republican Central Committee*



DELUSION /di-'lū-zhən/noun: A USEFUL SKILL IN THE FATTENING SEASON...

## Making food in case I die

I was the first to start having some symptoms but Miss Trixie, ever the copycat, soon followed suit and we both were stretched out in bed like two big, old beached whales.

Thankfully the government in their ever-thoughtful way had sent me a COVID testing kit absolutely free. Of course, they are charging the cost of that to me and my kids and grandkids as part of the national debt, so the old adage "nothing is free" still holds true even in this case.

But at least I had the darned thing at home and didn't have to traipse out to town to find out how sick I was but could find out in the privacy of our own abode.



Trout Republic by Kevin Kirkpatrick

As you know, Miss Trixie is resourceful beyond compare. As soon as Ol' Dutch became incapacitated she leaped to her feet and started cooking food enough for an army for the days ahead.

Her thinking was that if she got really sick and could not cook for me then I would not starve in the interim period of recuperation. Which is normally pretty good thinking but I do believe Ol' Dutch could probably live off the land — or the lard, if you know what I mean as I have plenty of reserves.

But regardless we had chicken nuggets bagged and ready for the pestilence and famine days ahead and Miss Trixie could then relax and have her own walk with the sweats.

I have to tell you that she does come by preparing ahead honestly. One time her mother was to have surgery and so she went to her kitchen and wrangled up three coconut cream pies for Trixie's dad, in case she didn't make it home from the hospital.

And I guess that is thoughtful in a way but so unnecessary in Texas as any funeral is bound to be followed by a large potluck and with 600 of your closest friends bringing food, any widow should be set for a long time following said event.

And not only that, rest assured that the widows all come out of the woodwork and make sure that poor man has food and company galore in the days ahead. That is until one

of them corrals him once again into the pen of perpetual nuptials.

But Ol' Dutch, ever his caring and sympathetic self, didn't have the heart to point out to Miss Trixie all the selfless widows just waiting in the wings for her to pass so they could have a turn with Ol' Dutch themselves. So, cook, she did.

But as luck would have it, Miss Trixie was able to rally at the last moment and seems to be on the road to recovery, cooking up a storm around the kitchen once again.

There was one good thing about having the big C and that was it gave Ol' Dutch an excuse to do nothing. That's right. I mean more than my normal nothing excuse which is just because I am a man.

No, that positive line on the test kit gave me carte blanche permission for naps, recliner time, coffee, and just plain old bellyaching. You know? Man sick.

It appears we are on the way to recovery and thankful it was not worse as some people really are suffering from it. Thankful for all the prayers of many, the patience of Miss Trixie, and the ever-stoic nature of Ol' Dutch himself in times of trouble.

*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.*

## Robinson announces run for RGC Sheriff

Editor,  
 My name is Anne Robinson, and I'm running for Rio Grande County Sheriff. I have 37 years of experience in law enforcement, almost 32 of which have been in service to the people of the State of Colorado with the Colorado State Patrol. I've worked in the metro area, the mountains, on an interstate, and in rural communities. I recently retired at the rank of Sergeant Major. I have experience in various aspects of law enforcement including dispatch/communications, jail, administration, supervision, and public relations. I worked for the Colorado State University Police Department, National Park Service, Clear Creek County Sheriff's Office, Valley County (Idaho) Sheriff's Office, as well as the Colorado State Patrol.

I grew up in a farm community where my father taught me the value of community service. He felt strongly about taking care of the community and he retired from the local volunteer fire department after more than 40 years as a member. He also gave his time as a fire district board member and treasurer. I feel strongly about that kind of work ethic and choose to be a good neighbor through my actions. Having been a victim of crime myself, I don't want people to feel "revictimized" by receiving poor service or their needs not being met.

I've built strong partnerships with local law enforcement agencies, other government entities, businesses, and community members over the 21 years I've been in the San Luis Valley. I've responded to community concerns, solving problems through partnerships if I or my agency alone couldn't do it. I feel law enforcement officers should be representative of the community they serve and be a part of that community. We have a responsibility to take ethical action on behalf of the people who live, work, recreate, or travel through this county.

I've been active in several local non-profit organizations to include being a board member for the San Luis Valley Boys and Girls Club, President of Trail Wise Back Country Horsemen, President of Covered Wagon Days, and as the Merchandise Chairperson for the Rio Grande Chapter of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation.

I'd appreciate your support and if elected I would work toward bringing professional, dedicated, and caring law enforcement to Rio Grande County.

*Anne Robinson  
 Rio Grande County*



## Mineral County Clerk and Recorder Wintz running for reelection

Editor,  
 Please consider this my official announcement for my intention to run for re-election as your Mineral County Clerk and Recorder.

I'm pursuing another term amongst the most trying, challenging, hostile times within our capacity of Election Officials because at the end of every day no matter the noise, the power I hold to protect the absolute right of every voter in Mineral County to voice their choice brings me fire and passion to fight.

I promise to continue to be ethical, professional, and do my best covering all aspects within this office while staying approachable and your best ally. Every vote is a mark of confidence, and the depth of my appreciation is remarkable.

As always, I look forward to conversations with anyone seeking information or insight, my door is open for you.

*Eryn K. Wintz  
 Mineral County*



# CENTER POST-DISPATCH

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# Celebrating Irish-American Heritage Month



Photo of Dublin coddle courtesy of The Spruce, Irish American graphic courtesy of the United States Census Bureau.

By MECHEL MEEK

**SAGUACHE COUNTY** — In 1991 Congress designated March as Irish-American Heritage Month and each year the sitting U.S. President issues a proclamation commemorating this occasion.

The beginnings of the celebration of Irish-American Heritage Month began with the religious holiday to honor St. Patrick, who introduced Christianity to Ireland in the 5th Century. Over time, this religious holiday has evolved into a celebration of all things Irish.

According to the U.S. Census

Bureau, "The world's first St. Patrick's Day parade occurred on March 17, 1762, in New York City, featuring Irish soldiers who served in the English military. This parade became an annual event, with President Truman attending in 1948."

In the United States, 30.4 million people claimed Irish ancestry in the 2019 community survey. The largest concentration of people living in the United States with Irish ancestry was Cook County, Ill.

Colorado has a higher concentration of people with Irish ancestry than the overall United States. In Colorado, 11.6% of people identify as having Irish ancestry, and the United States has 9.2%.

One of the most popular ways to celebrate Irish heritage is through food, with the traditional and popular recipes of Dublin coddle, soda bread, bangers and mash, Irish brown bread, Irish stew and for dessert, Irish fruit cake.

## SdCNHA offers youth programs

STAFF REPORT

**ALAMOSA** — Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area (SdCNHA) is looking for students to participate in its Caminos de Valle Youth Walking Tours and its Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Camp.

With 11,000 years of documented human habitation, the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area is a crossroads of the centuries. Here a blend of Native American, Hispano and Anglo settlement is reflected in the diversity of the people, art and traditions. The geographic isolation of the high desert San Luis Valley and the peoples' enduring ties to the land have given rise to a rich cultural heritage and ensured its preservation.

The area's fertile cultural landscape is complemented by remarkable natural resources, including the mighty Rio Grande, majestic Rocky Mountain

peaks, Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve, Alamosa National Wildlife Refuge, Baca National Wildlife Refuge and Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuges, and the high mountain desert, all of which lend the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area an unparalleled beauty that offers a sense of retreat and a powerful source of inspiration for visitors.

Caminos de Valle Youth Walking Tours: SdCNHA will train six youth, ages 16-18, in group leadership roles that will lead walking tours in neighborhoods and public lands, cultural and historical nature, land and water conservation, nature-based education, walk facilitation, and tourism all within the heritage area. Students will choose the topics and locations they would like to lead tours in as well as becoming CPR certified, trained in public speaking,

self-defense, history, culture, and traditions. Each youth leader will receive a stipend at the end of the program for leading guided walking tours in the month of June, 2022. This program is free to the youth.

Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area Camp: SdCNHA will host two one-week-long camps in June. One for middle school aged students and one for high school aged students. This is an opportunity for youth to learn local history, heritage, traditions, and culture by visiting a variety of sites within the heritage area as historians will be able to elaborate on such topics and answer questions. This program is free to the youth.

If interested, fill out an application online at [www.sangreheritage.org/collaborate/](http://www.sangreheritage.org/collaborate/) and email to [info@sdcnha.org](mailto:info@sdcnha.org) or hand deliver to 231 State Ave. in Alamosa.

## Sargent Kindergarten Round-up is March 15-16

STAFF REPORT

**MONTE VISTA** — Sargent Elementary is having a Kindergarten Round-up on March 15 and 16 at the school. The event is for kindergarten enrollment for the 2022-23 school year.

To schedule an appointment or for more information, call Michelle at 719-852-4024.

Parents or guardians can register their child at this time for kindergarten and meet the teacher and principal. Children will also be

prescreened.

To be eligible for kindergarten in the 22-23 school year, children must be 5 years old on or before June 1, 2022. Parents or guardians will need to bring their child's birth certificate and immunization records.



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## San Luis Valley Scoreboard Basketball 2021-2022

### BOYS BASKETBALL

Centaurs 58	Alamosa 53
Ignacio 41	Del Norte 25
Sierra Grande 2	Lake City 0
Creede 60	Cotopaxi 33
Sangre de Cristo 51	Antonito 39
Moffat 44	Centennial 42
Centennial 62	Lake City 16
Cotopaxi 62	Sangre de Cristo 31
Moffat 70	Antonito 30
Sierra Grande 64	Manzanola 22
Primero 48	Moffat 32
Sierra Grande 64	La Veta 36
Cotopaxi 29	Centennial 27
Monte Vista 53	Trinidad 34
Custer County 71	Sargent 42
Sanford 51	Del Norte 49
Pagosa Springs 55	Del Norte 25
Sanford 62	Center 39
Monte Vista 57	Sargent 16
Durango 59	Alamosa 49

### GIRLS BASKETBALL

Centaurs 49	Alamosa 46
Sanford 40	Pagosa Springs 20
Sangre de Cristo 53	Center 44
Ignacio 38	Del Norte 34
Sierra Grande 43	Lake City 5
Sangre de Cristo 53	Antonito 18
Centennial 67	Moffat 27
Sierra Grande 63	Manzanola 12
Antonito 53	Moffat 18
Sangre de Cristo 56	Cotopaxi 18
Moffat 44	Primero 21
Centennial 47	Cotopaxi 21
Sierra Grande 50	La Veta 43
Monte Vista 60	Trinidad 7
Sargent 49	Custer County 28
Sanford 44	Del Norte 27
Pagosa Springs 48	Del Norte 27
Sanford 60	Center 19
Sargent 40	Monte Vista 37
Durango 51	Alamosa 37

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Photo by John Waters

The U.S. Forest Service is seeking public input on the Trail Gulch Vegetation Management Project that hopes to improve forest health in the 51,460-acre project area. Included in the proposed project, are riparian habitats along sections of the Conejos River as seen here.

## Forest Service moves forward on Trail Gulch Project

### STAFF REPORT

**LA JARA** — The Conejos Peak Ranger District of the Rio Grande National Forest announced recently the availability of the draft decision notice and environmental assessment for the Trail Gulch Vegetation Management Project.

District Ranger Andrea Jones has documented her decision to move forward with the project in the draft decision legal notice published on Feb. 18. This action marks the start of a 45-day pre-decisional objection period when people can submit objections to the draft decision.

Electronic objections are preferred and must be submitted to the Objection Reviewing Officer online at US Forest Service NEPA Projects Home ([usda.gov](https://www.usda.gov)), with “Trail Gulch Vegetation Management Project Objection” in the subject line. Electronic submissions must be submitted in a format that is readable with optical character recognition software (e.g., Word, PDF, Rich Text) and be searchable. An automated response should confirm that the electronic objection was received.

Objections can be faxed to the Objection Reviewing Officer at 713-852-6250. The fax cover sheet must include a subject line with “OBJECTION: Trail Gulch Vegetation Management Project” and should specify the number of pages being submitted.

Written objections may be submitted via regular mail to: Rio Grande National Forest, 1803 W. Highway 160, Monte Vista, CO 81144.

Objections sent by private carrier or hand delivery must be addressed

to: Objection Reviewing Officer, Rio Grande National Forest, Attn: Reviewing Officer, 1803 W. Highway 160, Monte Vista, CO 81144.

The proposed action includes a mix of vegetation treatment strategies including hand and mechanical thinning, pile and broadcast prescribed burning, and timber harvesting. Implementation is expected to begin as soon as possible. The actions are designed to improve overall forest health and return fire as a landscape-scale management tool.

The Conejos Peak Ranger District expressed great appreciation for the staff, partners, and stakeholders all working together to reach this important milestone.

“Reaching this draft decision point is an exciting and important step for the Forest and the communities and ecosystems affected by this project,” said Conejos Peak District Ranger Andrea Jones. “I look forward to taking this process to a final decision so we can begin planning the implementation steps.”

The project is located approximately 10 miles west of Antonito along and south of State Highway 17, entirely in Conejos County.

To view information on the Trail Gulch Project, visit the official project webpage at [www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=60258](http://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=60258). Another informational webpage on the project can be found online at [www.fs.usda.gov/goto/riogrande/trailgulch](http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/riogrande/trailgulch). People can also call the Conejos Peak Ranger District office at 719-657-3321.

For information on the Rio Grande National Forest, call 719-852-5941.

## Rio Grande Water Conservation District Seeks Letters of Interest for Appointment to Board

### BY MECHEL MEEK

**SAGUACHE COUNTY** — The Saguache County Board of County Commissioners is accepting letters of interest for an individual who would like to serve on the Rio Grande Water Conservation District.

According to Saguache County, “The Saguache County Board of Commissioners is again accepting letters of interest for appointment to the Rio Grande Water Conservation District Board from an individual who would like to serve as the Saguache County representative to

the Rio Grande Water Conservation District Board whom resides South of Saguache County Road L. This is a three-year term ending in April 2025.”

Letters of interest can be delivered by hand to the Board of County Commissioners at 505 3rd St., Saguache, mailed to P.O. Box 100, Saguache, CO 81149 or emailed to [wmaez@saguachecounty-co.gov](mailto:wmaez@saguachecounty-co.gov).

The deadline for letters is Friday, March 18, at 3 p.m. and the Board will make an appointment during the regular meeting held on Tuesday, April 5.

## Patients and providers benefit from grant at SLV Health

### STAFF REPORT

**ALAMOSA** — San Luis Valley Health was recently awarded grant funding by The Colorado Health Foundation to continue improving its service delivery throughout the primary care clinics.

“SLV Health is pleased to receive this grant award to create meaningful impact as we advance our team-based care planning. This is a grant that allows us to

build capacity,” explained Senior Clinic Administrator Antonio Gurule, SLV Health. “We have teams of caregivers that will offer uninterrupted care for the patients using this model of delivery.”

The grant funding expands training, capacity and technology and will be distributed over the next two years under the guidance of Audrey Reich-Loy, Director of Programs for SLV Health.

“We appreciate receiving this critical award in order to continue to achieve our mission, vision, and response to changes and challenges in healthcare delivery in the San Luis Valley,” commented Reich-Loy. “The grant will support initiatives that we have been working on to improve Population Health outcomes, such as when we added the crucial positions like our Care Coordinators.”

**The City of Monte Vista**

**&**

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**February 25**

**4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.**

**Comments at 5:30 p.m.**

**Light Hors d'oeuvre and drinks**

**will be served**

## Manage Stress So It Doesn't Manage You

Today it seems as if everyone is under stress. It's become a normal part of our everyday lives. As long as we keep that stress at a reasonable limit, there's no problem. But when we allow it to exceed that limit, trouble begins.

For example, a chair is built to sit on. It's designed and constructed to bear a certain amount of weight. If used properly, it should last a very long time. But if it's overloaded beyond its capacity, it begins to wear out prematurely and eventually break down completely under the strain.

In the same way, you and I were designed and created to bear a certain amount of physical, mental and emotional strain day after day. However, problems arise when we allow ourselves to be weighed down by more stress than we're capable of supporting.

A word we don't hear much about today is *prudence*. It means “careful management; economy.” In the Bible, *prudence* or *prudent* means “being good stewards or managers of the gifts God has given us to use.” Those gifts include time, energy, strength and health—even material possessions. They include our bodies, as well as our minds and spirits.

Just as each one of us has been given a different set of gifts, each of us has been given different levels of ability to manage those gifts. And some of us are better at managing our gifts than others.

Proverbs 14:8 (NIV) says, “The wisdom of the prudent is to give thought to their ways, but the folly of fools is deception.”

We all need to “give thought to [our] ways” and know our limits—we need to know how much we can handle. We need to be able to recognize when we're reaching “full capacity” or “overload.” Instead of pushing ourselves into overload to please others or satisfy our own desires of reaching personal goals, we need to listen to and obey what God's telling us to do. We must follow His wisdom if we really want to enjoy

the peaceful, joyful life He has planned for us.

Stress can be caused by just about anything. Stressors can be big or little things. In addition, what causes *you* stress may not bother someone else. And what bothers you today may not bother you tomorrow.

For example, let's say you're at the grocery store and the high prices create a stressor for you. Then the process of paying for your groceries (especially if money is tight) stresses you out. On top of that, the checker in your lane runs out of change and has to shut down temporarily. So you switch to a new lane and learn that five of your items don't have a price on them. The checker has to call for a price check on each one while you wait, and the line behind you grows. These small, seemingly innocent circumstances pile up until you feel like you're going to explode from the pressure.

Nobody can remove all the big and little things that cause stress in our lives. That's why we must be prudent in identifying the stressors that affect us most and learn how to respond to them correctly. We must recognize our limits and learn to say no to ourselves and others.

Stressors, not managed properly, can mount up one by one, bringing us to our breaking point. We may not be able to eliminate or reduce many of the stressors in our lives, but with God's help, we can learn how to manage or reduce their effects on us. We can't control all of our circumstances, but we can adjust our attitude and not let them pressure us.

It seems the very atmosphere of the world today is charged with stress and pressure. But the good news is, we don't have to operate in the world's system—reacting like people in the world who have no hope or peace in their lives. The world responds to difficulties by becoming upset and stressed, but our attitude and approach should be entirely different.

**Moving Up Higher**  
with  
**Joyce Meyer**



You know, you can completely turn a situation around just by choosing the right attitude and approach when you're in a challenging situation. Instead of stressing out and tensing up, take a moment to pray for God to help you, calm down, take a deep breath and focus on getting His perspective on the situation.

In the midst of your daily life, you'll have many opportunities to be stressed. But you can refuse to allow your circumstances to dictate how you're going to feel if you will remember to ask God to help you. The truth is you may not be able to control the situation, but you *can control* how you respond to it.

When you know you're going to face a stressful situation, take an offensive approach and decide beforehand what your attitude will be. Then the door will be opened for God to supernaturally help you to calm down and cheer up!

For more on this topic, order Joyce's three-part CD teaching series *Calm Down and Cheer Up*. You can also contact us to receive our free magazine, *Enjoying Everyday Life*, by calling (800) 727-9673 or visiting [www.joycemeyer.org](http://www.joycemeyer.org).

Joyce Meyer is a New York Times bestselling author and founder of Joyce Meyer Ministries, Inc. She has authored more than 135 books, including *BATTLEFIELD OF THE MIND* and *THE POWER OF THANK YOU* (FaithWords). She hosts the *Enjoying Everyday Life* radio and TV programs, which air on hundreds of stations worldwide. For more information, visit [www.joycemeyer.org](http://www.joycemeyer.org).

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

# Rocky Mtn Victim Law Center calls on AG to investigate DA's Office

*'We want victims to be heard'*

**BY PRISCILLA WAGGONER**

**DENVER** — On the heels of a Feb. 9 meeting of the Colorado Crime Victim Advisory Board that found the Office of District Alonzo Payne for the 12th Judicial District to be non-compliant under the Victim Rights Act (VRA), the Rocky Mountain Victim Law Center (RMVLC) has sent a 5,000-word complaint to the office of Colorado Attorney General Phil Weiser. In that letter, RMVLC requests a formal investigation into the “pattern or practice of violations of victims’ rights in the 12th Judicial District.”

“While the Colorado Crime Victim Advisory Board voted, for the first time in the more than 30-year history, to refer several Crime Victims’ Rights Act violation complaints to the governor’s office last week, it is of the utmost importance that the Attorney General investigate the egregious pattern and practice of disregarding victims’ right,” read a press release from RMVLC on Monday.

“District Attorney Alonzo Payne has tried to explain away the office’s disregard for victims’ rights citing staffing changes; however, crime victims and RMVLC have been voicing

concerns and advocating for deeper and more meaningful changes,” the RMVLC stated.

“The problem runs much deeper than the staff turnover and starts with the lack of leadership and commitment to community safety by its elected official. It is time for Attorney General Weiser to step in to ensure crime victims and their rights are adequately enforced and protected in the 12th Judicial District,” RMVLC stated.

The depth of the problem is significant, according to Matthew Beresky, victim rights staff attorney with the RMVLC.

“The first cases started coming through that office not long after the election. And there are a lot — a lot — more complaints for the 12th District than probably the whole state combined. It’s an unprecedented amount of complaints,” Beresky said.

Beresky said he does not believe those complaints relate to just one person but “start at the top and work their way down,” an opinion backed up by some of Beresky’s personal experiences in working on “a couple of cases” with DA Payne as the primary prosecutor.

There was one case where Payne was responsive to Beresky, but “it took multiple emails, multiple calls, a court order” with Beresky having to file a

motion with the court asking the district attorney to comply with the VRA. Since then, DA Payne has stopped responding to Beresky, at all.

“That’s not something we experience with any other DA offices in the state. Not all DA offices understand what victims’ counsel is, but they usually try to cooperate, try to understand what we’re doing. This is a completely different scenario. It’s radio silence and then you might hear what’s going to happen on the way to court,” Beresky said.

Beresky’s concerns go beyond the legal violations to the impact of actions by the DA’s Office on the victims themselves.

“It’s thrown the trust out for the judicial system and law enforcement. Some ask me why should they report a crime if nothing is going to happen? The DA victimizes them sometimes even worse than the offenders themselves because they’re dragging the case out, not telling them what’s going on, not giving them accurate information, switching things at the last moment,” Beresky said. “When you’re a victim of a crime, the last thing you want is unpredictability. They’re looking for something to be predictable, even if it’s something they don’t want. But the DA treats them sort of as an afterthought.”

RMVLC’s complaint also addresses

the plea deals agreed to by the DA, claiming they “ignore the severity and violence of the crimes” and fail to “show any care for appropriate punishment in the best interest of the community or the victims of those crimes.”

It further alleges “an extreme reluctance to take case to trial... extending very low offers to avoid the possibility of trial,” describing prosecutors as unprepared and acting without passion on behalf of victims.

Beresky agrees. Describing the plea deals as “egregious”, he said they have discouraged victims from wanting to report crimes “because they see where the case is going to go.”

What RMVLC hopes to accomplish

with their request for an investigation by the AG’s Office is “meaningful compliance with the law and for victims to be heard.”

When asked if he thinks that is possible with the District Attorney’s Office for the 12th JD, Beresky paused for a moment and said, “I hope change is possible.”

District Attorney Payne was asked to respond to some of the allegations made by Rocky Mountain Victim Law Center in their letter to Attorney General Phil Weiser.

“My office is aware that RMVLC has filed a complaint with the Attorney General and takes this matter very seriously,” he wrote.

## One person seriously injured in crash on Highway 160 in Costilla County

**STAFF REPORT**

**COSTILLA COUNTY** — One person was seriously injured in a multiple-vehicle crash on Feb. 21 on Highway 160 at Mile Post 279, according to Colorado State Patrol. CSP believes alcohol may have been a factor in the crash.

At approximately 4:15 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 21, a 2011 Dodge Dakota driven by Jason Ahrens, of Pueblo West, was traveling eastbound on Highway 160.

A 2017 GMC Sierra pulling a 2008 Pontiac G6 on a car dolly, driven by Wilber Garcia-Huallparuca, of Farmington, N.M., was traveling westbound on Highway 160.

A 1997 Toyota 4-Runner driven by Emily Kleppinger, of Colorado Springs, was traveling eastbound on Highway 160.

A 2015 Nissan Sentra driven by Larry Edwards, of Harris, Texas, was traveling eastbound Highway 160.

The Dodge Dakota drove over

the centerline and collided with the Pontiac G6 that was being pulled by the GMC Sierra, CSP reported. The Dodge Dakota then rotated clockwise and went into the lane of the Toyota 4-Runner. The driver of the Toyota 4-Runner attempted to veer to the left to avoid the Dodge Dakota and collided its right front-end with the left rear-end of the Dodge Dakota.

The Dodge Dakota continued to rotate clockwise, and the Nissan Sentra collided with the driver’s side of the Dodge Dakota, CSP reported. The GMC continued westbound while rotating clockwise going off the right side of the roadway and rolling once.

The driver of the Dodge Dakota sustained serious injuries and was transported to San Luis Valley Health Regional Medical Center in Alamosa, by ambulance, CSP reported.

Alcohol is being investigated as a contributing factor to the crash, CSP reported. The crash is still under investigation.

## SAGUACHE COUNTY SHERIFF'S REPORT

**SAGUACHE COUNTY** — The following information was provided by the Saguache County Sheriff’s Office for the period between Monday, Feb. 14, 2022, and Sunday, Feb. 20, 2022.

The Sheriff’s Department’s activity on the road included two crashes with property damage, one abandoned vehicle, five traffic stops, one stolen vehicle report, and one traffic complaint. They also patrolled the Town of Saguache eight times, one VIN inspection, and assisted motorists four times.

In addition, there were one report of loose livestock, one report of harassing phone calls, two reports of suspicious activity, one report of fraud, two animal problem reports, four protection order violation reports, one report of theft,

one report of criminal mischief, one missing person report, and one report of property damage.

They also responded to five controlled burns, one fire (other), one fire (structure), two ambulance calls, two alarm calls, two civil disputes, assisted citizens twice, provided information six times, and assisted a nearby agency three times.

### ARRESTS

- A 43-year-old Center man was arrested for suspicion of possession of an illegal weapon and resisting arrest.
- A 27-year-old Albuquerque, N.M., woman was arrested on an outstanding warrant.
- A 36-year-old Monte Vista woman was arrested for suspicion of fraud and deceit and for driving a vehicle without

a valid driver’s license.

- A 28-year-old Canyon City woman was arrested for suspicion of criminal mischief (\$5,000-\$19,999).

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

- A 24-year-old Saguache man was arrested for second-degree aggravated motor vehicle theft with value of \$15,000 or greater.

## RGNF

Continued from Page 1A

rio-grande-saguache@fs.fed.us, or via facsimile, to 719-655-2502 using the subject: Cantonment Vegetation Management Project.

The proposed project area is located in the Cantonment and Luders Creek drainages west of Saguache and south of State Highway 114 in Saguache County.

The need for the proposed project is to improve timber stand health and decrease fuel loading through timber management activities that focus on timber production, restoration and maintenance, according to RGNF officials. These objectives will be accomplished through a variety of silvicultural activities. Stands identified within the analysis area need treatment to reduce the impacts from western spruce budworm, dwarf mistletoe, overstocking, and poor stand health.

### Project activities will:

- Provide wood products that benefit the local and regional economies that depend upon National Forest timber resources;

- Harvest-treat insect and disease infested trees before commercial value is lost;

- Initiate management to enhance stand conditions to encourage suitable forested areas to be maintained with commercially valuable species at ages, densities, and sizes that allow growth rates and stand health conducive to providing a sustained yield of forest products; and

- Reduce fuel loading to reduce fire intensity and increase resilience.

These activities would improve the overall forest ecosystem, moving it closer to desired conditions outlined in the 2020 Rio Grande National Forest Land Management Plan, forestry officials stated.

People can view the scoping letter, maps, and information about how to comment online at [www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=61592](http://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=61592). There will be additional opportunities for input as the planning process continues, but early participation is encouraged.

### Public Notice

#### Rio Grande Water Conservation District Appointment

The Saguache County Board of Commissioners is again accepting letters of interest for appointment to the Rio Grande Water Conservation District Board from an individual who would like to serve as the Saguache County representative to the Rio Grande Water Conservation District Board whom resides SOUTH of Saguache County Road L. This is a three-year term ending in April 2025.

Letters of Interest may be addressed to the Board of County Commissioners and submitted to the Saguache County Administration office – 505 3rd Street, Saguache, CO 81149 or mailed to PO Box 100, Saguache CO 81149, letters may also be emailed to [wmaez@saguachecounty-co.gov](mailto:wmaez@saguachecounty-co.gov).

The deadline for letters of interest is Friday, March 18, 2022 at 3PM, for an interview with the Commissioners on Tuesday, March 29, 2022. The Board of County Commissioners will make an appointment to this board during their regular meeting on Tuesday, April 5, 2022.

No. 1622 published in the Center Post Dispatch, Thursday, February 17 and 24 and March 3, 10 and 17, 2022.

## JOIN US AT AN OPEN HOUSE TO LEARN ABOUT THE ALAMOSA TO ANTONITO TRANSMISSION LINE REBUILD PROJECT

New infrastructure will improve reliability and increase safety

Xcel Energy is proposing to replace the 60-year-old Alamosa to Antonito 69-kilovolt (kV) transmission line in Alamosa and Conejos counties to increase electric reliability and reduce potential safety risks associated with aging poles and equipment. We are hosting public open houses for you to learn about this important project and provide feedback on the preliminary preferred routes we are considering.

The 39-mile line is critical to providing reliable service to customers in the San Luis Valley and cannot be taken out of service to be replaced. For that reason, we need to build a new power line in the area, either in a new corridor adjacent to the existing line or in a separate corridor near the current location.

Please join us for our next series of open houses to learn about the preliminary route alternatives, ask questions and provide feedback.

VIRTUAL MEETING OPTION 1:	IN-PERSON MEETING OPTION 2:	IN-PERSON MEETING OPTION 3:
<p><b>Monday March 7</b> <b>6 to 7 p.m.</b></p> <p>To join the live virtual meeting, visit <a href="http://xcelenergy.com/AlamosatoAntonito">xcelenergy.com/AlamosatoAntonito</a> and click on <b>'Join Virtual Meeting'</b></p>	<p><b>Wednesday March 9</b> <b>4 to 7 p.m.</b></p> <p>Alamosa Recreation Center Dual Meeting Room 2222 Old Sanford Rd. Alamosa, CO 81101</p>	<p><b>Thursday, March 10</b> <b>4 to 7 p.m.</b></p> <p>Knights of Columbus #5512 521 Spruce St. La Jara, CO 81140</p>

For more information, visit [xcelenergy.com/AlamosatoAntonito](http://xcelenergy.com/AlamosatoAntonito), email [alamosatoantonito@xcelenergy.com](mailto:alamosatoantonito@xcelenergy.com) or call toll-free at **855-839-8865**.



# 2022 WRESTLING RECAP

## Centauri wrestlers denied state title repeat

**By KEN HAMRICK**  
DENVER — The Centauri High School wrestling team was looking to defend its Class 2A state championship on the third and final day of the Colorado High School Activities Association state tournament Saturday, Feb. 19, at Ball Arena.

### Two Falcons win individual titles

The Falcons made a good effort, but it wasn't enough for another state title as they finished in third place with 144 points. Wray won the title with 167.5 points, followed by Meeker with 146.

"We wrestled tough, and we wrestled fine," said Centauri coach Cahlen Keys. "It was no huge missteps on our part. A couple of the other teams showed up and wrestled really well."

The silver lining was that the Falcons had two individual state champions. Eyan Chavez successfully defended his state title by defeating Meeker's Connor Blunt by an 8-4 decision at 152 pounds. Erik Mestas won the 170-pound title with an 8-4 decision over Cedaredge's Ty Walck.

"It feels good," Chavez said. "It's what we worked for, so I'm glad I'm here and I'm glad I got it done in my last year at Centauri."

"It was an experience," Mestas said. "It was something I worked forever for."

This was the third meeting between Chavez and Blunt this season with Chavez winning all three matches. Chavez said he expected Blunt not to change his game plan.

"I knew every time I wrestled him, I had to get a little bit better and that's what I did," Chavez said. "Every time I wrestled him, I won by more and more. So, I opened it up in the state finals and got the job done."

"I'm very proud of those two," Keys said. "I'm very proud of all of them. They all wrestled well."

In his title match, Mestas fell behind

Walck early. He went into the third period trailing 3-2, but recorded two takedowns and an escape in the final period for the 7-4 win.

"I didn't get tired out and I knew I had a bigger gas tank than him," Mestas said. "I knew I had to stay moving and I'd catch up."

Both Chavez and Mestas were disappointed that the Falcons didn't repeat as state champs.

"I thought was we wanted was not what we expected," Chavez said. "It is what it is. We take it, we learn from it and we get better."

"It was a little bit disappointing," Mestas said. "I was kind of fluctuating throughout the tournament."

"It's hard to be really happy because we have some boys with some heartache right now," Keys said. "I feel some of it."

Chavez is a senior and he has signed to wrestle for the University of Northern Colorado. He said he is ready for the next level.

"I'm going to continue to work hard, get better every day and see what the future has in store for me," Chavez said.

Mestas is a junior and he is looking to defend his state title next year.

"There's talk of us going up to 3A next year but I'm not worried about it," Mestas said.

The Falcons had two more state finalists in Josh Polkowske (160) and Byron Shawcroft (195).

Polkowske was defeated in his championship match by Sedgwick County-Fleming's Hayden Burr as he was pinned in 1:28.

Shawcroft was defeated by a 16-2 major decision by Rye's Remington Peterson.

Centauri had three additional state



Photos by Ken Hamrick

Monte Vista's DeAngelo Archuleta looks to turn Crowley County's Case Buford on his back in the 138-pound fifth-place match. Archuleta won by an 8-2 decision.



Centauri High School's Eyan Chavez takes down Meeker's Connor Blunt in the 152-pound champion. Chavez successfully defended his state title with an 8-4 decision win.

placers. Zach Buhr (182) and Mario Vigil (120) both finished fourth in their weight divisions while Riley Valdez was fifth at 113.

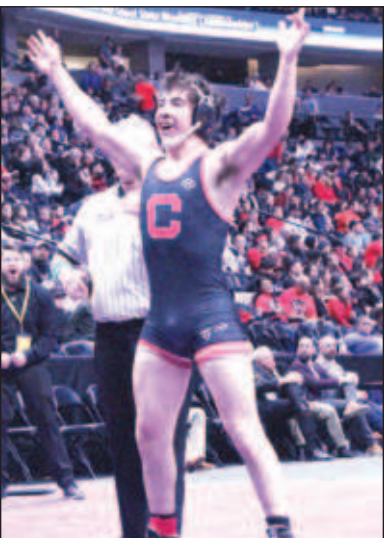
Sargent finished in 24th place with 23 points. It had one individual placer in Trenton Lovelace who was fifth at 220 pounds.

Center was tied for 26th with 19 points. Omar Hernandez was the Viking's lone place winner as he was sixth at 220 pounds.

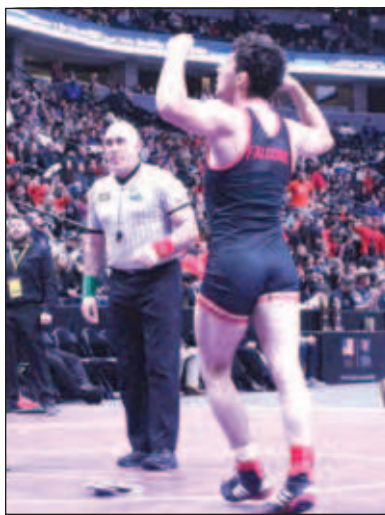
Monte Vista also tied for 26th place. It also had one placer in DeAngelo Archuleta who was fifth at 138 pounds.

Del Norte was 29th with 15 points. Malachi Gallegos was the Tigers' sole representative and he finished fifth at 120 pounds.

Sierra Grande-Centennial tied for 40th place with three points. It did not have any place winners.



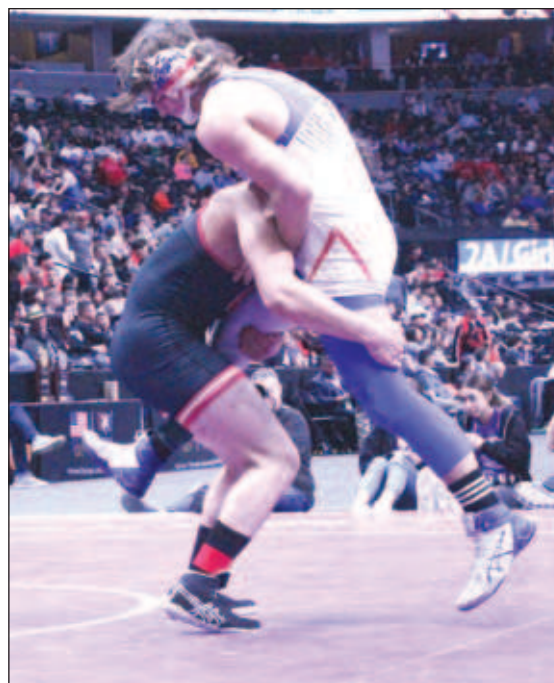
Centauri High School's Erik Mestas celebrates after winning the Class 2A 170-pound championship.



Above: Centauri High School's Eyan Chavez celebrates after successfully defending his state championship.



Centauri High School's Riley Valdez breaks down Byers' Jon Yapoujian in the Class 2A 113-pound fifth place match. Valdez won by a 2-1 decision.



Centauri High School's Erik Mestas looks to take down Cedaredge's Ty Walck in the 170-pound championship. Mestas became the state champion with a 7-4 decision win.

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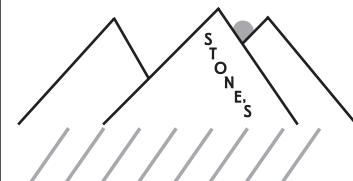


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# Registration underway for HVCC Soccer Season

## SUBMITTED ARTICLE

Hello community members! If you're missing sports already, you're in luck. Registrations for High Valley Community Center's 2022 Soccer Season are now available on our website, [www.theHVCC.org](http://www.theHVCC.org).

Soccer will include three co-ed age groups: K-2, 3-4, and 5-6. Practices will begin the week of March 7 and games will be in April. To stay informed, we recommend that you download the Procure App and visit our website for updates.

We want to thank the Rio Grande Watershed Conservation and Education Initiative for organizing a special educational workshop for our Fabulous Friday. We appreciate the opportunity to partner with

educational groups to enrich the HVCC kiddos' experience.

For our last Fabulous Friday of the month, the kiddos will enjoy more outdoor fun in South Fork.

We would like to invite everyone to attend a free night of theatre at HVCC on Tuesday, March 1. Our friends at the Creede Repertory Theatre will perform, "Ms. Joy" from 5:30-6 p.m. and HVCC will serve dinner immediately following. We hope to see you there!

This week during the after-school program, the kiddos were encouraged to consider which career paths they would like to pursue via our weekly theme, "Get a Job." We conducted a science experiment to introduce the STEM field to the kiddos and made outfits using recycled materials as an example of a potential career in the arts. Most importantly, we wanted to expand the students' understanding of the workforce and the necessity of jobs.

Join us every Thursday morning at 9 a.m. for Zumba classes! Veronica Climie has been teaching Zumba classes in South Fork and is now also partnering with HVCC. The class is \$5 for adults and free to individuals in the 50-plus community. We are located at 595 Grand Ave., in Del Norte. Give us a call at 719-657-2172, if you have any questions!

Have a wonderful week everyone!



Courtesy photos

## Pile burns planned at Alamosa, Baca and Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuges

### STAFF REPORT

**MONTE VISTA** — Alamosa, Monte Vista, and Baca National Wildlife Refuges (NWR) will be burning piles during the period of Feb. 16 and March 31.

Refuge staff have been removing invasive species and downed trees as a part of reducing wildfire risk and improving wildlife habitat. The Baca NWR has removed large quantities of downed cottonwood trees and branches from the creeks. The piles on the Baca NWR are located along North and South Crestone Creeks and at the administrative sites on Alamosa and Monte Vista NWRs.

Exact burn dates will depend on weather conditions.

Adjacent neighbors and towns should be aware of plumes of smoke temporarily generated because of the burning piles. The piles have the potential to smolder for several days. All burns will be monitored until they are declared completely out. Any neighbors or individuals that may require special consideration or assistance if unplanned smoke issues arise are encouraged to call Baca Refuge Manager, 719-256-5527.

Prescribed fire smoke may affect your health. For more information, visit online [www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/wood-smoke-and-health](http://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/wood-smoke-and-health).

Us on our San Luis Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/SanLuisValleyRefugeComplex](http://www.facebook.com/SanLuisValleyRefugeComplex) or contact Alamosa and Monte Vista Refuge Manager Suzanne Beauchaine at 719-589-4021 x 1003.



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# Lifestyles

Serving the entire San Luis Valley

Supplement to The Monte Vista Journal, Center Post-Dispatch, The Conejos County Citizen, The Mineral County Miner, The South Fork Times, and The Del Norte Prospector.

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Photo by Rio de la Vista

Water sustains the San Luis Valley's working farms and ranches and is vital to the environment, economy and livelihoods.

## ASU's Salazar Center posts full agenda for 2022 Rio Grande State of the Basin Symposium

SUBMITTED ARTICLE

ALAMOSA — With the theme of "In Scarcity, Opportunity for Community," the Salazar Rio Grande del Norte Center at Adams State University recently shared the agenda for the 2022 Rio Grande State of the Basin Symposium.

Inspired by these words from the late Justice Greg Hobbs, the symposium will address the causes of water scarcity here in the San Luis Valley, and ways that the community is coming together to address the issues. The public is invited to attend this free virtual event, from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 26. Registration is available online at: [tinyurl.com/StateoftheBasin2022](https://tinyurl.com/StateoftheBasin2022).

StateoftheBasin2022.

### Symposium Agenda Overview

"We are very pleased to have Dr. Maria E. Montoya of NYU provide her global perspective in her key note address on 'A Look at Water Scarcity Globally: From the American West to China.' And we're bringing back long time Adams State professor and newly appointed State Director for the USDA's Colorado Office of Rural Affairs, Armondo Valdez as our Master of Ceremonies," said organizer Rio de la Vista, "As a multigenerational farmer/rancher from the Capulin area, a water leader, educator and now statewide leader, Armondo brings

his valuable perspective to the whole event."

The morning will begin with a report on the current "State of the Basin," including the latest data on snowpack measurements and flow forecasts by Division Engineer, Craig Cotten with the Colorado Division of Water Resources. He will also provide information about the state of our groundwater and related challenges.

Given the various aspects of community and water scarcity facing our community now and, in the time, ahead, the Symposium agenda will address three key causes of water scarcity and the community's response to **Please see BASIN on Page 2**

## Seasonal closures at State Wildlife Areas protect nesting birds across SLV

MONTE VISTA — To protect water birds during the nesting season, Colorado Parks and Wildlife implements seasonal closures at several State Wildlife Areas (SWAs) across the San Luis Valley.

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

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

that continually work in these areas managing weeds, water movement or other projects, so the public may see staff during these times of closure."

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

- Hot Creek SWA is closed to motor vehicles from Jan. 1 through April 30.
- La Jara SWA is closed to motor vehicles Jan. 1 until the last Thursday before Memorial Day. This year, that is May 26.

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

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

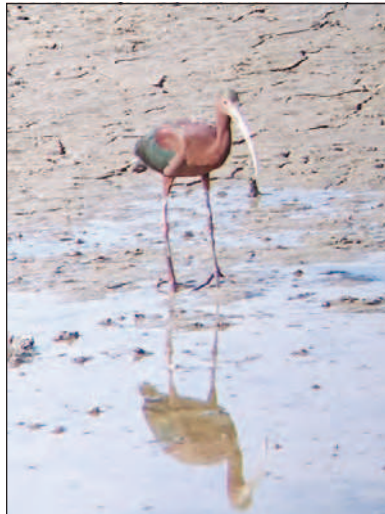


Photo by Tyler Cerny/CPW

A white-faced ibis is pictured at the Rio Grande State Wildlife Area in 2021.



Photo by Mechel Meek

Sandhill cranes are seen in a barley field in the San Luis Valley. The birds are making their annual Spring migration. The Monte Vista Crane Festival is set for March 11-13.

## Sandhill cranes return to the San Luis Valley

Crane Festival introduces new format for viewing

By MECHEL MEEK

SAN LUIS VALLEY — The cries of hundreds of sandhill cranes have returned to the San Luis Valley. Every year, the large birds can be seen returning from their winter grounds in the south to the assorted wetlands of the Valley.

The sandhill cranes are a draw for visitors, researchers, and bird enthusiasts from around the world. Many people come every year to Monte Vista during the Crane Festival to view these birds, listen to experts speak, and enjoy the craft show. The Crane Fest will be held March 11-13.

According to the Monte Vista Crane Festival website, [mvrane-fest.org](https://mvrane-fest.org), "In 2022, we are hosting a hybrid festival. We will not be using buses or gathering indoors. Instead of Crane tours, you will drive yourself to meet-up locations on the Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuge and learn from experts interesting facts about sandhill cranes from Refuge staff and volunteers. Individual tickets are purchased by selecting an event on the website. Please select one Crane Sandhill Crane Orientation Meet-up for the entire weekend to attend, we have limited availability this year because of COVID. If you wish to take a second tour to locations outside of the Refuge, again please select one meetup for the entire weekend. For 2022 speaking events, we asked our experts to record their presentations. You can watch the videos on-demand for free from March 11 through

March 20. We hope you enjoy! The videos contain interesting information about wildlife use of abandoned mines along the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, Flammulated Owls at the Hot Creek Research Natural Area in the San Luis Valley, raptor education by Hawks Aloft and more. The Craft Fair will be taking place for the entire weekend."

The ecosystem of the San Luis Valley is vital to many birds, not just the iconic Sandhill Crane. The San Luis Valley is a unique microcosm that many different types of migrating birds rely upon. The multifaceted system is comprised of several different types of wetlands, agriculture, and the most endangered wetland, the riparian wetland.

The strength of the stopover habitat is dependent on water, which highlights the importance of thoughtful management of water resources throughout the Valley. These migratory birds are a vital part of the local ecosystem, as they distribute seeds, pollen, and food chain balance which helps the overall health of this complex and inter-reliant system.

As the migratory birds ingest a large amount of energy to migrate, the health of the wetland areas is vital to their populations. Over 400 different bird species depend on the various Valley wetlands to make their semiannual migrations from Canada to the Gulf Coast.

The sandhill crane depends heavily on the San Luis Valley to support its migration north in the Spring and south in the Fall. The plentiful areas set aside in the various wildlife **Please see CRANES on Page 2**

# CRANES

Continued from Page 1

refuges provide needed breeding areas and plentiful food for these majestic wanderers.

farm fields is also a boon to these birds, especially during the early Spring.

“Upon reaching the SLV, they scatter themselves throughout barley fields,



Photo by Mechel Meek

lakes, wetlands, and the Rio Grande, feeding on high-calorie grains and nutrient-dense aquatic invertebrates. Each Spring and Fall, thousands of feathers slice through the brisk San Luis Valley (SLV) sky, alerting resident wildlife, local farmers, and eager birders to the change of season. Ranging from shorebirds to songbirds, a myriad of avian species visits this high-elevation desert as they migrate along the Central Flyway to their breeding and wintering grounds. Nurtured by the Valley’s mosaic of wetlands, riparian corridors, and agricultural fields, the SLV is a critical stopover for these determined

travelers,” stated the San Luis Valley Ecosystem Council in an article titled

“The San Luis Valley as a Critical Stopover During Bird Migration.”

# BASIN

Continued from Page 1

them: the state of the Valley’s aquifers and subdistricts, the current threat of water exportation, and the current and future effects of climate change.

The session on “What’s up with the aquifers?” will include a panel addressing the status of the aquifers and the work of the Groundwater Management Subdistricts to achieve ground water sustainability. Amber Pacheco from the Rio Grande Water Conservation District, George Whitten, rancher and water leader in Saguache County, and Charlie Goodson of Colorado Open Lands will answer common questions about these issues.

For the session on “What’s up with the water exportation threat?”, Heather Dutton, Manager of the San Luis Valley Water Conservancy District and the Rio Grande representative on the statewide Colorado

and Future.”

The program will also include information about the Rio Grande Basin Roundtable’s newly completed Rio Grande Basin Implementation Plan from Emma Reesor of the Rio Grande Headwaters Restoration Project. Becky Mitchell, Director of the Colorado Water Conservation Board will update on the new version overall Colorado Water Plan.

State Senator Cleave Simpson (R-District 35) will share the latest on water bills at the Colorado State Legislature. Updates on the Salazar Rio Grande del Norte Center’s upcoming water education programs for Adams State and the community will also be provided.

### Hosts and Sponsors

The Salazar Center and the Rio Grande Water Conservation District are co-hosts of the annual Rio Grande State of the Basin Symposium, with generous support from the Colorado Water Conservation Board. Symposium sponsorships from the SLV Chapter of Trout Unlimited, the Conejos Water Conservancy District, the SLV Irrigation District, the SLV Water Conservancy District, Headwaters Alliance, Colorado Open Lands, and generous individual donors all help make this event possible and free to the community.

To register and for more information about the 2022 Rio Grande State of the Basin Symposium, go to [tinyurl.com/StateoftheBasin2022](http://tinyurl.com/StateoftheBasin2022). Interested citizens can also follow the Salazar Rio Grande del Norte Center on Facebook for regular updates on water issues and get information about Water Education program at Adams State University at [www.adams.edu/](http://www.adams.edu/)

about/salazar-center/ or contact them directly at [salazarriograndecenter@adams.edu](mailto:salazarriograndecenter@adams.edu).

To learn even more about water issues in the Rio Grande, videos of presentations from the 2019, 2020, and 2021 Rio Grande State of the Basin Symposiums and other past water talks are all available online at: <https://tinyurl.com/ASU-SalazarCenterPlaylist>. The 2022 Symposium recordings will be posted there as well, as part of the Salazar Center’s on-going work to develop a Rio Grande Library of water information and resources.



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~ Greg H., Google Reviews

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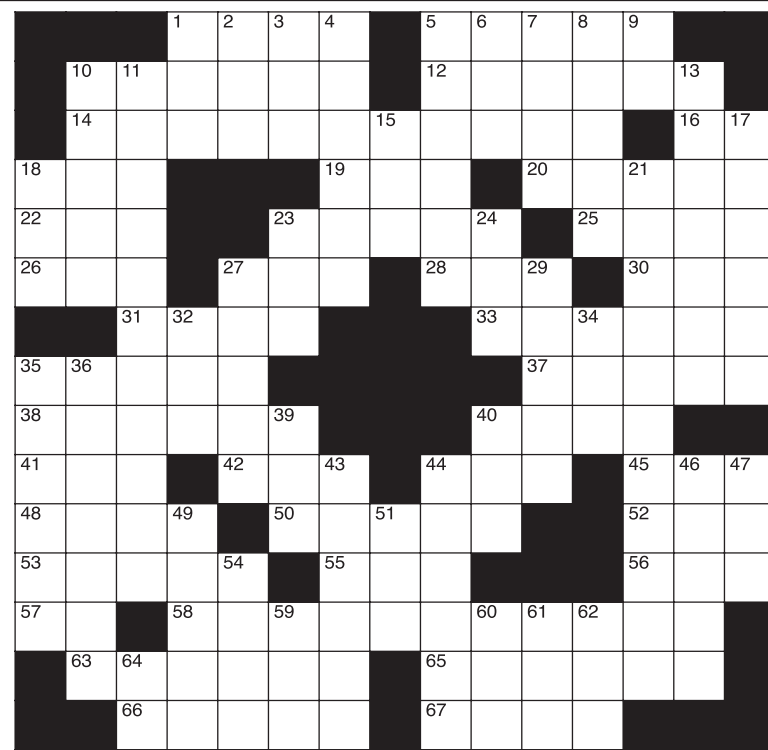
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### CLUES ACROSS

1. Ancient kingdom near Dead Sea
5. 2014 Winter Olympics host
10. Soft fabric
12. Covered in flowers
14. Works at a college or university
16. Keeps us cool
18. Corpuscle count (abbr.)
19. Similar
20. Birthplace of Muhammad
22. They \_\_\_
23. Preamble to a book
25. Southern China people
26. Hair product
27. The woman
28. Partner to cheese
30. One point north of due east
31. Round Dutch cheese
33. Be in awe of
35. Christmas song
37. Emits coherent radiation
38. Something that is comparable to another
40. Monetary unit
41. The cutting part of a drill
42. Resinlike substance secreted by certain insects
44. Touch lightly
45. Toyota SUV
48. \_\_\_ and Andy, TV show
50. Made less dangerous
52. Assets under management (abbr.)
53. Nostrils
55. Moved quickly
56. Thai isthmus
57. TV personality Roker

### Solution to last week's puzzle

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



58. Honors anew
63. Rags
65. One who obtains pleasure from inflicting pain or others
66. Marketplaces
67. Dark brown or black

### CLUES DOWN

1. Nowhere to be found (abbr.)
2. Not new
3. Brew
4. Stain with mud
5. Chief or leader
6. Luke Skywalker’s mentor \_\_\_ - Wan
7. Type of sauce
8. Sharpens
9. Priestess loved by Zeus
10. Jean Henri \_\_\_, French entomologist
11. Regulates supply of fuel
13. Disturbing and horrifying
15. Equal (prefix)
17. Hosts film festival
18. Tattered piece of clothing
21. Rich desserts

23. Unique motor (abbr.)
24. Disfigure
27. Chemical substance
29. Slang for famous person
32. Department of Labor
34. The A-team rode around in one
35. Beach cabin
36. Living things
39. Gun (slang)
40. Disconsolate
43. Stroke gently
44. Actress Richards
46. “Cletus Hogg” actor
47. Returned material authorization (abbr.)
49. Brazilian mountain range
51. Upset
54. One with supernatural insight
59. Insecticide
60. Taxi
61. “Much \_\_\_ about nothing”
62. Cannister
64. Popular clothing retailer

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# FINANCE & INSURANCE 2022

## SAN LUIS VALLEY

# Progress



February 23, 2022

Valley Publishing

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## Officials say insurance rates to continue rising

**BY MECHEL MEEK**  
**CENTER** — Insurance can be one of the largest unrecovered costs of running a business and is a necessity for most people.

The insurance industry often uses complex algorithms to decide upon insurance rates, whether or not these risks apply to a rural area like the San Luis Valley.

All types of insurance are necessary for farms, commercial enterprises and personal property. Businesses need to cover their assets, workers and liability.

Anyone who has a mortgage will need to pay for homeowners insurance, and even renters can benefit from coverage against losses and everyone who owns a vehicle is required to have car insurance.

The recent trend has been an increase in premiums, from auto insurance to commercial liability. According to Insurance Journal, “Shortages of building materials, microchips and skilled labor have contributed to higher-than-average inflation in recent months. It is unclear whether the increase in the consumer price index (CPI) is the result of demand surge following the reopening of the economy, which suggests the inflation bump will be a temporary phenomenon, or is related to rising wages, which

could make higher inflation linger. Insurers are concerned about the immediate effects of higher prices because such prices cause loss payments to increase, which in turn drive up premiums. Insurers are recognizing the impact of higher costs in their forward loss projections.”

Since inflation can affect insurance premiums, it is difficult to predict if the rise in rates will be temporary or long-term. When the cause of rate increases is a deep cause such as inflation, changing companies or comparing prices will not usually yield a lower rate. The insurers estimate that global non-life premiums will grow by 3.7% in 2022 and 3.3% in 2023. Auto insurance rates rose 3% from 2020 to 2021 and this trend is likely to continue into the rest of 2022.

According to The Motley Fool, “Companies will raise premiums due to those elevated claims they’ve seen in the past couple of years. This is a continuation of a trend in the insurance industry of what experts call a ‘hardening’ of the insurance market. This occurs when there is high claims activity and policies are harder to come by. We’ve been in a hardening market since 2019 due to those issues. As a result, insurers have the flexibility



Photo by Mechel Meek

**Farmers need insurance and industry officials are preparing people in all walks of life for increases, some of it due to inflation.**

to raise rates without losing too much business.”

Insurers have been paying out more often in the past two years

due to weather, civil unrest and other claims, according to reports.

While Colorado itself and the San Luis Valley have not been

subject to many of these types of issues, the insurance sector bases its rates upon the entirety of claims and not always specific areas.

## Marketplace insurance and the premium tax credit

*What you don't know can either help or hurt your pocketbook for tax time*

**BY MARIE MCCOLM**  
**MONTE VISTA** — The Affordable Care Act was implemented into law in 2010 by President Barack Obama. This act increased health insurance coverage for the uninsured and implemented and added stipulation reforms to the health insurance market. The act was an attempt to provide a better health care system for everyone.

As part of the act, people who did not have health insurance coverage and could afford health insurance, based on their income limitations, were charged a penalty on their tax returns. Certain exemptions did exclude certain individuals from paying the penalty, including tribal exemptions, and lower-income exemptions, for persons who could not afford to purchase health insurance. Therefore, it wasn't everyone without health insurance that had to pay a penalty, only certain individuals who could afford but did not purchase health insurance based on their income. The penalty for not having health insurance was later repealed and removed in the 2019 tax year.

Did you know though, that if you still have marketplace insurance, there is a chance you may still have to pay money back due to what is called an excess premium tax credit. Most places that sell marketplace health insurance, including Connect for Colorado, Obamacare, and Friday Health plans, just to name a few, do not always disclose this information when they sell you the health insurance. These types of insurance are based on your income, and it's also based on a preview of what you might make when your income is looked at from a previous year.

Marketplace insurance offers people subsidies also known as tax credits, that work on a sliding scale — they limit the amount of money you pay out in monthly premiums to a percentage of your annual income. If you overestimate your income, with your income being reconciled at the end of the year when you file taxes, you may have to pay back the excess amount of the premium tax credit that was advanced to you in subsidies.

However, if you have taken less than you qualified for, based on your income estimation, you would get the difference back.

Certain individuals who have marketplace health insurance, do not have this knowledge, therefore when they are sent form 1095-A,

which needs to be filed with their tax return, they do not know if the form will either cause them to owe money or receive money based on the estimated amount of income for the

year that was given to their health insurance service provider.

For more information on the advance premium tax credit, visit IRS.gov.

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

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## 07 Help Wanted

**Executive Director – Headwaters**

**Alliance, Creede, CO.** We are hiring an Executive Director to provide vision and organizational leadership to implement a full portfolio of water related projects enabled by proven fundraising and grant writing skills. Ideal candidate will have management and development experience, preferably in non-profit sector and the ability to work collaboratively with local, regional and state partners to complete tangible projects. This position offers autonomy augmented by an effectively functioning Board. FT, exempt position, \$56-64K plus other benefits. See complete description at headwatersalliance.org. (3/16)

**Ecodynamics Inc is hiring a sales & office clerk.** Tasks include sales, over the counter and over the phone, purchasing and inventory. Please drop off resume in person

at 5492 US Hwy 160 E, M.V. For more info, call 719/852-2662 (3/16)

**Admin & Program Assistant – Headwaters Alliance, Creede, CO.** Position supports key functions related to communications, event planning, volunteer coordination, and organizational capacity. Ideal candidate possesses exceptional skills in communications and logistics. Proficient with Word, Excel, Adobe Acrobat, Canva, and Google applications; skilled with social media and web maintenance; able to generate craft high-quality marketing and educational messaging. Detail-oriented, able to coordinate the many variables involved in event and volunteer programming. Opportunity for a growth-minded individual to gain experience in nonprofit and/or water-related work, or for someone seeking an assistant-level role with

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**CNA's \$14.50 - \$19.49 Hr**  
**Night-Shift Differential \$1.00 an Hr**  
**Other Positions Available!!!**  
**Please APPLY In-Person**

## River Valley Inn Nursing Home

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## Conour Upper Rio Grande Animal Society

**www.urgasconouranimalshelter.org**  
If you are interested in adopting, call 852-3366  
Open Tues.-Fri. 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. & Sat. & Sun. • 1:30 - 5 p.m.  
Monday & non-business hours by appointment only  
2825 Sherman Ave. • Monte Vista

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

Visit Our Facebook Page



Midgee is a Staffordshire Terrier mix, about 10 months old and on the small side. She gets along with most other dogs, she's just a rough young lady so her doggie friends should be on her same level. She's very playful with lots of energy and is just looking for the perfect home!

Hay hay is a Pit mix who's about 2 and a half years old with all the love to give. She loves to run and play chase, gets along great with dogs her size, and does well with kids too! She plays her version of tag, and loves when it's time to just hang out and cuddle! Is this love bug the one for you?



Cleo is a new arrival looking for a great home. She's a Staffordshire Terrier mix on the smaller side, and is about 10 months old now. She was very shy at first but is finally opening up to show her lovey



Ms. Piggy is one of our long termers here still looking for her forever home! She's a Staffordshire Terrier mix, approximately 3 years old, who has all the kisses waiting for you! She's a bit strong so be prepared, she may walk you! She has improved greatly since being

self. Very playful, good with kids and other dogs, and would rather spend her days running around and laying in a lap with belly rubs. Come meet her today!

here with our staff and has slowly learned how to make friends with the other doggos here, we're so proud of her. So please stop by today and see if she steals your heart away!

*With our population so high at the shelter we're going through more dog food for all sizes. We would greatly appreciate any donations from the community, thank you all!*

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

All breeds & ages of animals are a "best guess" and are not guaranteed to be accurate. Adoption fee includes: neuter/spay, vaccinations, de-worming and micro-chipping. *This ad space donated by Valley Publishing Inc.*



**Did you know that you have the power to stop an overdose death with a simple and easy to use nasal spray called Naloxone?** This lifesaving medication can reverse an opioid

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If you have any questions, please call **(719) 274-5109**, and for further information about Naloxone and how it works, please visit [Narcan.com](http://Narcan.com)

# Valley Wide Classifieds

a stimulating array of responsibilities. Full-time, exempt, \$22-\$25/hr, plus QSERA, 2-wks PTO and holidays. See complete description at [headwatersalliance.org](http://headwatersalliance.org). Send cover letter, resume and references to [hr@headwatersalliance.org](mailto:hr@headwatersalliance.org). Position open till filled, start date 4/2/2022. (3/9)

**COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION** Job Vacancy 18-22 This specific 4-H Youth Development Area Extension Agent position is a full-time position working with 4-H in the schools and the Juntos 4-H program throughout the San Luis Valley Area. A Completed bachelor's degree. D should be conferred in education, public health, social sciences, public relations, agricultural sciences, agricultural education, youth development or a closely related field. To view the job vacancy announcement and apply, click link: <https://jobs.colostate.edu/postings/99234>. **For full consideration, all materials must be RECEIVED no later than 11:59 PM Mountain Time on Sunday, February 27, 2022.** We are committed to increasing the diversity of our staff and providing culturally responsive programs and services. Therefore, we encourage responses from people of all backgrounds and abilities. We invite you to review Colorado State University's Principles of Community that guide our mission and vision of access, teaching, service and engagement. <http://diversity.colostate.edu/principles-of-community/> CSU is an EO/EA/AA employer and conducts background checks on all final candidates. **If you have questions before applying call Larry Brown SLV Area Extension Director at 719-852-7381.**

**Saguache County Treasurer's Office is accepting applications for a full-time clerical position.** Position is 40 hours per week, Monday-Friday 8:00 am – 4:00pm. Applicants must have Microsoft Excel, Word, 10-key, customer service, and bookkeeping experience. Must be able to answer phones, and wait on public. Starting salary is \$15.00/hr, but will be negotiable based on experience. Applications are available at Saguache County Administration Office at 505 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Saguache, CO 81149, or by visiting the Saguache County website [www.saguachecounty.colorado.gov](http://www.saguachecounty.colorado.gov). Position will remain open until filled. Must have high school diploma or GED. A background check and pre-employment drug screening is required. Saguache County is an E.O.E employer. (3/9)

**Rio Grande County's Sheriff's Office is hiring two Weekend Court Administrative Assistants.**

**These positions will assist the Sheriff with reports, bookings and reporting data to the State of Colorado, District Attorney.** Court/Administrative Assistants will be required to file jail/detention

bookings with the weekend courts. Work schedule is Friday thru Monday 10-hour shifts. Applicants will be required to pass a 10 panel drug test, including marijuana. Starting pay is \$16.30 per hour DOE. These

will be Full time positions with Full Benefit package: Medical, dental, vision, 4% Retirement match plus Life insurance. Full job description and application are available at [www.riograndecounty.org](http://www.riograndecounty.org).(3/9)

**FULL-TIME MAINTENANCE Person needed for apartment complex in Monte Vista. Interested persons need to have a minimum 2 years maintenance experience, valid driver's license,**



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# Valley Wide

# Classifieds

**clean background check and pass a drug test.** Maintenance duties include but not limited to minor plumbing & electrical, grounds keeping, maintaining buildings & common areas, and painting, etc. Interested persons should pick up an application at 551 Monroe Street, Monte Vista CO 81144. If any questions or further information is needed, please call 719-852-5505 or send resume to mvha04@yahoo.com Attn: Alonzo or John. Equal Employment Opportunity Provider and Employer. (3/2)

**2022 OPEN POSITIONS FOR PLANNING & ZONING**-City of Monte Vista is seeking three citizens with a desire to serve on <mailto:awelch@valleypublishinginc.com> the Monte Vista Planning and Zoning Commission. The Planning Commission consists of a five-member board and persons must reside in the City of Monte Vista. One member may be a non-resident but must own property within the City limits. The Planning and Zoning Commission members serve in an advisory capacity to the City of Monte Vista Council in matters relating to planning and zoning, reviewing and making recommendations on subdivisions and land development applications, and reviewing proposed ordinances related to the planning function. **The Planning and Zoning Commission meets on the last Thursday of each month and members that are appointed by City Council will receive a \$40 stipend per meeting.** Interested applicants please go to [www.cityofmontevista.colorado.gov](http://www.cityofmontevista.colorado.gov), **City Clerk's page, Dept. Forms/Documents** and fill out the Planning & Zoning Application and send it to [uvance@ci.monte-vista.co.us](mailto:uvance@ci.monte-vista.co.us) or 95 West 1<sup>st</sup> Street Monte Vista, CO. 81144. If you have questions please call 719-852-6171 (3/2)

**Rio Grande County Department of Social Services is seeking a Receptionist/Administrative Assistant.** Position provides a full range of clerical, secretarial, computer data entry, and receptionist duties. High School Diploma or GED and two years clerical experience required. Successful completion of business courses obtained beyond high school may substitute for the required experience. \$14.58/hour. Pre-Employment drug test, including a marijuana screening, and background check are required. Job Descriptions and applications are available online at [www.riograndecounty.org](http://www.riograndecounty.org), or pick up and submit to Human Resources, 925 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Room 200, Del Norte, CO 81132 (2/16)

**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.(2/23)

**Power Zone Equipment is seeking highly motivated applicants for the following Positions:** Industrial Painter/ Assembly Tech \$14-\$18/HR Welder/ Fabricator \$15-\$18/HR Certified Welder \$22-\$28/HR Pre-employment drug screening and background check required.

To apply or enquire about details for one of these positions, please email resumes to [greg@powerzone.com](mailto:greg@powerzone.com) or call 719-754-1981. (2/23)

**Creede Arts Council seeking part-time Program Coordinator.** Administrative and computer skills required. Info at [creedeartscouncil.com](http://creedeartscouncil.com). Send cover letter, resume and references to: PO Box 392, Creede, CO 81130 or email to [creedesculpture@gmail.com](mailto:creedesculpture@gmail.com). (2/16)

**Need Full-Time Farm Help** Must Know How to Weld and Know your way around a farm Call 850-2137. (2/23)

**Del Norte Bank is seeking to fill a full-time position for a Teller in the Creede Branch.** Duties will be to accept deposits, loan payments and process withdrawals while maintaining a balanced cash drawer. Must be personable and pleasant answering the phone and greeting customers. Many other

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# Valley Wide Classifieds

duties will be assigned as needed. The position is permanent, full-time, M – F, 8am – 4:30pm with ½ hour lunch and a robust benefits package. Application available at TrueLocalBank.com/careers or inquire at 117 N. Main, Creede or call 719-657-3376 and ask for Dawn. EOE. (2/16)

**The Saguache County Sheriff's Office is accepting applications for Full-Time Dispatch/Jailer. Applicants must be 21 years old and have a high school education or GED. Applicants must be proficient in computers, be able to multi-task, a problem solver and requires working with county Jail Inmates. Applications must pass a criminal background check as well as a drug Test. Applications may be picked up at the Saguache County Sheriff's Office located at 530 5th St., Saguache, CO. Phone 719-655-2544. The Saguache County Sheriff's Office is an equal opportunity employer. Positions are open until filled. (2/16)**

**12 Houses for Rent**  
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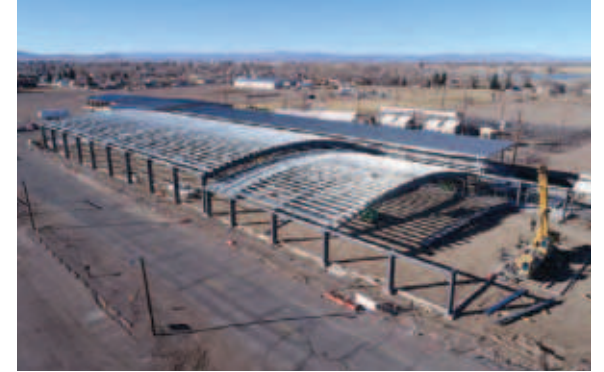
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Outcalt Event and Conference at SLV Ski Hi Complex Ribbon Cutting



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## **CEREMONY**

- Friday, Feb. 25
- 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.
- Comments at 5:30 p.m.
- Open to the public

# INSIDE



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Ag Conference attendees enjoy new building— Page 13



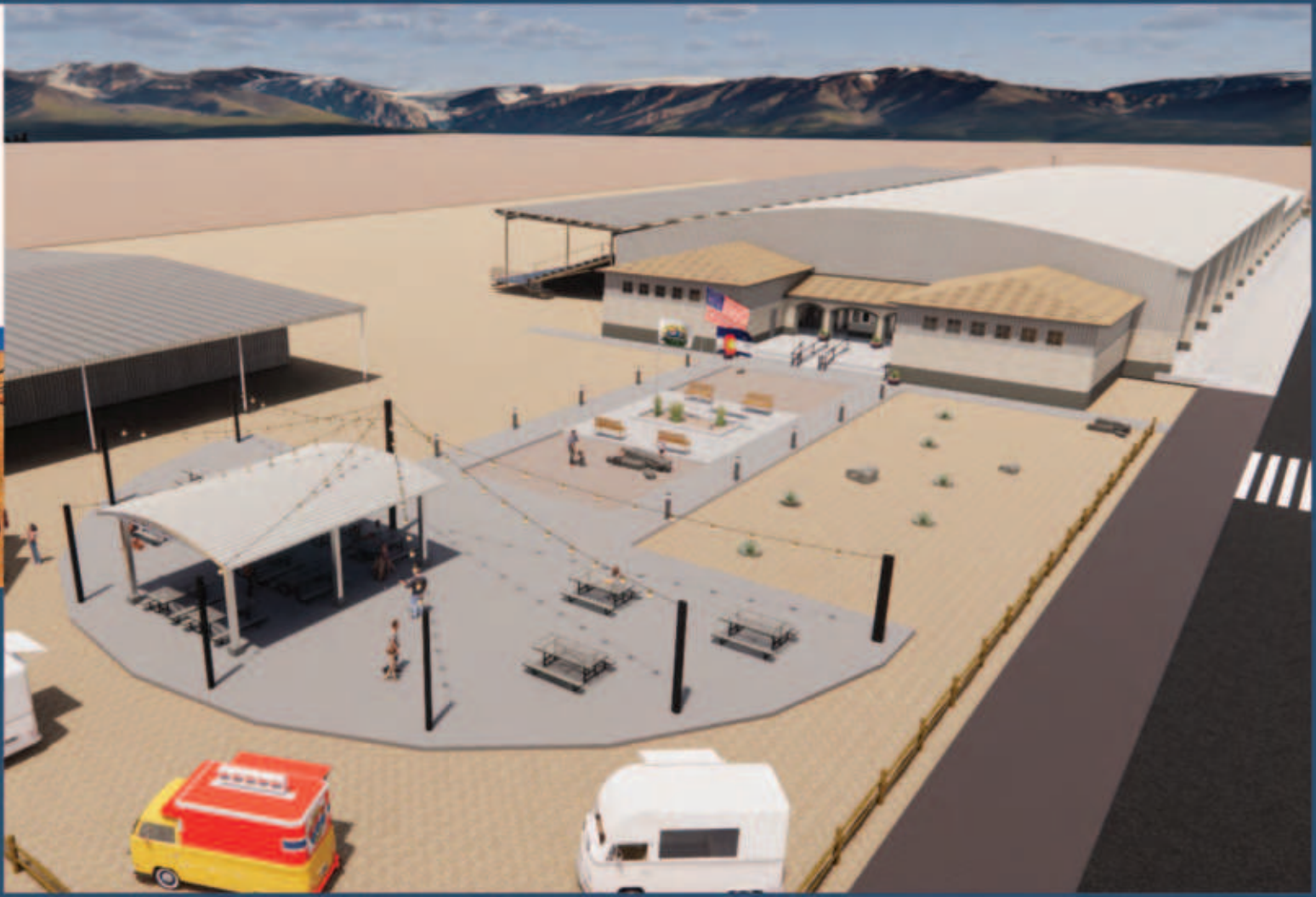
Purpose of the Outcalt Event and Conference at SLV Ski Hi Complex— Page 14



Project in pictures— Page 15



Congratulations on the Grand Opening of the Outcalt Event and Conference Center at the SLV Ski Hi Complex. Spencer Architecture Studio is proud to have been chosen as the Architect for this project.



MAJOR CONTRIBUTION

# The legacy of Ralph Outcalt

By JOHN WATERS  
COURIER NEWS EDITOR

**VALLEY** — Ralph Outcalt, a long-time San Luis Valley resident and business leader who lived to be 101, led a life of business and community service that continues to this day through a foundation that bears his name.

Outcalt's father died during the Spanish flu epidemic in 1918 when Ralph was 5, leaving his mother to support her family of three young children by running a boardinghouse. The economy of the region relied heavily on the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad that supplied passengers in need of overnight accommodations supplied by the Outcalt family. To support the family, Outcalt dropped out of high school and worked at a bakery. He finished high school through a correspondence school where he also studied engineering and surveying.

During World War II, Outcalt served in the U.S. Army in Italy commanding an engineering unit. Upon returning to the states, he worked with his uncle at Sorum Tractor, eventually buying and operating the business for many years. With his business partner Don Wuckert, the two bought the First National Bank.

Through his life, Outcalt supported many causes in the San Luis Valley and in 2008 established the Outcalt Foundation, a nonprofit with a mission to promote the growth and prosperity of the valley and the future of youth.

According to Karla Shriver, trustee of the foundation, Outcalt and the foundation has supported Boys and Girls Clubs, Adams State University, 4-H, Alamosa Future Farmers of America, the Rio Grande Hospital, La Puente, the Colorado State Veteran's Center at Home Lake in Monte Vista and the Monte Vista Police Department, and others. The foundation also provides financial assistance to Shriners Children's Hospitals.

Outcalt's experience of dropping out of high school, working during the day to financially support his mother and later finishing school at night, greatly influenced his lifelong support

"The facility is now named the Outcalt Event and Conference at SLV Ski Hi Complex.

I think Ralph is smiling down from heaven."

— **Outcalt Foundation Trustee Karla Shriver**

of education. The Outcalt Foundation provides student scholarships to both traditional and non-traditional students. According to Shriver, "Ralph was very youth oriented in his giving because

he knows that is the future of the San Luis Valley."

Last year the foundation endowed Adams State University \$150,000 for student scholarships of up to \$25,000 per

year and one-time awards of up to \$3,000 to cover other educational expenses.

Shriver said the foundation is a supporter of the Ski Hi Pavilion and offered, "We are proud of our contribution and we are very proud of the way the community got behind this. Everybody got behind this and we all got it done. The facility is now named the Outcalt Event and Conference at SLV Ski Hi Complex."

"I think Ralph is smiling down from heaven," Shriver said.



Ralph Outcalt

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## INITIAL PROPOSAL

# Friends of Ski Hi makes pitch to City of MV

Published Monte Vista Journal,  
September of 2019

By CHELSEA  
MCNERNEY-MARTINEZ

**MONTE VISTA** — The Friends of Ski Hi Park, a collaborative group of organizations, user groups, event committees, and other parties with an invested interest in the Ski Hi Complex, presented the results of their work thus far in a potential design for a new multi-purpose building and other changes to the Ski Hi Complex. The design was presented at the City of Monte Vista meeting on Sept. 4, 2019, that included Friends of Ski Hi Co-Chairs Karla Shriver and Kathy Rogers-Woods, attendees from Spencer Architecture Studio who completed the design, and representatives of Alcon Construction, contractors for the project.

The plan included demolishing the multi-purpose building and pool area, except the bleachers and the roof over the bleachers which were in sound condition and replacing the building with a new 30,000 square foot one with a multi-purpose area and a conference center on the east side. The McMullen Building, arena, and other spaces would not be altered. The new building will be in the same space although about 10-20 feet narrower from north to south and slightly longer, about 30-40 feet, from east to west than the current footprint, with the west side of the building as the main entrance for the recreation-multi-purpose area. The picnic area will be moved to the west side; there will be a new ticket booth-office building west of the main building along with a food truck circle.

The new building will include two sets of restrooms with both indoor and outdoor access as well as two shower stalls in each restroom. Don Spencer stated his architecture firm and Alcon Construction did a lot of research to ensure they get the most durable and functional materials for the restrooms and were working with Rio Grande County to ensure they meet all ADA Compliance standards, safety codes,



Artist rendering of the front of the new building design.

and emergency coordination needs.

The multi-purpose recreation area was designed to consider several different events and potentially removable courts-flooring for those events, including volleyball, basketball, pickleball, roller derby, badminton, and wrestling, among others. Monte Vista Recreation

Director Jaime Hurtado inquired about sound design, as acoustics have been an issue for recreation events and concerts in the current building. Spencer replied they would hire an acoustic engineer to ensure absorptive materials and sound panels can be utilized to improve the sound quality in the space for an economic cost.

Alcon Construction's Brian Cook pointed out the wide-open space without columns is ideal for fitting about 105 vendor spaces, and they were looking at the details of mechanical, electrical heating, and cooling needs to select the most "abuse-resistant, long-lasting" and efficient materials for cost estimates.

Spencer Architecture and Alcon Construction were also looking at retractable electrical outlets that come down from the ceiling instead of floor-level outlets.

The conference center would include one main conference room that could fit between 248-310 people and three smaller conference rooms with a capacity of 155-223 people, a food warming area, and hallways and entries that can be locked or opened to meet specific conferences' needs.

Rogers-Woods explained they considered the costs of a full commercial kitchen space but the

current and anticipated uses of the facility would make a warming area for caterers more practical.

When asked by attendee Kyle Brown how long the building was expected to last, Cook said they had used similar metal-exterior structures before and expect approximately 100 years out of the building. The buildings are also fairly easy to maintain and they've previously repurposed or refurbished similar buildings before, citing the examples of the Sanford gymnasium and Gunnison Airport.

"It's an industrial quality of beauty," Spencer added, "...it will look good and be very durable...It deserves to be attractive, solve problems and be something we and the community can be proud of."

"We are working very hard to make this a functional and nice, but cost-effective project," said Rogers-

*Please see PITCH on Page 7*

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### AT AT GLANCE

- ENTIRE BUILDING  
**54,473 sq ft**

- EVENT CENTER  
**31,717 sq ft**

- CONFERENCE CENTER  
**16,723 sq ft**



Photo by Brian Williams

- LARGE CONFERENCE ROOM-BANQUET ROOM  
Max Capacity **416**

- SMALL CONFERENCE-MEETING ROOMS MAX CAPACITY  
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- WARMING KITCHEN  
It will have the following items to help keep food at the correct temperature:  
— Two Warming Ovens  
— Refrigerator  
— Ice Machine

**Of note:** Has a built in dance floor, two large projectors and screens.

**Of note:** The four small conference rooms have partition walls that can be removed or added depending on the space needed. Each small room has an 85 inch TV.

— Information provided by the City of Monte Vista.

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Monte Vista

## FUNDRAISING EFFORTS

## Community supports Ski Hi project

Published Monte Vista Journal,  
December of 2020

## STAFF REPORT

**MONTE VISTA** — “The new San Luis Valley Regional Ski Hi Event and Conference Center is becoming a reality!” said Karla Shriver, co-chair of Friends of Ski Hi. “Even in these challenging times, the project is moving forward. And it’s all possible due to the wonderful support of people who believed in the project, both in our local San Luis Valley community, as well as some who live outside the Valley.”

Because of the steady local support, Friends of Ski Hi has successfully raised grant funding from a number of foundations, such as the Outcalt Foundation, Cultivating Hearts, Trinchera/Blanca Foundation, Daniels Fund, El Pomar Foundation, Robert Rawlings Foundation, Gates Family Foundation, and Boettcher Foundation. State and local governments have also seen the benefit of this project for the whole San Luis Valley, including all six San Luis Valley counties, Alamosa, Conejos, Costilla, Mineral, Rio Grande, and Saguache. At the state



Photo courtesy of Friends of Ski Hi

level, the Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) and the Colorado Housing and Finance Authority (CAFA) have also designated funds for the project. The Friends of Ski Hi was also named as a beneficiary for the Larry and Vivian Reed Estate which has been a huge benefit for the project.

“Even though Friends of Ski Hi and the City of Monte Vista decided to proceed with the actual building of the facility, there is still additional funding needed for its full completion,” said Kathy Woods, Friends of Ski Hi co-chair. “This is an Enterprise Zone tax credit project, so any financial contribution over \$100 qualifies for a 25% tax credit to qualified Colorado income taxpayers. Still, donors should check with their accountants to be sure they qualify for this benefit.”

Friends of Ski Hi is seeking to raise a minimum of 10 to 15% of the total construction costs to use as matching

funds for additional grant applications. The goal is to raise locally at least \$875,000, and more if possible.

“Friends of Ski Hi are so close, yet so far from raising the amount needed for the total project cost of \$8,641,800,” said Shriver. “To date, we’ve been able to secure cash and pledges amounting to \$8,055,903 or 93% of the total. But that means we are still short the final 7% or \$585,897 to complete the project. We are still seeking grant funding, but Friends of Ski Hi needs to continue to bring in local matching funds locally,” said Shriver. “We hope to raise an additional \$100,000 to \$150,000 in our community in the next couple of months.”

“This project has truly been a San Luis Valley community project,” said Woods. “People, businesses, and organizations have all pitched in to make this work, as we all see the benefits this facility will bring to the whole San Luis Valley.”

# Congratulations Outcalt Event and Conference Center!



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# Congratulations!

## Outcalt Event and Conference Center at Ski-Hi Complex

‘Huge thank you to Karla Shriver and  
Kathy Woods for their work on this project’



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Photo courtesy of Friends of Ski Hi

**Friends of Ski Hi made a presentation in 2019 to the Monte Vista city Council that led big changes to the Ski Complex.**

## PITCH

Continued from Page 4

Woods in a press release about the design reveal.

Shriver confirmed they do not have committed sources of funding for the project yet as most grants and other sources require the cost estimates, that would be forthcoming after Alcon Construction and Spencer Architecture complete their research on materials, HVAC needs, and other details as well as the completion of a survey for drainage, retention ponds, and other needs.

In a press release, the Friends of Ski Hi Park stated, "The goal is to have the project completed by 2021 for the 100th anniversary of Ski-Hi Stampede. However, it may take a little longer depending on the planning and fundraising.

"The group has not yet received cost estimates, but once we do the group will decide if we need to look at phasing the project in some way or if we can move forward with both the multi-use portion along with the conference center," the release stated.

"We will then begin our fundraising efforts," said both Shriver and Rogers-Woods, "and it will take the whole San Luis Valley to make this work. This

is for our kids, grandkids, and great-grandkids just like our forefathers envisioned the current facility for us to use."

The design and concept phases are being funded by a DOLA grant obtained by the City of Monte Vista and a grant the Friends of Ski Hi obtained from a local foundation.

In the overall master plan that was completed for the Ski Hi Complex in 2006, there was a phase in the vision for a swimming pool.

"We all want a swimming pool back in Monte Vista," said Shriver. "However, we have to design and build this in phases as we cannot afford it all at once nor is the City set up to maintain it all right now. We are not sure we can afford to do both the new multi-purpose recreational portion along with the conference center at this time either. What we do know is what the user group tells us we need to support current events now held at the facility. There have been some events lost due to the lack of infrastructure now at the current building. The difficult part is that when you have a complex of this size, costs go up because of building codes, which are needed, which call for a certain number of bathrooms, fire suppression, etc. We have to be real on what the Valley community can afford," said Rogers-Woods.



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<p><b>\$2,000,000 - \$500,001</b>            Department of Local Affairs (DOLA)            Larry &amp; Vivian Reed Estate (Friends is beneficiary)</p>	<p>Co-Bank (FCSC match) (Denver)            Del Norte Federal Bank            First Southwest Bank            Magnolia Society (Women's group)            Monte Vista Cooperative Assn            Sunflower Bank            Trinchera Blanca Foundation</p>	<p>Monte Vista Chamber- vendors Ag Conference            Monte Vista Potato Growers            Mountain West Insurance            MV Lodge 73 A.F. &amp; A.M.            Peterson Farms            Rio Grande County 4-H Council            Rio Grande Seed &amp; Grain            Sorum Tractor            Terry Hillin and Family            Thad &amp; Deanne Elliott            Triple M Farms (Mueller Family)            Wall, Smith, Bateman            Wenta Nip &amp; Sanitizing, LLC</p>	<p><b>\$1,000</b>            Barbara...            Beau &amp; Kir...            Blanca Po...            Brian &amp; Terr...            Byron &amp; Amie U...            Carlson, Hamm...            Den...            Cathryn...            Charles &amp; Me...            Compost Te...            Conejos...            Costilla...            Crane F...            Diamond Hos...            Hampt...            GFWC Colorado T...            Clu...</p>
<p><b>\$500,000 - \$100,001</b>            Daniels Fund            El Pomar Grants            Rio Grande County</p>	<p><b>\$10,000 - \$5,001</b>            Anschutz Family Foundation            David and Linda Warsh            Eugene &amp; Evaliyn Farish            Gary &amp; Jerene Wilkinson            Hi Land Potato Company            Karla Shriver            Karla and Jim Willschau            Keith Holland Family            Mike Mitchell Farms            Monte Vista Eye Care Center/Paul-            Barb Heersink            Monte Vista Rotary            Price Farms            Richard &amp; Alana McNitt            Saguache County            Steve &amp; Karla VanTreese            Troy Plane Insurance            Wilbur Ellis            Worley Family Farms, LLC            Xcel Energy Foundation</p>	<p><b>\$2,500 - \$1,001</b>            Alamosa County Farm Bureau            Bill &amp; Kris Paddock, Denver            Blue Sky Farms SLV, Inc            Blue Spruce 4-H Club            Debra Callahan            Doug &amp; Brenda Cooper            Eastern Star            Esperanza Farms LLC            Glenn and Beatrice Getz            Jackie White in Memory of Melvin            Getz            JDS Farms            Mike &amp; Barb Kruse            Monte Vista Education Foundation            Monte Vista Kiwanis            Neufeld Farms LTD            Palmgren Farms</p>	<p>Harold &amp; Marga...            Jacob &amp; Aub...            Jim &amp; Cynt...            Kathy &amp; Sha...            Ken &amp; Hope Sa...            Linda &amp; Gler...            M&amp;G F...            Merk...            Mike &amp; Crys...            Monte Vista Cha...            comm...            Monte Vista Cham...            Monte Vista Uni...            Chu...            Nazarene Chur...            Rick &amp; Che...            Sandhill S...            Sargent Comm...            Skyline Hospitali...</p>
<p><b>\$100,000 - \$75,001</b>            Boettcher Foundation            Coors Foundation            Cultivating Hearts (local San Luis Valley farmer)            Gates Family Foundation</p>	<p><b>\$5,000 - 2,501</b>            Art &amp; Amy Holland            Asplin &amp; Associates            Blue Spruce &amp; Sand Dunes Drifter            4-H Clubs            Carolyn Kawanabe/Floyd Carruth            CIA-Leavitt Insurance Agency            Circle D Farms</p>	<p><b>\$2,500 - \$1,001</b>            Alamosa County Farm Bureau            Bill &amp; Kris Paddock, Denver            Blue Sky Farms SLV, Inc            Blue Spruce 4-H Club            Debra Callahan            Doug &amp; Brenda Cooper            Eastern Star            Esperanza Farms LLC            Glenn and Beatrice Getz            Jackie White in Memory of Melvin            Getz            JDS Farms            Mike &amp; Barb Kruse            Monte Vista Education Foundation            Monte Vista Kiwanis            Neufeld Farms LTD            Palmgren Farms</p>	<p>Harold &amp; Marga...            Jacob &amp; Aub...            Jim &amp; Cynt...            Kathy &amp; Sha...            Ken &amp; Hope Sa...            Linda &amp; Gler...            M&amp;G F...            Merk...            Mike &amp; Crys...            Monte Vista Cha...            comm...            Monte Vista Cham...            Monte Vista Uni...            Chu...            Nazarene Chur...            Rick &amp; Che...            Sandhill S...            Sargent Comm...            Skyline Hospitali...</p>
<p><b>\$75,000 - \$50,001</b>            Colorado Potato Administrative Committee            RG Bank            San Luis Valley Federal Bank            SLV Rural Electric Foundation/            SLVREC/Ciello</p>	<p><b>\$50,000 - \$25,001</b>            Alamosa State Bank            Alamosa County            Colorado Housing &amp; Finance Authority (CHFA)            Farm Credit of Southern Colorado            Robert Hoag Rawlings Foundation (Pueblo)</p>	<p><b>\$2,500 - \$1,001</b>            Alamosa County Farm Bureau            Bill &amp; Kris Paddock, Denver            Blue Sky Farms SLV, Inc            Blue Spruce 4-H Club            Debra Callahan            Doug &amp; Brenda Cooper            Eastern Star            Esperanza Farms LLC            Glenn and Beatrice Getz            Jackie White in Memory of Melvin            Getz            JDS Farms            Mike &amp; Barb Kruse            Monte Vista Education Foundation            Monte Vista Kiwanis            Neufeld Farms LTD            Palmgren Farms</p>	<p>Harold &amp; Marga...            Jacob &amp; Aub...            Jim &amp; Cynt...            Kathy &amp; Sha...            Ken &amp; Hope Sa...            Linda &amp; Gler...            M&amp;G F...            Merk...            Mike &amp; Crys...            Monte Vista Cha...            comm...            Monte Vista Cham...            Monte Vista Uni...            Chu...            Nazarene Chur...            Rick &amp; Che...            Sandhill S...            Sargent Comm...            Skyline Hospitali...</p>

**CONTRIBUTIONS ARE STILL BEING REQUESTED/NEEDED!**



**Names Below have BUILT the new SKI HI EVENT and CONFERENCE CENTER!**  
**Recreation Equipment will make Ski HI complete! We continue to humbly ask for donations to  
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 Shon Davis  
 Sleep Sanctuary, New Mexico  
 SLV Quilt Guild  
 SLV Cattleman's Association  
 SLV Federal Bank - Giving Program  
 Southern Colorado Computers  
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 William & Pauline Dey  
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### **In-Kind Contributions**

Jim Wilschau  
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*We have made every effort to  
 include every one who contributed  
 in this list, we apologize if anyone  
 was inadvertently left out.*

**Send to: Friends of Ski Hi, P.O. Box 262, Monte Vista, CO 81144**

## FIRST BIG EVENT

## SRM Ag Conference enjoys new building

BY LYNDISIE FERRELL

**MONTE VISTA** — As snow fell on the San Luis Valley, visitors to the 40th annual Southern Rocky Mountain Agriculture Conference and Trade Show were met with chilly weather for the second and third days of vendors, seminars, presentations and agricultural education at the Outcalt Event and Conference at SLV Ski Hi Complex.

This was the first time in two years that the conference was held in person and though attendance seemed average, Kyler Brown, Southern Rocky Mountain Agricultural Conference Coordinator said that it was lower than in previous years. It was also the first official event to be held inside the new event and conference center.

“A lot of people were actually surprised that we were hosting the event in person but as far as attendance goes it’s down only a little bit this year and we hope to see that change as we move forward. We are really happy with the new building, and everyone has been enjoying the new conference rooms. It was nice to have this center for the vendors and the seminars,” said Brown.

Wednesday morning, Feb. 2, started with a breakfast served by local SLV Rural Electric Cooperative members and employees. SLVREC Marketing-Sales Coordinator Jennifer Alonzo spoke about the new building and the difference it made at the conference this year.

“Everyone we have talked to has mentioned how great of a venue this is and the conference rooms are just wonderful. We really enjoyed serving breakfast this morning and have had a good turnout this year,” she said.

Over 90 vendors came this year to showcase their educational and informative booths throughout the main room of the complex.

“This center is probably one of the best things to happen here in the Valley in quite a few years. The building is amazing and will be a huge benefit to the community for many years to come,” said Rio Grande



Photo by Brian Williams

**The 40th annual Southern Rocky Mountain Agriculture Conference and Trade Show was held Feb. 1-3 inside the newly named Outcalt Event and Conference at SLV Ski Hi Complex.**

County Commissioner Chairman Gene Glover.

Glover and his fellow commissioners

Scott Deacon and John Noffske were in attendance Wednesday to greet

visitors and to thank the committee

that was responsible for putting the conference together.

“The committee that worked to put

this year’s conference together did an amazing job. The event was very well planned and laid out throughout the entire building, and we were all very impressed with how things went,” said Glover.

Monte Vista High School participated by allowing students to attend the conference and participate in some of the presentations and interact with the vendors. Overall, the conference was considered a welcome success for the Valley and Monte Vista.

Plans for the next event are well underway, and according to CSU San Luis Valley Extension Director Larry Brown, the committee, Colorado State University and other organizations are looking forward to seeing the conference grow.

“We are anticipating that the conference will be better as we move forward and we are looking forward to the next 40 years,” Brown said.

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## COUNTLESS VOLUNTEERS

# Thousands of man-hours donated to project

By **LYNDSIE FERRELL**

**MONTE VISTA** — Through the many efforts of community leaders, community members, local organizations, businesses, and individuals, the time has finally come to celebrate the Grand Opening of the Outcalt Event and Conference at SLV Ski Hi Complex and a sincere amount of gratitude goes out to all who made it possible.

The building was literally erected on dreams and built from the dedication and passion of all who volunteered their time, equipment, resources, money, and expertise to the project.

In the early days of the project, a group of like-minded individuals that was comprised of different backgrounds came together with one purpose in mind and that was to see the dream of having a new building at the Ski Hi Complex become a reality. The Friends of Ski Hi was formed and through that partnership, a dream became a reality. Through countless hours of hard work and dedication, the group raised enough funding to get the project off the ground and continued with the project all the way to the end.

While the group was hard at work raising money for the project, volunteers stepped in to prepare the old building for demolition. Karla Shriver and her crew with Pro Mountain Farms and Terry Hillin with Colorado Seed worked to clear the building before it was torn down and have continued to generously donate time to the project in many other ways.

Rio Grande County Commissioners played a significant role in the donation of funding to the project through the county's Colorado Conservation Trust Fund. The county donated \$250,000 to the recreational aspects of the building in hopes of increasing the youth recreational opportunities in the

area. The building will eventually be used for recreational events including youth basketball and other sports.

"The county would like to congratulate the successful effort to get this project up and going," said Rio Grande County Commissioner John Noffske.

"We are happy to be a part of the recreational aspect of it," continued Rio Grande Commissioner Scott Deacon.

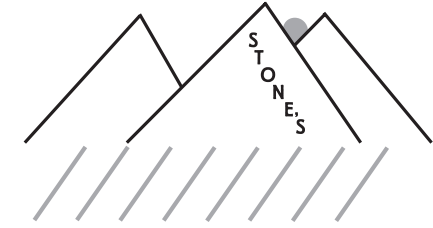
Rio Grande Commissioner Gene Glover, "Congratulations to the success of the facility and we are pleased to have done our part for the recreational opportunities the building will bring to the community."

Other businesses and volunteers who graciously either donated time, equipment or expertise include Jim Willschau with SLV Earthmovers who donated time, equipment, and knowledge in the demolition phase of the project, Troy Gerringer with Earthworks of Southern Colorado who gave a significant amount of time throughout the project, James Cooley with Cooley and Sons Excavating who helped with the end dump phase and donated a loader and operator, Adrian Absmeier with Absmeier Landscape and Construction who donated time and a dozer, Bryan Malouff with RMS Utilities who helped with the end dump and provided a driver, Rio Grande County Road and Bridge Department who brought in a dozer, street sweeper, water truck and donated significant time and operators, the Ski Hi Committee who donated and countless numbers of volunteers and the City of Monte Vista for removing equipment and utilities.

The project was also not possible without the efforts of the San Luis Valley community who showed support, donated monetarily through a tax increase and fundraising efforts throughout the duration of the project.

# Congratulations on completing the Outcalt Event and Conference at SLV Ski Hi Complex

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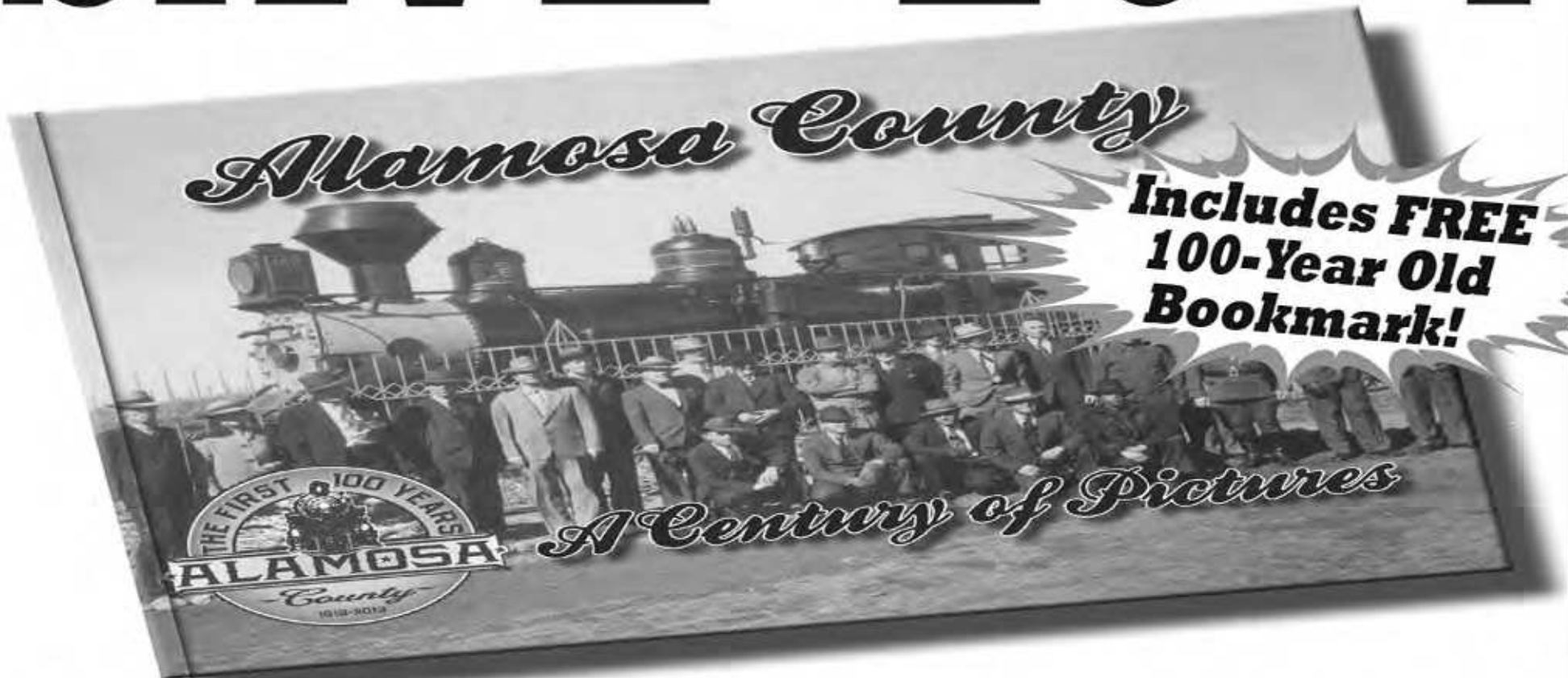


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**NAME HONORS AREA HISTORY**

# It's officially the Outcalt Event and Conference at SLV Ski Hi Complex

**STAFF REPORT**

**MONTEVISTA** — Friends of Ski Hi and the City of Monte Vista announced the new facility on the east side of town is officially the Outcalt Event and Conference at SLV Ski Hi Complex.

The news came from the City of Monte Vista on the eve of the 40th Annual Southern Rocky Mountain Agriculture Conference and Tradeshow that will be the first official event held at the new building.

“The vision of this new facility has been in the works for many years, and timing was right in the last couple of years to make it a reality,” said Karla Shriver, co-chair of Friends of Ski Hi. “It has been amazing to see how the whole San Luis Valley community has stepped up to make it happen along with several other funders including foundations, local governments, and DOLA. This is a facility that will be here for years to come. Friends would like to thank all ALCON and all the subcontractors who worked on it. It truly has been a team effort.”

The people choosing the name wanted to celebrate the history of the building and keep Ski Hi in the name, according to the City of Monte Vista.

The large charitable donation from the Ralph Outcalt Foundation warranted his name at front and center. In addition, the complex was promoted as a regional facility and received regional support from many donors so adding SLV (San Luis Valley) will be all-encompassing for anyone using the facility.

The building was a want for the area for years and gained momentum in recent years as fundraising for the multi-million project began in earnest spearheaded by the Friends of Ski Hi.

“The vision behind the new Ski Hi building had been there for a really long time,” Shriver said in an earlier interview, chairperson for the Friends of Ski Hi. “This idea was there as early as 2006, 2007, the only thing that was not, was the funding. The funding really came from grants and community donations and involvement; it really just took off from there.”

# Congratulations! Outcalt Event and Conference Center at Ski Hi Complex

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Stephanie Ruybal [sruybal@ci.monte-vista.co.us](mailto:sruybal@ci.monte-vista.co.us) or call 719-490-9670

## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

# Purpose of the Outcalt Event and Conference at SLV Ski Hi Complex

By GIGI DENNIS  
MONTE VISTA CITY MANAGER

**W**hy would a community, a city, a region want to invest in a facility like the Outcalt Event and Conference at SLV Ski Hi Complex? I'm guessing this was heavily discussed before a shovel was ever put into the ground. Coming into the project at the tail end, I will give you some thoughts on what I think this building means to the San Luis Valley and the City of Monte Vista.

First and foremost, I want to congratulate the leaders of our community who created a grassroots collaboration of citizens from across the valley, local county governments, small and large community and regional non-profits, local organizations, and young and old alike who saw a great need and an opportunity to build something special. They helped find the private funding needed to create a facility that would complement the state's oldest professional rodeo, Ski Hi Stampede, as well as added space for local craft and vendor shows, a place for small or large meeting venues, and celebrations like weddings, reunions, and Quinceanera's and sports tournaments. It is an exciting time for our city, and we are proud to have this facility in our community!

Having said that, the funding to build the structure and get it open is only half the story. Now comes the operations, management, event booking, maintenance, and overall systems to keep this facility viable for many years to come.

The management and maintenance alone of a 54,000 square-foot structure on a community our size may be overwhelming on a stretched City Budget. The partial 1-cent sales tax that was passed by the voters (thank you very much) will definitely help with some of

the operations and maintenance expenses, but it does not cover all of it. We will have full-time staff to keep the building in tip-top shape and address the daily operational expenses like electric, gas, waste, parking lot, light bulbs, keeping the furnishings and AV equipment in safe running order, and the additional responsibility of setting up tables and chairs, and the sports equipment are all costs associated with booking the facility.



Photo by Brian Williams

As cities across the country know, all of the operating costs are not recovered by renting the facility. There is an ongoing cost to operate these facilities and we will continue to manage our resources to the best of our ability.

Optimistically, the city is very enthusiastic to work and show the benefits of such a grand structure. Industry-oriented events and nonprofit organizations have meetings and conferences so by

marketing and word of mouth, we are planning outreach meetings that will fit a variety of organizations. People will always need places to rent and serve the need for trade shows, concert halls, and banquet facilities. The end result is the indirect impact of more people in town, meaning more people in restaurants, staying in our hotels, and shopping locally.

The city team will strive to foster a win-win relationship with each of

our clients. We will show the value of having their event in our space and they will enjoy the service we provide in a facility that will fit their IT & wifi needs, HVAC comfort, and quality sound system as well as a comfortable, safe, and accessible place for gathering. We will manage our success by constantly evaluating how we can be better.

In addition, when a weather-emergency event happens in the community and an emergency shelter or warming center is needed, we will be able to serve those needs and open the doors for those purposes.

The versatility of the facility is outstanding from business meetings to wedding receptions to birthday parties-graduation parties-baby showers to tournaments and to all of our annual events that will continue to be held at the Outcalt Event and Conference at SLV Ski Hi Complex. The opportunities are endless, and we look forward to hosting you. Please, come join us!

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# PROJECT IN PICTURES

Photos courtesy of Friends of Ski Hi



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