

Shorts

Filing period for URGSD board opens Aug. 4

DEL NORTE — Two school Upper Rio Grande School District C-7 board member seats will be up for election in November. Nomination packets, with petitions for 25 or more signatures, may be picked up from Terri Dudley at the URGSD District Office, 950 French St., Del Norte, starting on Aug. 4, between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. The petition packets must be returned to Dudley at the school district office no later than noon on Aug. 27 — C.R.S. 22-31-107(1.5).

CDPHE vaccination bus in DN, MV and Center this week

Free COVID-19 vaccination clinics are being held this week in Del Norte, Monte Vista and Center. No appointments are needed except for Pfizer vaccinations. The CDPHE vaccination bus will be available Thursday, Aug. 5, between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. at the Simple Foods Store at 680 Grande Ave. in Del Norte; Friday, Aug. 6, at the Monte Vista Farmer's Market at 946-998 US Highway 160 from 9 a.m. to noon; and Friday, Aug. 6, at Tierra de Nueva complex in Center at 980 S Broadway from 1 to 5 p.m. Children between the ages of 12 and 17 years old can get vaccinated with parental consent. Because children under 18 receive the Pfizer vaccine, an appointment is needed. To make an appointment, call Rio Grande Public Health at 719-657-3352.

SLV Health provides Bumps and Bruises Clinic

With school starting up again and sports season beginning, it's important to keep children. All San Luis Valley high school athletes are eligible for SLV Health's Bumps and Bruises Clinic. This free service includes an initial evaluation, rehabilitation treatment, and management for minor injuries. Visit SLV Health's website — www.sanluisvalleyhealth.org/services/sports-medicine/ — to see which days a local clinic is open for Bumps and Bruises.



Saguache Hollyhock Festival brings family fun

BY MECHEL MEEK
SAGUACHE — The annual Hollyhock Festival on July 31 was fun for all ages, with many community members bringing the entire family on a hunt for “fairy houses” scattered throughout downtown Saguache. Adding to the festivities was the annual art walk, an art competition, plus food and drinks sold to benefit the Saguache Volunteer Fire Department. The winners of the art competition were awarded cash this year as a prize, with the first-place winner having their artwork grace next year's seed cards. The Saguache Chamber of Commerce organized the event and handed out maps to patrons.

Please see FEST on Page 4A

The Hollyhock Festival is always held on the last weekend in July in Saguache. The Hollyhock is the town's official flower.

Photo by Mechel Meek



Frontier Drive-In revitalization brings new building techniques to Center

BY MECHEL MEEK
CENTER — The site of the old Frontier Drive-In is the location of a new way to build using technology. On Thursday, July 29, a group of community members gathered at the Frontier property to see the new buildings, techniques and a presentation was given about the progress and the future of the site.

As you drive up to the Frontier, the first thing that catches the eye is the restored Frontier Drive-In's neon sign. This piece of history has been preserved, along with the huge movie screen and the original snack bar building.

All the other structures on the property are new construction, which includes Quonset-style buildings, yurts and the addition of 3D printed adobe structures.

Artist Ron Rael designed the adobe structures and 3D printing software, along with his team at Emerging Objects. The adobe structures will be used as individual private bathhouses with a view of



Photo by Mechel Meek

Frontier Drive-In Program Manager Adam Gildar and Antonito artist Ron Rael led a group of Center community members and town officials on tour of the property and the technology being used on the project.

the open sky.

The adobe structures are conical with an opening at the top called an oculus and are “printed” one layer at a time. Each layer is allowed to

dry before printing the next.

The printing robot is controlled by a cell phone, which directs the robot on where and how thick to

Please see FRONTIER on Page 4A

RGNF welcomes Acting Deputy Forest Supervisor Jones

STAFF REPORT

MONTE VISTA — Rio Grande National Forest Supervisor Dan Dallas announced that Andrea



Jones began serving Monday, Aug. 2, as the Acting Deputy Forest Supervisor for the Rio Grande National Forest. Jones will serve her four-month temporary assignment in Monte Vista, Colorado as the third Acting Deputy Forest Supervisor since Tom Malecek's December 2019 retirement.

Jones elevates to the post from her position as the Conejos Peak District Ranger where she has served since 2012. Prior to that appointment she served as the Wildlife Biologist on the Conejos Peak Ranger District and as a Rangeland Management Specialist on the Canjilon Ranger

Please see JONES on Page 8A

First-ever Center K-9 competition delights crowd

BY MECHEL MEEK
CENTER — The Center Police Department hosted a K-9 competition at Center Community Park on July 31 that showcased police K-9's from Center PD, Gunnison PD, Delta PD, Delta County Sheriff's Office, Alamosa County Sheriff's Office, Valley K-9, and High Desert Police K-9 Association.

K-9's Kit, Blitz, Ronin, Jenna, Tig “Integrity”, Ralco, and Beno all participated in different areas of the competition. This event was free for the public to attend. A bright sunny day was the backdrop for a competition that showed how these police dogs do their work.

The day started with warmup runs on the obstacle course, with each handler and dog familiarizing themselves with the different obstacles that simulate real-life challenges.

Following the warmup, a simulated police chase ran across the football field with lights flashing and sirens wailing. The K-9's then pulled volunteers in “bite suits”, who were pretending to be resisting subjects.

Please see K-9 on Page 8A

The Center Police Department hosted a K-9 competition at Center Community Park on July 31 that showcased police K-9's from across the state.

Photo by Mechel Meek



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OBITUARIES

Darrel Eugene Asay

Darrel Eugene Asay, 92, passed away in his sleep on July 14, 2021. A life-long resident of the San Luis Valley, Darrel recently relocated to Caddo Mills, Texas to be with family. Darrel was born on April 9, 1929 in Alamosa, Colorado to Otis and Elsie (Miller) Asay.

After graduating from Center High School in 1947, Darrel was drafted into the military. He served for the U.S. Marine Corps, stationed mainly in Japan and Korea.

Upon his honorable discharge from the Marines, Darrel moved to Chicago where, in 1955, he married his sweetheart Maryellen LaJoie.

Growing tired of the big city life, Darrel longed for the fresh air, scenic mountain views, and serenity of the San Luis Valley. So, in 1961, he and Maryellen returned. Settling in Center, Darrel began a career that included land leveling, farming, potato warehouse machinery maintenance, foreman, and warehouse owner.

In 2010, Darrel retired although he still participated in harvest as often as he could.

Darrel was a passionate TV football watcher. Family members often remarked that it was just as entertaining to watch him during a game as the game itself. Sitting in his chair dodging would-be tacklers, stiff-arming popcorn bowls, and drop-kicking plush animals. Field Goal!!

In addition, Darrel enjoyed tinkering in his shop. Creating carts to move propane or oxygen bottles, potato bulk-boxes, and even a potato planter. No piece of machinery was safe if Darrel thought improvements could be made.

Darrel was well known for his athletic achievements in his younger years. He was the state runner-up in the pole vault during his sophomore year, 1945. He followed this up in 1946 and 1947 by not only being the state champion, but setting a pole



vault record that stood for many years. However, Darrel's first love was football.

Not only did Darrel lead the Vikings to a SLV championship in 1946, but he also played in the North-South All-star game. While in the Marines, he was able to continue to play football; often travelling to air or army bases for a game. In his last game, he played for OTSU Japan winning the Far East Command Championship. Darrel's athletic achievements culminated with his induction into the Center High School Sports Hall of Fame in 2007.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Otis and Elsie, his brothers John and Robert Asay, his sister Cleo Prentice, and his son Daniel Asay.

He is survived by his wife Maryellen and son Thomas of Caddo Mills, Texas.

The family would like to thank those friends who stayed in touch with Darrel as his health failed in the last few years. They would also like to thank those who provided care for him until the end so that he could stay in his home.

At his request there will be no memorial service, but a Celebration of Life will be held later this fall. All who knew Darrel are invited to attend and reminisce.

Stay tuned for more details.

Alexander MacGreggor Colville Jr.

Lifetime Del Norte resident Alexander MacGreggor Colville, Jr., 89, passed away on July 31, 2021. He was born on June 30, 1932, in Del Norte, Colorado to Alexander MacGreggor and Ruth Marie (Samuels) Colville.

He honorably served his country in the United States Army. He married his wife of 56 years, Louise Edna Stephens on June 11, 1965, at the Monte Vista Presbyterian Church. Alex graduated from Adams State College with a degree in teaching. He taught for a few years until he learned his true passion was art, especially woodwork.

He and Louise opened the Casa de Madera Store in Del Norte and Alex was proud of the fact that he had signs, made by him on every continent, including Antarctica. He was a true outdoorsman. He shared his love of the outdoors with his nieces and nephews, especially his nephew Kevin Off.

Alex is survived by his wife Louise Colville, his children Kristi Powell and Toni (Pat) Velasquez, his grandchildren, Kyndra Powell, Tyler Powell, Mason Colville, Payton Hogner, Alex (Amy) Reynolds and Tara (Clayton Holman) Reynolds, his great-grandchildren, Jayden Powell-Gates, Brylee Powell, Carter Powell, Kylie Holman, Axel Reynolds and Arthur Reynolds, his sister Suzanne Off and numerous other extended family.



He was preceded in death by his parents and his brother David Colville.

Cremation was selected and a memorial service will be held at a later time. Contributions are suggested to the Alzheimer's Association and may be made in care of the funeral home office. To express condolences, please visit www.rogersfunerals.com.

Rogers Family Mortuary in Monte Vista is in care of the arrangements.

Clayton Wirt 'Kelly' Mackey III

Clayton Wirt "Kelly" Mackey III, 73, went to his eternal home on



Saturday, July 24, 2021. He was born on July 23, 1948, in Steyr, Austria, to Clayton Wirt Mackey, Jr. and Erika Steffe Mackey.

He honorably served his country in the United State Army for over 20 years. On May 23, 1969, Kelly married Janice Heap in Monte Vista. Kelly was a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints and has held many callings in the Church. He enjoyed golfing, bowling, fishing and gardening.

He is survived by his wife Janice Mackey, his children, Kimberly (Darrell) Mackey-Canty and Clayton Daryl Mackey, his grandchildren, Dashawn (Heather) Mackey, Raymond Canty, Tiana Canty, Daryl Tyler Mackey and Kaylee Marie Mackey, four great-grandchildren and his

siblings, Anne Henningsen and Erik Mackey as well as numerous nieces, nephews and extended family.

Clayton was preceded in death by his parents and his sister Sandra Bukovsky.

A visitation will be held from 6 p.m. until 8 p.m. on Thursday, Aug. 5, 2021, at the Rogers Family Mortuary in Monte Vista as well as from 9 a.m. to 9:45 a.m. on Friday, Aug. 6, 2021, at the Rio Grande Ward of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints with the service following at 10 a.m. Interment will follow services in the Homelake Cemetery. Contributions in his memory are suggested to the Conour SLV animal Shelter and may be made in care of the funeral home office.

Rogers Family Mortuary of Monte Vista is in care of the arrangements. Online condolences may be left by visiting his obituary at www.rogersfunerals.com.

Jose Vivian Lujan

Jose Vivian Lujan, 73, a 51-year resident of Las Vegas, Nev., passed away July 19, 2021. He was born in 1947 in Lobatos, Colo., to Juan Lujan and Eurcinia Lujan. He married his Antonito, Colo., sweetheart Lena Lujan, 50 years ago in Las Vegas, Nev.

Jose Vivian Lujan worked at the Nevada test site Area-51 from 1970 to 1976, then worked for Frehner Construction Company for 32 years as a heavy equipment operator throughout the state of Nevada, California and Idaho. He was an avid Denver Broncos fan. He loved hunting, fishing, 4-wheeling, gambling at casinos and playing

billiards pool tournaments.

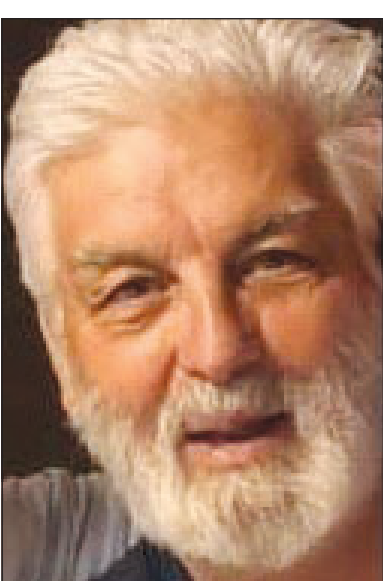
He is survived by his beloved wife Lena Lujan of the family home in Las Vegas, Nev., his son Michael Lujan of Mount Joy, Pa., his grandchildren Kevin Lum (Veronica), Alexis Acosta (Cassandra), Giorgio Acosta (Diamond) all from Las Vegas, Nev., Dr. Miranda Acosta of St. George, Utah, Gianna Lujan and Gauge Lujan both from Mount Joy, Pa., his great-granddaughter Melody Alexandra Acosta, his siblings Audrey Hicks, Angela Duran, Lorenzo Lujan, Ricky (Cordy) Lujan, all of Lobatos, Colo., as well as numerous nieces,

nephews and cousins.

Jose was preceded in death by his daughter Tamara Lujan, his father Juan Lujan, his mother Eurcinia Lujan, his sister Candie Duran and his nephew JoJo Duran.

A Recitation of the Rosary will be held on Friday, July 30, 2021, at 7 p.m. at the Lobatos Catholic Church in Lobatos, Colo. A Funeral Service will be held on Saturday, July 31, 2021, at 3 p.m. also at the Lobatos Church. Interment will follow the service at the La Florida Cemetery.

Arrangements are in care of Rogers Family Mortuary of Alamosa. To leave online condolences please visit www.RogersFunerals.com.



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OPINION & EDITORIAL

The Sunday morning parade

Summer seasons of late have found Miss Trixie and Ol' Dutch involved in more things than I can count. This past month we have been busier than a mosquito at a nudist convention, with no end in sight.

Miss Trixie and my ever-handsome and talented-if-not-humble self have been leading the praise and worship on Saturday evenings and Sunday mornings at The Chapel of the South Fork. And that means at least once a week Ol' Dutch has to put on some clothes other than the daily camouflage attire that lets me hide from working too hard.

Of course, for men, dressing up means opening the closet and grabbing any pair of pants and a semi-clean shirt, and we are ready to go. And since most churches are casual attire that makes it easy for any man to comply.

Matching said items only becomes important after you are harmoniously attached to a female partner, and they prevent their man from mixing plaid patterns with stripes or polka dots.

But with the female of the species getting ready for church involves way more than simply putting on what's readily available. Church outings, at least at our abode, involve Miss Trixie pulling out a couple hundred clothes and trying them all on, sometimes in layers that make Aunt Edna's nine-layer cake look like beginners' work.

Why just last Sunday Ol' Dutch was subjected to what every man fears. The dreaded parade through the living room of a fully dressed Miss Trixie and the feared "how does this look" questions. Now Ol' Dutch has been around that block for many a year in my past life, but it still took all my years of practice to be able to give the "right" answers.

This routine is nothing new as it's been practiced by women down through the ages to get compliments from their man who is absorbed in the latest issue of Outdoor Life Magazine. It's more commonly known as the time where the man of the house sits dressed and ready to go and the lady of the castle tries on outfit after outfit parading through the living room asking, "how does this look?"

It's not as bad as the "does this outfit make me look fat?" question that men are asked as that is only a set up for a fight and then having to take them out to dinner to make up for your answer. Which is kind of silly considering eating out may increase the odds of that question being self-fulfilling. Well, filling, at least.

But there sat Ol' Dutch on Sunday morning having to give his cultured fashion opinion about how Miss



Trout Republic
by Kevin Kirkpatrick

Trixie's outfit looked. You have to know that I did my best and was at least halfway honest and, in the end, I suddenly realized all she wanted was conversation. Because when all was said and done, she chose what she liked anyway.

I believe the safest thing to say is "I am really unsure. I think you need to try on some more for comparison." This gives the lady the impetus she needs to go whole hog and try on everything she owns and that makes her happiest.

At that point, a man is as safe as can be as he can always say "I like that better than the last one". And at least you didn't remark about her exposed varicose veins, childbearing bump, her caboose being enhanced or her turkey neck poking out of the top of the dress.

Speaking of more events to come, we are fast approaching this year's Fashion Show at the Chapel of the South Fork on August 12th. This is an annual event to showcase the fashionable clothes that are offered at the Chapel Thrift Store in South Fork. As anyone will tell you, it is the event of the season.

This is a ladies-only excursion which means they get to leave Old Grumpy at home and dress up for a scrumptious lunch and a runway presentation put on by the pretty ladies of the area.

Along with food and fashion, you also get first class entertainment. Ticket reservations are required. Contact The Chapel of the South Fork at 719-873-5753 for more information. Doors open Thursday, Aug 12 at 11:30 a.m. You may even grab a glimpse of Miss Trixie in some fetching outfit and Cooper, the wonder Yorkie.

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.



YOUR NIGHT SKY

BY DARLENE DANKO

Meteor Showers and Planets

Brilliant Venus dominates the western sky this month. At 45 minutes after sunset, it will be 8 degrees high, so if there are high mountains in your sky, you may not be able to see it. But it's very bright. So, look for it in the west to see if you can find it.

In the southeast Jupiter and Saturn rise after sunset now. Saturn rises in the SE as the Sun sets. Jupiter rises an hour after Saturn and will be a little to the left of Saturn.

This is the time to observe the Perseid Meteor Showers. It peaks on Aug. 12, but they are highly visible from the 11th to the 13th. Since the

new moon is on Aug. 8, this is a perfect year to view them. Next year, the full moon will occur when they peak.

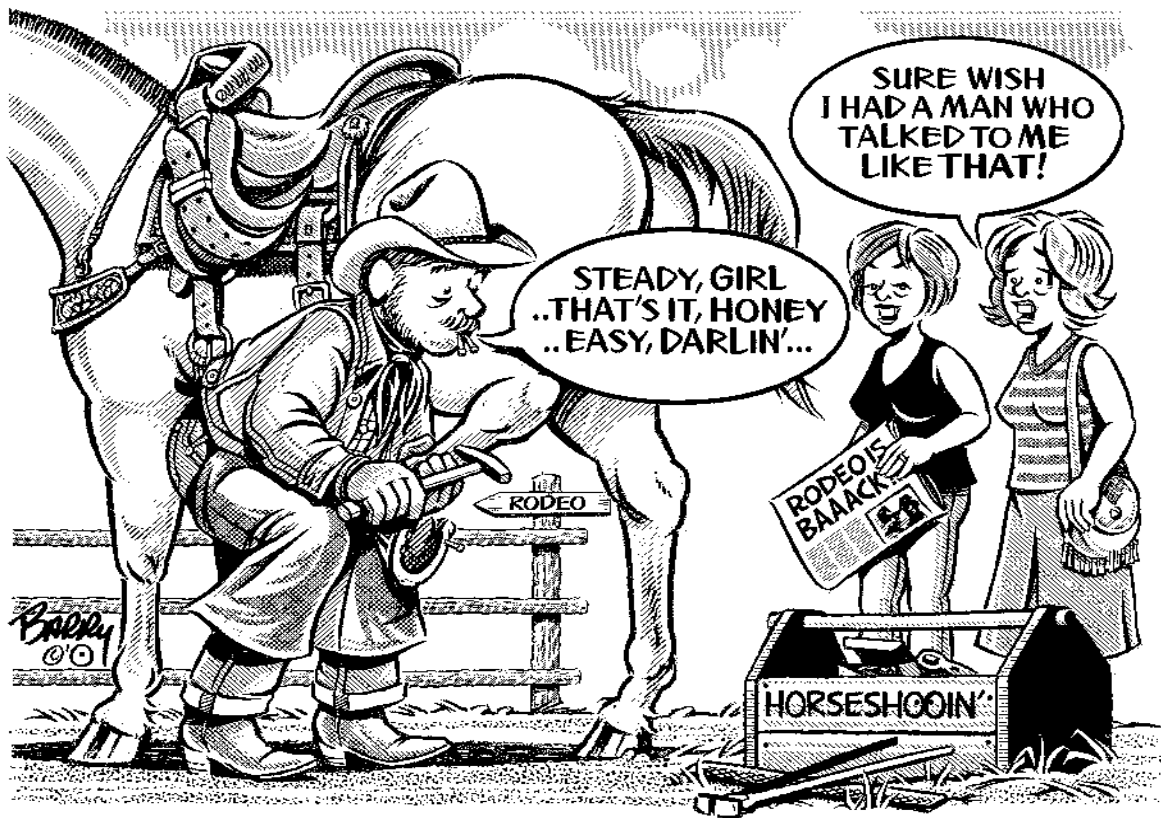
They rise in the NE, but as the night gets later, they rise higher making them a night view. So, the best time to view them is from midnight to dawn. In fact, as they get higher, they will shoot all over the sky. You may see 100 meteors per hour. Now that is fabulous! They are just below the constellation Cassiopeia the Queen which is a big W.

Every August earth intersects the comet's path and plows through it. So, they slam into our atmosphere at 37 miles per second as they glow white hot. Both the glowing hot particle and the trail of ionized air are



responsible for the meteor shower. They become visible at 10 p.m., but the best time to view them is after midnight.

So, get up during the night and go outside to observe them. I plan to stay out for an hour. The Delta Aquariids last from July 12 to Aug. 23, so you might also see a few of them, too. Hopefully, our sky will be clear to see them. We need the rain, but we need that night to be free of it



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FRONTIER

Continued from Page 1A

apply each adobe layer, which is siphoned from a mixing tank to the robot arm, and moves in a rhythmic, almost hypnotic fashion.

This combination of traditional, mixed with cutting-edge techniques is Rael's newest artistic architectural design. Rael is based in Antonito and is well known for his unique art, in particular the art installation of a teeter-totter on either side of the US-Mexico Border Wall. He lives on his family's ranch, where they have been ranching for five generations.

According to Program Director Adam Gildar of Frontier Drive-In, "Among many accomplishments he's (Rael) pioneered the use of 3D printing with adobe to create human-scale buildings using ancient and modern technologies."

The talk and demonstration by Rael was attended by many Center community members and town government officials. Everyone was excited by the demonstration of the robot and the tour of the facilities.

After the demonstration of the 3D printing, the group moved to the old snack bar which is currently under construction. A short talk was given by Gildar, who explained the materials used in construction and the future development plans.

He explained how each material chosen for building was thought out to maximize longevity because of the harsh nature of the San Luis Valley climate.

Afterward, everyone was able to see inside the Quonset buildings and the yurt structures. The Steel Master Quonset buildings and yurts will be utilized as sleeping accommodations. The Quonset buildings are designed similar to hotel rooms with a bathroom and one main room, and each building contains two separate accommodations. They combine a metal structure with warm woods inside and outside.

The yurts have a shared bathroom for



Photos by Mechel Meek

All the other structures at the Frontier Drive-In property in Center are new construction, which includes Quonset-style buildings, yurts and the addition of 3D printed adobe structures.



Artist Ron Rael designed the adobe structures and 3D printing software, along with his team at Emerging Objects, that is being used at the Frontier Drive-In property in Center.



two separate "pods" which have five yurts in each pod placed in a circle around a large fire pit. The interiors contain wood floors, a pellet stove and heated floors. The yurt structures have been designed to withstand the harsh winters with two separate layers of canvas.

According to Gildar, "When first opened, the Frontier provided a connection between the remote San Luis Valley and global cultural production. Shuttered for over 35 years, the re-animated outdoor cinema will continue its film heritage, adding innovative guest accommodations and programs in architecture, regenerative food, contemporary art

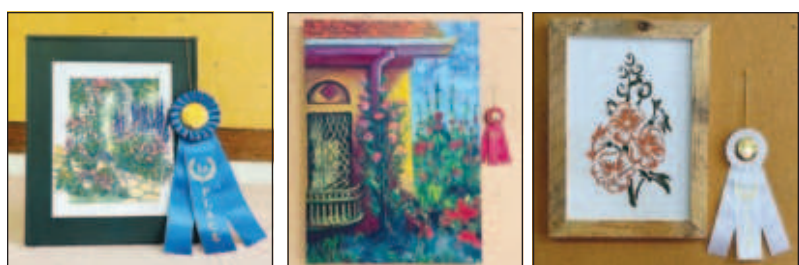
and performance."

The plans for the site do not stop at the current level. This is the first phase of building, and more structures will be added in future phases with the final build-out to house over 200 guests lodged in a variety of accommodations including RV and camping sites in addition to the buildings and yurts. There are plans in a future phase to also add a stage to the current drive-in movie screen to hold concerts and plays.



Photos by Mechel Meek

The annual Hollyhock Festival in Saguache on July 31 featured an art walk and vendors from around the country.



Winners of the art competition at the Hollyhock Festival in Saguache on July 31 received cash prizes.

FEST

Continued from Page 1A

Crowds streamed through downtown which hosted artist vendors from all over the country. The art offered at the vendor event was of a wide variety, including jewelry, clothing, sculpture, painting, and even a booth offering reflexology foot massages.

The face painting booth was popular with the kids, with many families coming out to enjoy the sunny day.

According to the Saguache Chamber of Commerce, "The town of Saguache adopted the Hollyhock as the town flower in 2012. Since 2013,

there have been self-guided tours of town gardens and yards."

The Hollyhock Festival is always held on the last weekend in July and celebrates all things Hollyhock.

The hollyhock plant originated in Asia but quickly spread through cultivation to Europe and America due to the plant being prized for its drought tolerance and adaptability. Hollyhocks that grow in the San Luis Valley are likely descended from the first plants brought to the area in the 1800's. The annual Hollyhock seed cards are available for purchase at the Chamber of Commerce.

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HWA hosting Star Party for annual Perseid Meteor Shower

CONTRIBUTED ARTICLE

CREEDE — Each year, the Perseid Meteor Shower lights up the night sky in the Northern Hemisphere, typically from July 17 to Aug. 24. While the entire length of the Perseids is worthy of attention, the shower peaks this year Aug. 11-13, where it's possible — on a clear night — to see up to 60 meteors per hour.

In honor of this year's Perseids, Headwaters Alliance (HWA) is hosting a Star Party on Aug. 12 just outside of Creede on Pool Table Road. Along with the meteors themselves, the event is highlighted by two local astronomy experts, Dr. Dave Robinson and Terry Taddeucci, who will share their knowledge and passion for the stars.

Dr. Robinson is a retired Professor of Aeronautics and Astronautics and a retired distinguished research scientist. Currently, he is a blacksmith in Creede and also part of the Global Meteor Network that works with local, curious citizen scientists in 23 countries across the globe. Using

450 low-cost cameras and open source technology, the network tracks meteors and meteorites, analyzes their composition, trajectories and more. Robinson is excited to share his work at the Global Meteor Network during the Perseid watch party.

"Tracking meteors helps scientists understand the risks to space travel from meteor impacts," says Dr. Robinson. "Collecting specimens from meteorite falls allows for better understanding the composition of interstellar materials, their origins within the universe and hence our place in the grand scheme."

Creede is an ideal location for meteor showers because of the extremely dark sky, an attribute that Headwaters Alliance is working to preserve and one that Taddeucci greatly appreciates.

"I am originally from the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and still have vivid memories of looking up at the blazing stars from the shores of Lake Superior and feeling like I could float away into space," says Taddeucci.

"Of all the places I've lived since then, the dark skies of Creede come closest to replicating that childhood experience."

Taddeucci is a retired nuclear and particle physics researcher who worked in Los Alamos. A longtime astronomy buff, he owns several telescopes, the largest of which is a 16-inch reflector. He'll be bringing a telescope for the watch party that has the ability to connect to a video display to allow easier viewing of the distant sky. But even without a telescope, Taddeucci is enamored by the night sky.

"You don't need a large or expensive telescope to enjoy looking at the stars," adds Taddeucci, "just dark skies and a sense of curiosity."

HWA is delighted to invite folks to the Star Party to view stars, meteors, a potluck and even staying the night. As Taddeucci says, bring your sense of curiosity.

The event includes a potluck. It starts at 7:30 p.m. Dr. Robinson will speak at 8 p.m. and Taddeucci will



Courtesy photo

Zodiacal light in spring 2021, photo by Terry Taddeucci

follow with his telescope and video display. The location is 4 miles up Pool Table Road from Highway 149 south of Creede.

This event is part of a bigger initiative by HWA to designate much of Mineral County an International Dark Sky Reserve which protects this incredible resource. Information will be available at the event on their application process and ways to get involved.

"I applaud Headwaters Alliance," says Taddeucci, "for sponsoring events to help convince our friends and neighbors in Mineral County that our dark skies are a resource worth preserving and enjoying."

Head to headwatersalliance.com, for more information or contact Alex Handloff at coordinator@headwatersalliance.org. This is a weather dependent event.

DMPRD seeks funding for feasibility study for recreation center

BY LYNDSIE FERRELL

DELNORTE — Over the past year and a half, there have been several conversations about the Del Norte Community Athletic Fields located near the new high school and what, if anything, should be done with the property.

In original discussions, the Upper Rio Grande School District was planning to take on ownership of the 40-acre property and planning to use funding that was available through the district for a community park and

walking trail. After discussion between the school district, Rio Grande County, Town of Del Norte and D Mountain Parks and Recreation District, the school district pulled out of the negotiations after a deadline related to the funding came and went.

Since then, little has been discussed as to what the county wanted to see done with the location until a meeting on Wednesday, July 29, when the Rio Grande Board of County Commissioners was approached by

a representative of the D Mountain Parks and Rec. District board.

During this meeting, D Mountain Parks and Rec. District representative Jessica Lovelace spoke to the board about funding a feasibility study to gauge if a recreation center would be beneficial to the community of Del Norte. During past conversations, the recreation center idea was floated.

DMountain Parks and Rec. District wants to begin a feasibility study to see if the Del Norte community would support and benefit from a

recreation center to be built on the property which consists of about 40 acres of land.

The Del Norte Athletic Community Fields currently has a walking trail and baseball diamond which have been used by the school for several years. Both the walking trail and surrounding property have fallen into disrepair and the community has voiced their support in seeing something done with the land.

The parks and recreation district was recently awarded a portion of

the costs needed to complete the feasibility study from the Department of Local Affairs for \$12,750 and is seeking matching funds to hire Ballard King Associates to complete the study. Representatives during the meeting with the county said they will also be seeking funds for the study from the Town of Del Norte.

Rio Grande County commissioners committed Conservation Trust Fund money to D Mountain Parks and Rec. District contingent upon the Town of Del Norte doing the same.

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DF-CD-NP-Q321



Photo courtesy of RGNF

A minimal amount of smoke from the Jasper Fire on the Rio Grande National Forest's Conejos Peak Ranger District can be seen in the center of the red circle on Sunday, Aug. 1.

RGNF officials monitoring Jasper Fire

STAFF REPORT
The lightning-caused Jasper Fire was reported just before noon on Saturday, July 31, according to Rio Grande National Forest officials. Located above the community of Jasper on the Rio Grande National Forest's Conejos Peak Ranger District, the fire has been slowly burning a single tree on a steep and rocky slope with repeated monsoonal storms passing over the fire over the last three days.

Occasional smoke has been seen from Jasper and along Forest Road 250. Firefighters monitoring the fire reported no visible smoke Monday morning, Aug. 2. The Jasper Fire is considered a full-suppression fire, meaning fire managers intend for the fire to be fully extinguished, RGNF officials stated. The tactics for this fire currently involve allowing the forecast continued thunderstorms to rain on the fire. If conditions dry out and the fire remains burning, fire managers will reassess the situation

and dispatch either aerial or ground resources to the fire to take necessary suppression actions.

As always, public and firefighter safety is the primary concern for this incident, RGNF officials stated. Any changes to the Jasper Fire situation will be posted on the Rio Grande National Forest Facebook page, www.facebook.com/USFSRGNF.

Saguache County Sales Tax Grants now available!

The Saguache County Board of Commissioners will be taking Grant Applications for Saguache County Sales Tax Grants until 3:00PM, Friday, August 13, 2021.

To be eligible grant applications must be for either: Emergency Services/Public Health and Safety; Youth and Senior programs, projects, or organizations; or Renewable Energy projects/Business Opportunities and Job Creation.

Grant applications are available on our website at saguachecounty.colorado.gov - use "sales tax grant application form 5" or you can contact the Saguache County Administration office at 719-655-2231 to request a copy of the grant application.

No. 1600 published in the Center Post Dispatch, Thursday, July 8, 15, 22 and 29 and August 5, 12 and 19, 2021.

State extends three COVID-19 public health orders to Sept. 1

STAFF REPORT
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) extended public health order 20-38 to expire on Sept. 1. "The prevalence of the Delta variant, coupled with the fact that many eligible Coloradans are not fully vaccinated, is threatening our progress here in Colorado. That's why we are taking additional steps to protect the most vulnerable, including extending mask requirements in congregate settings. We support and fully expect local communities to take additional steps to protect their

communities given the variability of disease transmission and vaccination across the state," said Scott Bookman, COVID-19 Incident Commander. The state has also amended PHO 20-33 (laboratory data reporting) and PHO 20-21 (vaccine access and data reporting for COVID-19) to better track variants and double down on removing any barriers to accessing the vaccine. All three of these amended orders became effective Sunday, Aug. 1, and will expire at 12:01 a.m. on Sept. 1, unless extended, rescinded, superseded, or amended in writing.

The state has also updated school guidance and intends to update long-term care facility guidance to align with recently updated CDC guidance and science regarding the Delta variant. CDPHE and local public health agencies both have the authority to issue public health orders and enact mandates for disease control measures. Throughout the pandemic, the state has supported and empowered local communities and public health agencies to have stricter protocols in place to reflect local disease transmission, vaccination rates, and other local factors.

MV National Night Out postponed

MONTE VISTA — Due to numerous weather reports and consultation with event planners, the Monte Vista Police Department decided to postpone its National Night Out event that was scheduled for Tuesday, Aug. 3.

The National Weather Service and other weather reports were reporting a 90 percent chance of heavy rain and thunderstorms, including the potential for flash flooding, starting late afternoon into the evening on Tuesday, according to MVPD Chief

George Dingfelder. "Since this is an outdoor event and community participation is paramount in making it successful, we feel postponing to a later date makes the most sense to make this successful, fun and a safe event," Dingfelder said.

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Center Consolidated School District 26JT
Call for Nominations

The Board of Education of Center Consolidated School District 26JT in the County of Saguache, State of Colorado, calls for nomination of candidates for school directors to be placed on the ballot for the regular biennial school election to be held on Tuesday, November 2, 2021. At this election 2 directors will be elected representing the following director districts for a term of office of four years: Director of District A and Director of District B.

To be qualified, a candidate must have been a registered elector of the school district for at least 12 consecutive months before the election and a resident of the director district which will be represented. A person is ineligible to run for school director if he or she has been convicted of committing a sexual offense against a child.

A person who desires to be a candidate for school director shall file a written notice of intention to be a candidate and a nomination petition signed by at least 25 eligible electors who are registered to vote in the regular biennial school election.

Nomination petitions may be obtained at the Center Schools Administration Office, located at 550 S. Sylvester Ave. Center, CO 81125. Office hours are 8:00AM – 4:00PM, Monday through Thursday.

Completed petitions shall be submitted to Alondra Maldonado no later than 9:00AM on August 27, 2021.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Board of Education of Center Consolidated School District 26JT., County of Saguache, State of Colorado has caused this call for nominations to be given this 5th day of August, 2021.

No. 1603 published in the Center Post Dispatch, Thursday, August 5 and 12, 2021.

How Forgiveness Leads to Promotion

Most people would say they have goals and want to make progress in life. It's a natural desire, and there's nothing wrong with wanting promotion in various areas. But we need to realize that anytime we ask God to promote us, or use us in greater ways, we're going to have to go through a time of testing and preparation to get there.

It's important to understand that God will never tempt us with anything evil. But He will allow—and even sometimes arrange—for things to happen in our lives that will challenge us and help us develop the character we need to successfully handle greater privileges and responsibilities.

James 1:2-3 (AMPC) says, "Consider it wholly joyful, my brethren, whenever you are enveloped in or encounter trials of any sort or fall into various temptations. Be assured and understand that the trial and proving of your faith bring out endurance and steadfastness and patience." When we go through trials with a good attitude, trusting God to use them for our good, then they will work things out of us—immature behaviors and ungodly mindsets—and cause us to grow in our faith.

There are different kinds of tests that get us to the point where we learn how to do things God's way. One of the most common is the forgiveness test.

Forgiving people who hurt you, disappoint you, do something you don't like, or even betray you is not easy. It's one of the most challenging things we have to learn to do as Christians because it can seem so unfair to just let someone get away with the injustice they've done.

I understand this very well because I felt that way when the Lord spoke to my heart about forgiving my father for the years of abuse that he had put me through. But I came to realize that holding on to my anger was really just continuing to hurt me. I needed to be

Moving Up Higher
with
Joyce Meyer



The best thing we can do when we need to forgive someone is pray for them, make the decision to forgive and "let it drop (leave it, let it go)." That means you stop talking about what they did, stop thinking about it and rehearsing it over and over and over in your mind.

The quicker you decide to let offenses go, the easier it will be; however, if there is a hurt that has been in your heart for a long time, it may take some time for you to get totally free of it. But you can do it—by God's grace—if you won't give up!

Jesus gave His life so we can have relationship with God, not religion. I want to encourage you to choose a pure heart, free of unforgiveness, so you can have a personal, intimate relationship with God that will fill you with His joy and prepare you to fulfill His good plan for your life!

For more on this topic, order Joyce's three-teaching CD series *Don't Panic, This Is Just a Test*. You can also contact us to receive our free magazine, *Enjoying Everyday Life*, by calling (800) 727-9673 or visiting www.joycemeyer.org.

Joyce Meyer is a New York Times bestselling author and founder of Joyce Meyer Ministries, Inc. She has authored 130 books, including *BATTLEFIELD OF THE MIND* and *HOW TO AGE WITHOUT GETTING OLD* (FaithWords). She hosts the *Enjoying Everyday Life* radio and TV programs, which air on hundreds of stations worldwide. For more information, visit www.joycemeyer.org.

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

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more concerned about myself and my relationship with God, rather than trying to make him sorry for what he had done.

The truth is when you choose to forgive people, you're doing yourself a favor. In Matthew 5:8, Jesus says, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God" (NIV). And Proverbs 4:23 says, "Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it."

It's so important for us to keep our heart right with God. When we do, we can hear Him more clearly, be a lot more sensitive to His presence and enjoy close fellowship with Him. And there is nothing we need more than the presence of God in our lives!

God is the source of every good thing, and Psalm 16:11 (NKJV) says, "In Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore."

If we are not pure in heart, we're sacrificing an intimate relationship with God because we'd rather harbor anger, bitterness and resentment toward others in our heart.

Everyone experiences offenses at times, and when we do, we have to be determined to do something about it with God's help. The Bible says in Proverbs 4:23 that YOU need to guard your heart. So when you recognize that you're offended by something, you need to quickly take action, doing what God tells you to do, by His grace, to overcome it.

Mark 11:25 says, "Whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him and let it drop (leave it, let it go), in order that your Father Who is in heaven may also forgive you your [own] failings and shortcomings and let them drop" (AMPC). This verse is saying that if we choose to hold on to unforgiveness, then God can't forgive us of our sins, and our intimacy with Him will suffer.

Del Norte Covered Wagon Days

August 7 - 8, 2021 Exploring our Horizons

Thursday, Aug. 5

- Quilt Shows
- Rio Grande County Museum, 580 Oak St., Aug. 3-14, admission fee
- Kathy's Fabric Trunk, Columbia Street and Grande Avenue, all weekend
- 6 p.m. — Music in the Park at North Park

Friday, Aug. 6

Local businesses open normal business hours

Saturday, Aug. 7

- 7 a.m. — Del Norte Library Book Sale until Noon at 790 Grande Ave.
- 7 a.m. — Val Alto Pancake Breakfast at HVCC, 595 Grande Ave.
- 7:30 a.m. — It's the Bee's Knees 5K Trail walk-run, start (and end) at HVCC, 595 Grande Ave.
- 8:30 a.m. — Parade participants number pickup, lineup and walk-in registration at Cedar and 6th Streets
- 9 a.m. — Merchant Open House at local Del Norte businesses all day
- 10 a.m. — Parade "Exploring our Horizons" Opening Ceremonies at Columbia Street and Grande Avenue
- 11 a.m. — Del Norte Fire Department BBQ Lunch at the DN Firehouse, 880 Grande Ave.
- 11 a.m. — Car Show and Music in Town Park, 32 Spruce St.
- 11 a.m. — Mountain Man Encampment in Town Park, 32 Spruce St.
- 11 a.m. — Kid Games in Town Park, 32 Spruce St.
- 11 a.m. — Ice Cream Social, Rio Grande County Museum, 580 Oak St.
- 11 a.m. — Del Norte Bank, 100th anniversary celebration, 705 Grand Ave.
- 12 p.m. — SLV Veterans Auction in Town Park, 32 Spruce St. (items will be shown in parade)
- 1 p.m. — Historical Hay Wagon Tours/Haywagon rides, depart from Town Park, 32 Spruce St.
- Evening — Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation Annual Dinner, Del Norte Field House, advance reservations required, contact Brandy at 719-480-8884 or riograndermef@gmail.com, for tickets and additional details — https://events.rmef.org/shop/riogrande1?utm_source=ems&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=8815

Sunday, Aug. 8

- 8 a.m. — Fly-in and Breakfast at Kent Rominger Regional Airport, 883 County Road 22
- 8 a.m. — Car Show at Kent Rominger Regional Airport, 883 County Road 22
- 10 a.m. — Church Service in the Park, 32 Spruce St.

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K-9

Continued from Page 1A

out of vehicles.

After that portion, the K-9's then ran the obstacle course and flushed out a "resisting" volunteer in a bite suit out of a "blind", which is an enclosed box that the volunteer hides in.

Then the dogs were carried by the handler to a target range where the handler fired simunitions, which is non-lethal training ammunition, at a target.

Next was a wall jump, followed by a crawl through a boxed-in obstacle.

The final test was chasing down a running "suspect" in a bite suit and pulling them to the ground for the handler to arrest.

The timed obstacle course was won by K-9 Kit and her handler Aaron Fresquez of the Center Police Department.

Fresquez was also responsible for organizing and creating this event.

"We are planning on training more K-9's and sell them to other agencies to support our K-9 unit," Fresquez said.

Fresquez will be attending a train the trainer K-9 program to become certified as a police K-9 trainer.

Accompanying the demonstrations were talks with the handlers who explained their jobs and talked about how their dogs are trained. Bloodhound K-9 Blitz of the Alamosa County Sheriff's Office put on a demonstration of how he finds missing people by finding a volunteer from the audience who led a winding trail, which Blitz then used to track the person down and "rescue" them.

Available for purchase were food and drinks, Center PD K-9 clothing and a chance drawing for prizes. All proceeds went to the Center PD K-9 unit to support their program.



Photos by Mechel Meek

The Center Police Department K-9 competition included an obstacle course that tested each K-9 officer and their handler.



The first-ever event for the Center Police Department served as a fundraiser for its K-9 program.

JONES

Continued from Page 1A

District of the Carson National Forest.

"I look forward to serving the Rio Grande National Forest and the surrounding communities in this new capacity. I have great respect for our partners and forest users in the San Luis Valley and value our strong relationships with the communities we serve," said Jones. "I am excited to be shifting the focus of my work with the Forest to a broader scale and supporting our employees in this new role."

Before her employment with the Forest Service, Andrea held short

term positions with the Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit at New Mexico State University (NMSU), served as a Teaching Assistant for NMSU and worked for the Cooperative Extension Service at NMSU.

Jones lives near Antonito with her family where they frequently enjoy hunting, fishing and recreating in the forest.

The forest is in the process of permanently filling the Deputy Forest Supervisor position as well as filling a temporary assignment to the Conejos Peak District Ranger position.

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HWA continues to promote learning, fun outdoors

SUBMITTED ARTICLE

CREEDE — Last week was a busy time in Creede where both kids and adults explored their natural environment and learned a thing or two along the way. What greater classroom than the great outdoors. While there were two separate events — Willow Creek Science Camp for youth and Crew Leader for Ecological Restoration training — the participants were unified in their pursuit for scientific knowledge and fun.

This was the sixth year that Headwaters Alliance (HWA) has hosted Willow Creek Science Camp, and most recently in partnership with Creede Parks and Recreation. The week-long camp, held at the Miner's Creek Boy Scout Cabin, was led by Tanya Petach,

a doctorate candidate at the University of Colorado Boulder, and Jessie Egan, who is completing a master's in civil engineering. The camp focused on introducing kids to science in the field.

"Curiosity is the heart of scientific inquiry, and the upper Rio Grande watershed is a magical place to foster that curiosity in a wild, fun, and question-oriented way," says Petach. "I also find it notable that kids have no shortage of curiosity and are naturals at scientific inquiry."

"I firmly believe there is a place in science for everyone," adds Egan, "but science needs to be accessible. Science didn't always come naturally to me. Starting young is so important because kids already have a limitless imagination and this innate ability to

explore, discover, and push boundaries. My role is to equip young scientists with some of these skills and to help them navigate the scientific process in hopes of fueling that insatiable curiosity while most importantly having fun along the way!"

Both were eager to have the kids experience doing field work as a scientist and had the help of local AmeriCorps members, Josephine Swift and Elliott Marshall, as well as HWA intern Taylor Johnson. Just to name a few activities, the kids took the pH of water, built beaver-inspired dams, constructed water filters from natural materials and identified plants, bugs, and rocks, not to mention the 10 different varieties of the game "tag."

Please see HWA on Page 6



Courtesy photos

Playing in Miners Creek during Kids Science Camp.

Center is 'affiliate' of Main Street program



Photo by Mechel Meek

Center becomes an 'affiliate' of the Colorado Main Street program. This opens door to resources for downtown revitalization.

BY MECHEL MEEK

CENTER — Center was named an "affiliate" of the Colorado Main Street program last week. The announcement was made Thursday, July 22, on the Facebook page for Colorado Main Street.

According to Center Town Manager Brian Lujan, "This is the first step to becoming an official Colorado Main Street town."

He explained that the application for Colorado Main Street affiliation was completed by town VISTA volunteer Keith Brockhurst.

The Colorado Main Street program is designed to help small

communities revitalize their downtown area with support, grant opportunities and strategies.

According to the Colorado Main Street website, "The Colorado Main Street program offers support for community-led downtown revitalization. We help communities thrive by providing a customizable framework to focus efforts, energy, and resources to create a more vibrant community. Proven revitalization strategies and needed organization help communities identify and leverage opportunities and resources. By focusing on current community strengths and

assets, the Colorado Main Street Program is a catalyst to move you forward, one step at a time."

This is just one more step in the future of Center. Partnerships are being created with many community support groups, state agencies, non-profits and community members which will be the foundation for the comprehensive improvement plans.

These plans include revitalizing the downtown area, and the development of the 90 acres north of town but do not stop there. The plan is comprehensive to all the city.

The Right Tool for the Job

Some might wonder why prehistoric cave drawings weren't more detailed. Surely there were artists capable of rendering intricate representations of the circulatory system of aurochs or the dentition of a Saber Tooth Tiger drawn to scale.

But what we see on these cave walls are stick figure men chasing antelope shaped quadrupeds, reminiscent of Dick and Jane throwing a bone at Spot. Rather primitive at best.

I think there had to be a Neanderthal equivalent of Norman Rockwell, but he was born without a pencil sharpener, a pencil, or even a Big Chief pad. He didn't have the right tools for the job.

How many times have you screwed up a perfectly good latigo, bridle, spur strap or belt for want of a hole punch? Have you ever knocked the corners off a hex head nut tryin' to take it off with a pair of pump pliers?

How 'bout wirin' a couple of old board panels across a broken hole in the pen



thinkin', 'This will only have to hold 'em till the trucker comes at noon.'

Have you ever fallen prey to the temptation to rope a turn back steer when yer ridin' a 3-year old trainee? Do you recall using baler twine to repair some temporary break-down, hopin' it will hold until the welder comes?

In Iowa you can buy a handy little tool made from bent PCV pipe affectionately called a chicken catcher. It's like a sheep crook and is commonly used to grab baby calves.

Doug had cornered one of his calves in the barn lot to treat him for pinkeye last June. While a group of his itinerant coffee shop companions watched, Doug attempted several lasso's at the streaking 250-pounder. Finally the peanut gallery climbed the fence to help. They stepped carefully around the rain puddles and shooshed and waved as the calf ducked and dived between them.

Randy spotted the chicken catcher layin' with the baby balling gun and empty box of scour pills. "Maybe I can snag him with this", he laughed, pickin' up the chicken catcher. "I'll catch the calf, then you guys come and help." It was an even match. Randy weighed about the same as the calf. He shot the hooked implement out and snagged the adrenaline charged calf above the fetlock

of the hind leg.

He was jerked off his feet, but hung on as the calf jerked, rattled, kicked and ran, slingin' mud and cow droplets across Randy's broad front. Randy went down, but hung on as the calf drug him around the pen. His teeth were clacking like a bad valve job when the crew, weak from laughter dropped a rope over the calf.

Randy looked like the floor of a stock trailer. "You reckon," he asked, "they make one in a bigger size?"

Baxter Black, former large animal veterinarian and irregular commentator on National Public Radio, is America's best-selling cowboy poet. He is a frequent performer at national stock shows and rodeos as well as in many smaller local events. He is author of several books, including Cactus Tracks, Croutons on a Cow Pie, Hey, Cowboy, Wanna Get Lucky? and Dunny and the Duck. Baxter Black can be contacted via e-mail at: vikki@baxterblack.com

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Rio Grande Basin Fishing Forecast Update

RIO GRAND BASIN — This report is based on the best information available as of July. Water levels and streams flows, conditions that are not usually under CPW control, can change significantly and can have some effects on access, stocking and your fishing.

Surface acreages listed are for full lake volume unless otherwise noted. For the most up-to-date information, readers are encouraged to visit the CPW website at www.cpw.state.co.us and go to Things to do / Fishing / Statewide Conditions or Stocking Report.

You can also call the CPW Biologist or your local CPW Area Office for more detailed information. A valid Colorado fishing license is required to fish in Colorado.

Beaver Creek Reservoir (114 ac)

This popular fishing destination is located 8 miles southwest of South Fork. Dam repairs were completed in 2016 and the reservoir has been refilled. Rainbow trout, brown trout, and kokanee salmon have been stocked in the reservoir for multiple years. In 2021, Rio Grande cutthroat trout, rainbow trout and brown trout have been stocked in the reservoir. The water levels in the lake will allow for boating access through most of the summer. Historically, traditional trout fishing techniques such as bait fishing with worms or power bait and spin fishing with Kastmasters, Panther Martins, or Rapalas have worked well.

Big Meadows Reservoir (114 ac)

This popular fishing destination is located at the headwaters of the South Fork Rio Grande, 13 miles west of South Fork. Mountain scenery is outstanding at this high-country reservoir. Water level should be relatively normal throughout the summer. Stocking level will be similar to past years with 45,000 catchable (10 inch) rainbow trout scheduled to be stocked from May through September.

Although the majority of fish caught will likely be recently stocked rainbow trout, a 2015 survey of the reservoir showed that a good number of rainbow trout survive the winter in the reservoir which provides anglers an opportunity to catch these larger, over-wintered fish. When available from our hatcheries, Big Meadows is typically stocked with a small number of “broodfish” rainbow trout (16-20 inch) to give anglers an opportunity to catch large fish.

Fishing is expected to be good to excellent throughout the summer for rainbow trout (10-14 inch) and brook trout (10-12 inch). Traditional trout fishing techniques usually work well, including power bait, worms, and lures (Kastmasters, Panther Martins and Rapalas). Fly fishing in the evening should produce good results for brook trout as well as rainbow trout.

Mountain Home Reservoir (631 ac)

Mountain Home Reservoir is a popular fishing destination located 4 miles southeast of Fort Garland. This reservoir provides outstanding views of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains.

Fluctuations in water level are expected throughout the summer due to irrigation water releases. Stocking level will be similar to past years with 23,000 catchable (10 inch) rainbow trout scheduled to be stocked from May through June. Sub-catchable (3 inch) rainbow trout are also stocked annually to allow these smaller fish an opportunity to naturally grow in the reservoir to a size in which anglers can catch these fish.

When available from our hatcheries, Mountain Home is typically stocked with a small number of “broodfish” rainbow trout (16-20

inch) to give anglers an opportunity to catch large fish. Fishing for rainbow trout from bank or boat should be good throughout the summer.

Traditional trout fishing techniques usually work well, including power bait, worms, and lures (Kastmasters, Panther Martins and Rapalas). Northern pike were discovered in 2011 by CPW biologists during their standardized sampling efforts. This was most likely due to an illicit introduction. Anglers are encouraged to keep all northern pike they catch as the bag and possession for this species is unlimited statewide. Northern pike can decimate a trout fishery.

Road Canyon Reservoir (140 ac)

This popular fishery is located in the upper Rio Grande basin, 29 miles west of Creede. The reservoir will be stocked with approximately 14,000 catchable (10 inch) rainbow trout throughout the summer.

Sub-catchable (3 inch) rainbow trout and brook trout are also stocked annually to allow these smaller fish an opportunity to naturally grow in the reservoir to a size in which anglers can catch these fish. Water level should be normal with minimal fluctuations later in the summer. The trout fishery consists of rainbow trout (10-18 inch) and brook trout (12-16 inch).

Good to excellent fishing for rainbow trout and brook trout using traditional trout fishing techniques should be expected from May to July. Trolling lures or casting artificial flies from boats and float tubes work well, especially early in the season. Algae blooms and aquatic vegetation growth may impact bank fishing in late summer.

Sanchez Reservoir (4571 ac)

This popular cool-water fishery is located 8 miles south of San Luis. Outstanding views of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains may be observed from this reservoir. A few northern pike are still present in the reservoir but the fishery is dominated by common carp and channel catfish.

Yellow perch are making a gradual comeback, but abundance continues to be low. CPW is currently working to reestablish the Yellow Perch to provide a prey base that allows the

reestablishment of predatory fish in the future.

Smith Reservoir (280 ac)

This highly productive trout fishery is located 4 miles south of Blanca. Due to the drought the reservoir was drained last year causing a loss of the fishery. The reservoir has since refilled and will be stocked with a total of 16,000 catchable (10 inch) rainbow trout in 2021.

The reservoir has been getting stocked since May and is scheduled to be stocked every two weeks through mid-July. Traditional trout fishing techniques usually work well, including power bait, worms, and lures (Kastmasters, Panther Martins and Rapalas).

Trujillo Meadows Reservoir

Located 24 miles west of Antonito, Trujillo Meadows Reservoir offers good fishing opportunity for rainbow trout and brown trout. This reservoir is stocked with sub-catchable brown trout on an annual basis that allows those fish to naturally grow in the reservoir to sizes anglers can catch.

The reservoir will be stocked with 13,000 with catchable (10 inch) rainbow trout throughout the summer. Fishing is best from ice out through

September. Traditional trout fishing techniques usually work well, including power bait, worms, and lures (Kastmasters, Panther Martins and Rapalas) and flies.

Conejos River

Flows are expected to be low, late this summer. During low flows and high-water temperatures, CPW may implement a voluntary fishing closure to protect the fish in the river. Warmer water temperatures can cause fish to become stressed which may reduce survival of individual fish after being caught.

In these conditions, the best time to fish is during the morning when water temperatures are lower. Fluctuations should be expected due to irrigation water releases from Platoro Reservoir.

Angling for brown trout should be good to excellent from Mogote to Platoro. Best fishing areas include the Fly Water from Aspen Glade Campground upstream to Menkhaven Resort, the Pinnacles Section and the meadow below Platoro Reservoir. Best fishing time is before snowmelt and after runoff in late June through July.

Mayfly, stonefly and caddis fly hatches occur throughout the summer providing outstanding fly fishing

opportunities for quality size brown trout and some rainbow trout in the meadow below Platoro Reservoir.

Rio Grande

Flows are expected to be low, late this summer. During low flows and high-water temperatures, CPW may implement a voluntary fishing closure to protect the fish in the river. Warmer water temperatures can cause fish to become stressed which may reduce survival of individual fish after being caught. In these conditions, the best time to fish is during the morning when water temperatures are lower.

Brown trout and rainbow trout fishing should be good to excellent from Del Norte to Rio Grande Reservoir. Best time to fish is after snowmelt in mid-June through July, especially during caddis fly, stonefly and Green Drake mayfly hatches.

Wade fishing is available on public land and CPW leases (contact Monte Vista Service Center for more information about leases). Multiple boat/raft launch sites on public land provide float fishing opportunities to fish long stretches of the river.

— This report updated by Estevan Vigil, of Monte Vista, 719-587-6908, or estevan.vigil@state.co.us.

Crestone Energy Fair is set for Aug. 28-29

STAFF REPORT

CRESTONE — The 32nd annual Crestone Energy Fair is set for Saturday, Aug. 28 and Sunday, Aug. 29, from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. in Crestone.

This is a free, family-friendly event with workshops and presentations focusing on alternative construction, natural building, solar, sustainable gardening, permaculture and healthy lifestyle practices.

The event will feature bluegrass, Americana, rock, soul,

funk and electronica music from around the state, and a full line of vendors selling unique arts and crafts.

Kids activities and entertainment will be provided by Rainbow Lightning and a community kitchen will be serving free food throughout the day.

Organizers will be livestreaming to Facebook and YouTube for people to attend virtually. For more information, visit online www.crestoneenergyfair.org.

The Crestone Energy Fair con-

tinues to be a tradition in the San Luis Valley for more than 30 years, bringing innovative ideas in construction, lifestyle, and sustainability to the region. Run by volunteers, this free event is committed to improving the lives of all attendees by empowering them to learn and experience the necessary skills to use alternative building methodologies and materials in future projects, to learn about energy usage and technologies and create an atmosphere of networking, problem-solving and fun.

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Back-to-School **TIME**

Help students improve their focus on their studies

Teachers strive to create supportive and challenging classroom environments for their students. Such settings can bring out the best in students and help them overcome obstacles, including an inability to focus.

The struggles students can have with focusing on their studies was apparent during the pandemic. A 2020 survey of more than 400 college students found that 64 percent were concerned about their ability to maintain their focus and discipline in remote instructional environments. Though educators, students and parents are hopeful that remote learning will soon be a thing of the past, no one is certain about what lies ahead in regard to the 2021-22 school year. Ideally, students will be back in school time full-time five days per week by the start of the new academic year. However, there's no guarantee that will be the case, and students may need help focusing on their studies.

• **Emphasize one activity at a time.** Various studies have shown that multitasking adversely affects performance and makes it hard to

concentrate. A recent study from researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology found that performing two or three activities simultaneously puts significantly more demand on the brain than simply doing those tasks one after another. All students, and especially those who are struggling with focus, should be encouraged to take on one task at a time.

• **Take breaks.** The Cleveland Clinic notes that various studies have found that periodic breaks improve mood, boost performance and increase a person's ability to concentrate and pay attention. Many students are well acquainted with lengthy cramming sessions on the eve of a big exam, which can feel like a rite of passage for high schoolers and college students. Parents and educators can emphasize the importance of taking breaks during such sessions and how periodic rest can help improve performance.

• **Take a piecemeal approach to big tasks.** The Child Mind Institute notes that breaking big tasks down into smaller, more manageable pieces



can help kids effectively tackle more challenging tasks. The piecemeal approach can make big tasks seem less daunting, and the success kids have at each smaller task can provide some needed momentum as they draw

closer to solving the problem.

Many students struggle to focus on their studies. Some simple strategies can help students overcome such challenges and fulfill their academic potential.

School bus safety

The dawn of a new school year is a time marked by change and fresh opportunities. For many children, school marks the first time they are away from their parents for an extended period of time. It also may be the first time they ride in a vehicle other than their parents' cars. Riding a school bus can be a novel experience no matter a student's age or grade. Kindergarteners may be introduced to the school bus on their first day of school, while older students are no doubt familiar with life inside a school bus. But all students and families can benefit from a refresher course on school bus procedures to ensure this school year begins on safe footing.

• **Be a smart pedestrian.** Riding the school bus is very safe, but injuries can occur walking to and from the bus stop. Watch for cars backing out of driveways and always look both ways multiple times before crossing streets.

• **Remember school bus laws.** Most areas of the country have specific school bus laws that include stopping when red lights are flashing on the school bus.

Cars must stop whether they're behind the school bus, next to it or on the opposite side of the street facing the bus. Stopping allows passengers to enter or exit the bus safely.

• **Stand away from the curb.** The National Safety Council advises keeping six feet, or three giant steps, away from the curb while waiting for the bus. Young children should be carefully supervised.

• **Be visible.** Always cross in front of the bus, making eye contact with the driver so that he or she knows your intentions before crossing. If you drop something, do not bend down to pick it up. Tell the driver instead.

• **Remain seated.** Find a seat promptly and remain seated for the duration of the ride. Do not stand up and proceed down the center aisle until the bus has stopped.

• **Minimize distractions.** Always speak softly and behave so that you do not distract the driver.

School buses are very safe vehicles, but passengers need to do their part to avoid injury.

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05 Notices

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07 Help Wanted

Rio Grande County is seeking a Full Time CSU Administrative Assistant/Office Manager for the Area Extension Director and the Agents in the San Luis Valley. The Extension office delivers lifelong learning experiences to citizens throughout the San Luis Valley, fostering healthy youth and families, prosperous farms and ranches while creating resilient proud communities. Must be a professional, well organized and office efficient individual. Must be able to effectively transmit and receive written and oral communication. Must be proficient with computers and Web page management. Must be able to pass a drug and background check. Salary will be \$34,000 - \$38,000 DOE plus full benefit package. For additional information visit www.riograndecounty.org. Send resumes to humanresources@riograndecounty.org or 925 6th Street, Room 200, Del Norte, CO 81132. (8/14)

Rio Grande County Sheriff's Office is accepting applications for Evidence Technician Specialist. Must be 21 years of age, must pass an extensive background check, Colorado driver license with a good driving record required, High School diploma or GED, Knowledge of Microsoft Windows and Computer operation. Previous law enforcement background or evidence work with law enforcement preferred. Must be detail oriented.

Must be able to work with others as a team. Pick up/submit applications: Human Resource Office, or humanresources@riograndecounty.org, or 925 6th St., Room 200, Del Norte, CO or on-line at www.riograndecounty.org. Go to the Sheriff's, employment opportunities page for RGSO application. Pay range DOE \$15.67 starting an hour. Deadline: Until filled. (8/14)

Valley Educators Credit Union in Alamosa is accepting applications for a Teller/Member Service Representative. Work week is Monday-Friday, 8-5pm. Willing to train. Necessary skills include general math skills, customer service, positive work ethic, computer proficient, and attention to details. Position open until filled. Pick-up application at 910 Main Street. Wage based on experience. EOE. (8/18)

Costilla County Public Health Agency is seeking a Registered Nurse to provide Public Health Nursing in Costilla County. The position will provide skilled nursing services including Immunizations, Communicable Disease control, and support in prevention areas/programs and Core Public Health Services. A baccalaureate degree in nursing is preferred. An Associate Degree with 2 years experience will be considered. Current license (in good standing) to practice as a registered nurse (RN) in Colorado. Please visit the Costilla County Website for application and job description <https://costillacounty.colorado.gov/> or call 719-672-3332. The Position is open until filled. (8/14)

HELP WANTED BUILDING CUSTODIAN -Experienced individual needed for janitorial

services with responsibility for cleaning various county buildings. Full time position, 32 to 40 hours a week, with variable hours which include evening and/or early morning work times. Starting salary will be \$15.05 per hour to start. To view the job description and an application they are available at Saguache County Administration office 505 3rd Street, Saguache or printable at www.saguachecounty.colorado.gov. Call 719-655-2231 for more information. Applications close on Friday, July 30, 2021 at 3:00 P.M. Saguache County is an EEO employer. Valid Driver's License, Drug testing which includes,

background check will be required and a physical exam may be required for final applicants. (8/05)

Ultrasound Tech (Fulltime) at Rio Grande Hospital in Del Norte Colorado, one year of

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

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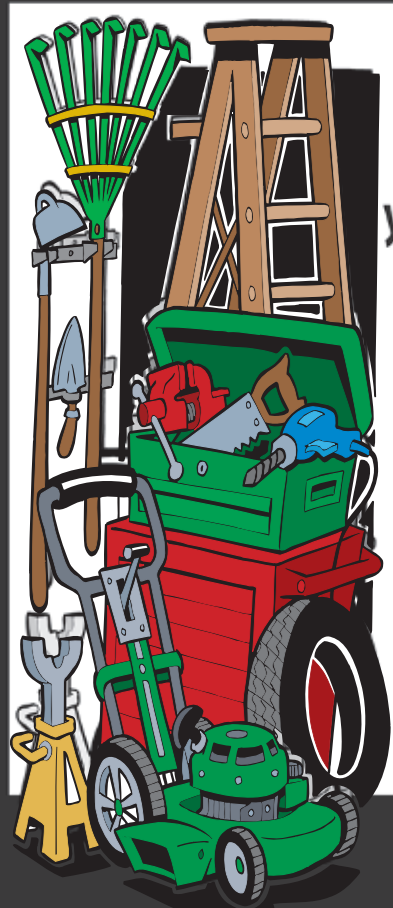
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Solution to last week's puzzle

D	A	C	E	S	E	D	D	A	S	N	A	P						
E	N	O	K	I	P	R	O	C	R	E	A	T	E					
U	N	D	E	R	T	H	E	W	E	A	T	H	E	R				
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			S	P	A	S			S	T	E	E	R	S				
D	R	A	Y					D	O	E	S		A	C	E			
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S	S	T			V	A	R	Y						W	E	R	E	
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S	E	C	E	S	S	I	O	N			W	O	R	R	Y			
A	R	E	S			T	O	N			A	D	I	O	S			

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Courtesy photos

Tie dye shirts made by the campers at Kids Science Camp.



Left to right, Kim Frederick explains the details of streambank willow bundle planting to David Jennings, Denise Jennings, and Sue Ehrgood.



Left: Rosalee Reese handles a willow bundle to be planted in the streambank.



Jessie Egan assisting campers in designing boats — emphasizing different design approaches and flow path dynamics.



Left to right, Rosalee Reese, Taylor Johnson, Denise Jennings, and Sue Ehrgood watch a tool demonstration from Kim Frederick.

HWA hosted the Crew Leader for Ecological Restoration training, facilitated by Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado (VOC), immediately following the camp. After a rigorous morning in the classroom, participants enjoyed two days of hands-on work on the Willow Creek floodplain.

“It is inspiring to work with these dedicated volunteers in such a worthy project,” says Kim

Frederick, instructor for the training. Frederick has over 30 years of experience in trail and

riparian restoration all over the world, however, he has a soft spot for Creede where he’s worked in the past. “I welcome the opportunity to come back to Creede, work with Headwaters Alliance, and be part of the Willow Creek restoration efforts. I would do it again in a minute!”

Participants learned skills for leading groups of volunteers, including safety, group dynamics and conflict resolution. Meanwhile, the field work included willow harvesting and planting techniques to maximize streambank stability, water filtration and natural habitat. The training helps set the foundation for future revegetation ef-

forts. It will be a long-term project to transform the floodplain into one that is visually appealing and ecologically functional, but events like these help jumpstart the process.

“Being new to the area of Creede, I wanted to get involved with this small community,” says Denise Jennings, one of the training participants. “I love the outdoors! The leadership training was fun and informative. I look forward to helping out again in the near future.”

“The workshop was very informative and helpful,” says Sue Ehrgood, a longtime volunteer with the Willow Creek Restoration Company and HWA. “I learned a great deal about handling tools and the correct way to plant willows. It was a fun time and I got to meet and make new friends.”

Both of these events highlight an important ingredient to successful learning and the scientific process — getting involved. Don’t miss your chance to get involved this summer and in the future with Headwaters Alliance, especially at the upcoming HWA extravaganza — Floodplain Dog Days, Aug. 20-21. The events include willow planting, the first-ever Mountain Ping Pong Tournament, After Hours Speaker Series on drought and water quality, and a dog parade and costume contest. Head to headwatersalliance.com, for more information about these events and the ongoing work at HWA.

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Everyone wants a slice of Heaven. This 1.17 acre pie shaped lot (lot # 35) in Beaver Mountain Estates Phase 3 could be yours. 356 Church Creek Drive is a county maintained road which is paved from Hwy 160 directly to the lot, about 3/4 of a mile, but then all the major roads in BME are paved. This means less road dust so you can open your windows to let in the breezes. It adjoins a 1.44 acre Open Space lot on it's north side, which means no house can be built there and the deer will continue to feed in the open space. It is the largest lot, with the best building opportunities, that is crossed by Church Creek. It has underground utilities (no ugly poles or wires), water tap, and is on the county sewage system because of the creek, so no septic system has to be installed by the owner, a big cost savings. At the back is what we call the Grotto. The pie shaped rear of the lot is covered by tall pine trees and offers a perfect quiet place to have chairs and a table for picnics where the trees provide shade and the flowing creek provides coolness and sounds in the summer months. You can walk the creek down to the South Fork of the Rio Grande River about 400 yards away to fish. You are about 1.3 miles to the center of town and about 18 miles to the Wolf Creek Pass Ski Area. At the top of the street you can enter onto National Forest land. The views to the south are of the mountains. A real slice of Heaven. **\$69,000 MLS#778004**

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Arbor House in South Fork celebrates 20 years

BY LYNDISIE FERRELL

SOUTH FORK — Nestled among the trees along the South Fork of the Rio Grande on the west side is a beautiful, cozy and welcoming bed and breakfast owned and operated by Keith and Laurie Bratton. The Arbor House Inn is celebrating its 20th year in South Fork and continues to combine relaxation and adventure with guests from all walks of life.

“My parents are locals that grew up here in the Valley. Keith grew up and graduated from Monte Vista and my mom, Laurie grew up in Del

Norte. I am so proud of what they have built here that I wanted to recognize them for what they bring to this amazing community. They have been through so much in the last 20 years and their story is like so many of the businesses here. Having a business last this long is a milestone,” said daughter and local photographer Ashley Bratton.

The couple met while in college and after leaving the Valley, made their home in Littleton, where they raised their daughters, Ashley and Amanda.

“They swore that they were never going to come back to the Valley to live,” Ashley said. “They had a life in Littleton up until both me and my sister left for college, and I guess the empty-nest syndrome kind of kicked in because it wasn’t until my senior year that they announced they were coming back to South Fork.”

Bratton said her parents liquidated their assets and made the move with one thing in mind, opening a bed and breakfast.

“It was always a dream of my mom’s to open a bed and breakfast, but it was also a shock to us kids when they said they were going to sell everything and go start a business,” Ashley said. “It took them a year to find the right property and I personally thought they were crazy, especially when I saw the property they purchased.”

According to Ashley, her parents settled on a property that sat right next to the South Fork of the Rio Grande with a dilapidated house in the center of the three acres.

“I just didn’t have their vision at the time, but now, seeing what they turned this place into and the perseverance of keeping it afloat for 20 years is just simply amazing. I am just so proud of them,” Ashley said.

They purchased the property in 1999 and spent the next two years making it into their dream bed and breakfast.

“They remodeled everything, cleaned up the yard, moved trees and created access to 400 feet of riverbank,” Ashley said. “This section of river is private, and it will stay private and preserved for years to come. They completely flipped

this place around and the results are wonderful.”

The Brattons went through two fires, the Million Fire in 2002 happened after a year of being open and in 2013 the West Fork Complex Fire ravaged the surrounding Rio Grande National Forest.

“They didn’t let anything stop them. They had a dream, and they were going to see it come through,” Ashley said.

Last year during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Brattons used the

time they were closed to upgrade the property to eight rooms. Five rooms are in the main house and three rooms are in a small cottage on the property.

“COVID was a blessing in disguise, and they used their time to improve the property and add some flair,” Ashley said.

Now, the small bed and breakfast fills up a year in advance and a one-time dream has long since been a reality.

For more information or reservations, visit www.arborhouseinn.com.



Courtesy photo

Keith and Laurie Bratton have owned the Arbor House Inn in South Fork for 20 years. The small bed and breakfast is a testament to hard work and dedication for this family.

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DF-CD-NP-Q321

HVCC volleyball and football registration underway

SUBMITTED ARTICLE

Hi, community members! We are happy to announce that registrations for High Valley Community Center volleyball and flag football are now posted on our website, TheHVCC.org.

Volleyball is available in two age groups — third-fourth grades as well as fifth-sixth grades. Flag football will be available for first-second graders. Registrations is required by Aug. 27!

Any kiddos in grades 3-6 can play tackle football with Rise Above Football. Contact either Dan Roesch at 719-850-8690 or Jesse Albright at 719-480-2660, for more information! Keep an eye out for practice and game updates.

We are also happy to report that Brade and Julia will be hosting a drama camp at HVCC on Aug. 2-6. More information to come! Registration for drama camp is available on

our website.

This week marks the final week of our summer program! We had such a wonderful summer with the kiddos and now it is time to celebrate! We would love for you to join us in celebrating a successful summer at HVCC's End of Summer Carnival on July 29. The carnival will be from 2-7 p.m. and will be here at HVCC. There will be games, snacks, treats, music, laughter, and bounce houses! We hope to see you there. Spread the word!

HVCC will be closed for regular programming until Sept. 7. During that time, HVCC staff will be busy making fun activity plans for the upcoming school year and we are excited to share them with you! Thank you to everyone who has been a part of HVCC, big and small. We are grateful for your continued support! Please do not forget to register for fall sports and drama camp!



Courtesy photos High Valley Community Center is having its summer carnival on July 29. The community is invited to come play games and enjoy an afternoon of fun.

HVCC students have enjoyed a busy summer traveling all over the Valley and beyond.

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Ladies Aid rummage sale cashes out on an excellent fundraising event

By **LYNDSIE FERRELL**

CREEDE — The Creede Ladies Aid Society rummage sale hit it out of the ballpark two weeks ago. The organization took a year off due to the COVID-19 pandemic but bounced back in a big way in 2021.

“This tiny little town can do such amazing things and be so very generous,” said Ladies Aid member Janet Harrison. “This was a record year for us, and we cannot say thank you enough to this wonderful community.”

Harrison and the other group members spent countless days preparing for their annual fundraiser.

“The funding raised during this event help people in need throughout the year in our community,” Harrison said. “It allows this organization to give back when things are rough. See a need, fill a need and we had such an amazing turnout from the community, it just fills your heart right to the top.”

Work begins for the event the Sunday prior to the sale. Members gather at the Virginia Christensen Center.

“People come to volunteer, and we never lack for help,” Harrison said. “Everyone comes together and the process is really quite smooth. The group has been doing this for so many years, everyone just knows what to do. We lay down flooring to protect the gym floor and then everyone takes a section, and we start to set everything up. This year, we had an abundance of merchandise because we had to store things from last year until this year. We have tables donated from local churches and everything we sell was a donation. The event really takes a community.”

The event lasted two days and in that brief time, Ladies Aid took in a record number of donations.

“I am not at liberty to say how much was donated but I can say that it was the biggest amount I believe we have ever had,” Harrison said. “The amount of work that goes into this event in such a short time is a sight to behold.”

Funding from the event goes toward many community outreach opportunities. The organization also makes and sells chile relleno casseroles. This year they sold 180 dishes to people coming to the rum-

Farmer’s market each Saturday in Alamosa

ALAMOSA — The Alamosa Farmers’ Market welcomes locals and visitors to downtown Alamosa, Saturdays at the corner of 6th and State for the 2021 market season.

Mask wearing is encouraged, and vendors will be distanced again this season. Organizers encourage immune-compromised customers to shop early in the day and avoid the peak hours from 10 a.m. to noon to shop.

Vendors will be selling regional farm fresh food products, other food stuffs, hand-crafted items each week. Kids activities will be to-go items with all the directions and supplies.

The Market accepts debit and credit cards, SNAP, Double Up Food Bucks, WIC vouchers, and cash. Bring bills smaller than \$20 for the convenience of the vendors.

For more information, see www.alamosafarmersmarket.org or the Farmers’ Market tent on Saturdays.



The 2021 Creede Ladies Aid Society held a successful rummage sale fundraiser on July 13 and 14. The event was the biggest fundraiser the group has held in many years.



The Creede Ladies Aid Society spent days prior preparing for the annual event making 180 casseroles and setting up for the rummage sale.

of the Ladies Aid, I say thank you to all who helped make it possible,” Harrison said.

Courtesy photos

Artists open studios for Silver Thread Studio Tour on Aug. 14

STAFF REPORT

The Creede Arts Council (CAC), and area artists are proud to present the 17th Annual Silver Thread Studio Tour on Saturday, Aug. 14, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Discover the world of artists of South Fork and Creede as they open their studios to friends, old and new. Take a self-guided driving tour along the beautiful Silver Thread Scenic Byway in the San Juan Mountains of Southern Colorado.

Artist’s studios are located from South Fork through historic Creede, and along the route toward the Studios at Bristol.

“Enjoy a beautiful drive through the mountains and the incredible range of artistic talent in our area,” organizers stated. “Local artists will welcome you into their home studios and galleries, where they will answer questions, share techniques, perform demonstrations, and showcase a variety of works available for purchase.”

The Silver Thread Studio Tour will have 18 participating artists this year. The offerings include fiber arts, ceramics, wood, photography, jewelry, paintings, sculptures, and fused glass. Many of the

artists have national and international recognition in their respective fields.

Map brochures will be available at the Chamber of Commerce in Creede, and at The Studios at Bristol. You may also view and print the map brochure from the CAC website at www.creedearts.com.

Watch for the bright red and yellow signs, banners and windsocks that will guide your way from stop to stop. There is no charge for this event, and all are welcome during these hours, without reservations. All the studios and galleries will be following state COVID guidelines and protocols.

For more information, contact the CAC office at creedearts@outlook.com.



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Light up South Fork Garage Sale is Aug. 6-7

SUBMITTED ARTICLE

SOUTH FORK — The South Fork Friends Foundation has been busy since early June preparing and receiving donated items for its Aug. 6-7 “Light Up South Fork Sale.”

“We have a huge building full of things you don’t want to miss, thanks to the generosity of our Friends and residents of South Fork and surrounding areas,” organizers stated.

The sale begins at 7 a.m. on Friday, Aug. 6, and continues at 7 a.m. on Saturday, Aug. 7, and goes until 4 p.m. each day. Most items are only \$1 unless otherwise priced.

The location is next to the Mountain Pizza and Taproom, in the old Hungry Logger building. The proceeds from this sale will be used to help pay for Colorado Christmas Lights, a professional lighting

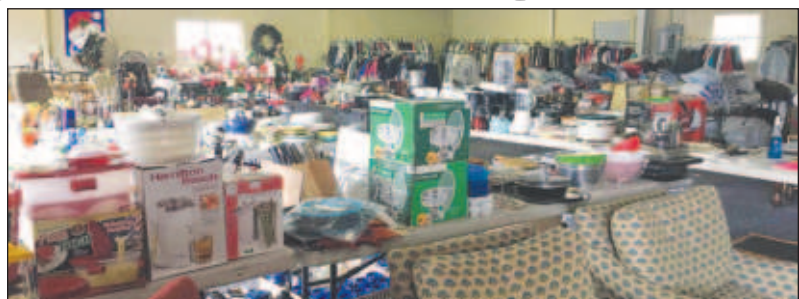
service, that lights up Vail, Aspen, Breckenridge, and many other Colorado towns. They will be putting new lights in the trees at the Visitor Center. The annual Yuletide celebration has been a signature event of the South Fork Friends Foundation since the first celebration in 2017.

SFFF has supported numerous projects and events in South Fork for years with many more in the planning stages. The Friends, with help from Rio Grande County Commissioners, repaved the pickleball court where people play all through the season — Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, from 9-11 a.m. If you haven’t already seen the new Big Bear at the Community Center, check it out the next time in SF. He will be placed on his permanent stand soon welcoming all to the

Community Center, where you can enjoy the newly purchased tables and chairs for the Center at a cost of \$20,000. This past winter saw ice skaters enjoying the larger ice rink and heated skate shack, all thanks to the SFFF, the Town of South Fork, and supporters.

Tell your friends and neighbors, better yet, gather them up and come on to our sale in South Fork, dine at fabulous restaurants and check out the shops at the confluence of our mighty waters.

For more information about what the South Fork Friends Foundation is all about, check out our Facebook page or visit the website, www.friendsofsouthfork.com. Do you have questions? Send us an email to info@friendsofsouthfork.com, we would love to hear from you!



Courtesy photo

The South Fork Friends Foundation is getting ready for another yard sale to take place in the old Hungry Logger building the first weekend of August. All proceeds from this event will go toward local projects.

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Borderlands Tribute to benefit Wildwood Sounds in Del Norte

STAFF REPORT

DEL NORTE — Over a dozen Americana music artists from multiple states will be showcased in Del Norte’s upcoming Borderlands Tribute 2021 Americana Music Showcase on Friday, Aug. 13 and Sunday, Aug. 15.

Friday’s 7 to 10 p.m. concert at Wildwood Sounds Concert Venue Back Porch will feature Steve Brooks of Austin, Texas. Brooks is a songwriter, storyteller, speaker, and award-winning punster that has appeared in Alamosa previously.

Friday’s concert also features Sharon Walker, Darrin Kobetich, Lisa Byrn, Bob “Zin Bubba” Wil-

liford, Ruben Dominguez, and Eric Sommer.

Sunday’s headline act is Sweet Magic, a quartette of San Luis Valley artists whose music combines flamenco, tight vocals and original writing in a magical delivery.

Sunday’s show also features the duos McLeod Nine, The Whitmores, and Howe2 for a lively brunch-time concert, 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Food will be provided at the Sunday concert by Del Norte’s new Rabbitbrush Catering, a sponsor of Borderlands Tribute.

Proceeds benefit Wildwood Sounds House Concerts. Suggested donation is \$15 for each concert.



Sunday brunch plates are \$12. Beverages available at each concert by donation. Wildwood Sounds Concert Venue is located at 850 Grand Ave., Del Norte.

South Fork Mushroom Foray is Aug. 6-7

SUBMITTED ARTICLE

SOUTH FORK — This year’s South Fork Mushroom Foray will be held on Aug. 6 and 7. The same agenda is planned for both days, so adventurers need only to sign up for one day or the other. However, people are more than welcome to participate on both days.

Both days start at 8:30 a.m., with an introduction at South Fork Visitor Center that includes quick tips regarding the proper way to identify and collect mushrooms.

The group will then travel to a designated area to look for and collect mushroom species. Once the mushrooms have been collected, the participants will go back to the Visitor Center for identification and discussion.

The registration fee for this event is \$20 per person, per day or \$35 for both days. Space is limited to a maximum of 30 people each day.

Adventurers are advised to bring water, rain gear, sack lunch, small paper bags or napkins to separate specimens, hat, spade or knife, camera, notepad, and pen. And people can also bring a mushroom guide, whistle, sunblock, gloves, hand wipes, walking stick, sunglasses, and GPS.

To register, call the South Fork Visitor Center at 719-873-5512 or email vcdirector@southfork.org.

South-Central Colorado Micro Brew Fest and Car Show is Aug. 21

STAFF REPORT

MONTE VISTA — Riding in on the wheels of a very successful Cinco de Mayo Cultural Celebration, the OptiMystics Citizen’s Action Network is planning its next fundraising event — the South-Central Colorado Micro Brew Fest and Car Show.

It is scheduled to take place on Saturday, Aug. 21 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. in Chapman Park, 300 W. Prospect Ave., in Monte Vista.

People who enjoy craft beer, classic cars, music, shopping, eating and more are encouraged to attend. Activities for the day, include tasting portions from a variety of microbreweries from around the state. People will have the opportunity to purchase their favorite from the tastings.

There will be live music, local vendors, food trucks, games and activities, and more.

Coupled with the Brew Fest, the Poor Boys Car Club will be hosting its 10th Annual Classic Car Show.

“The OptiMystics are proud to be partnering with the Poor Boys Car Club for this exciting one-day event,” organizers stated.

The platinum sponsor for this event is Rio Grande Bank.

“Special thanks to CEO Shon Davis and his dedicated staff for supporting the efforts of The OptiMystics CAN,” organizers stated.

Other sponsors currently include the Sandhill Inn & Suites, SLVoices and San Luis Valley Broadcasting.

The Brew Fest and Car Show are just one of the events happening throughout Monte Vista that weekend. Visitors can visit the weekly Farmers Market, 3rd Fridays Art Walk, the Native American Artist Fair on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, and the Amish Schools Benefit Dinner.

Transportation between Chapman Park and Downtown will be available at a nominal fee.

To find out more, become a sponsor, a vendor, or to donate, contact the OptiMystics CAN at optimysticscag@gmail.com or call 719-239-1811.

The OptiMystics Citizen Action Network was organized to support groups and individuals creating economic development through social and cultural events and other activities.



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Photo Mechel Meek

The rain across the San Luis Valley this summer has been mostly beneficial to local agriculture, according to the USDA.

USDA: Rain in SLV benefitting San Luis Valley agriculture

BY MECHEL MEEK

SAGUACHE COUNTY — The weather continues to affect agriculture in both positive and negative ways in the San Luis Valley and Colorado this year.

According to the USDA report on crop progress for the week of July 25, “In the San Luis Valley, heavy precipitation and flooding was noted. County reports mentioned no crop damage from flooding was noted, but some rangeland showed marginal damage and was expected to recover. Isolated hail and rain were enough to delay hay harvest.”

Also, according to the USDA, a positive result of the storms is that the amount of rainfall has been sufficient to maintain the necessary soil moisture in the topsoil and subsoil in potato, alfalfa and grain fields.

In 2020, per the USDA, the soil moisture in the San Luis Valley was short for most of the year, which dictated a necessary increased reliance on irrigation in 2020 to maintain optimal crop growth.

According to the Colorado Potato Committee Market Report, “the

shipments for Monday, July 26, 2021, were 134 loads. There were 134 trucks and 0 rail from the shipments, 50 were bulk loads, of which 0 were seed.

- July 2021 loads (to date): 2,049

- July 2020 loads (to date): 1,530

The market report shows an increase in potato shipments as compared to last year. This year, 42 percent of the San Luis Valley potato fields were in good condition with 30 percent of pasture and range in good condition.

With the unusually strong storms creating flash flooding and hail throughout Saguache County and the San Luis Valley at large, it was expected that there would be damage to some crops.

However, that has not been seen except in some rangeland areas and in some delays harvesting alfalfa fields.

Many areas in Colorado are still experiencing drought conditions and extreme heat which has led to a loss of crops and livestock. Luckily, the San Luis Valley has avoided these types of issues so far this year.



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CRT's Young Audience Tour hitting the road this fall

STAFF REPORT

CREEDE — Now in its 38th season, the Young Audience Outreach Tour's mission is to bring high quality musical theatre to rural and underserved communities. This

Creede Repertory Theatre program annually produces an original children's show for students in grades K-6 throughout the Southwest, serving over 37,000 young people.

With a strong anti-bullying message, the Fall tour encourages students to be “upstanders” rather than “bystanders” through an original bilingual musical. The Young Audience Outreach Tour is geared for students in grades K-6, in alignment with National Core Arts Standards, a musical that empowers and motivates action, and is full of audience participation.

Productions last approximately 50 minutes and can be performed in a multi-purpose room, a theatre, or gym. The actors will interact directly with the students throughout the show. It is a highly energetic hour of learning and entertainment. Schools throughout the south-

western part of the US have enjoyed several years of this growing production and many have raved about the experience including local schools here in the San Luis Valley. This year's production is “El

Guayabo/The Guava Tree” with the book and lyrics by Diana Grisanti, music by Emiliano Messiez and directed by Ismael Lara.

According to the play's description, “Emiliano is all grown up now, but he has a story to share about the hardest year of his life: the third grade. This was the year Emiliano moved from Mexico to Colorado — from one tiny mountain town to another — uprooting everything he had ever loved. ‘El Guayabo/The Guava Tree’ is a story of displacement and resilience, of thinking back on the bullies who hurt us and the friends who saved us.”

Be on the lookout for schedules at local schools throughout the Valley and beyond. For more information, visit www.creederep.org or contact Brittni Shambaugh Addison, Education Director, by email at brittni@creederep.com or by calling 719-658-2540 Ext: 227.

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Brown steps up to 'rebuild' CSU Extension

STAFF REPORT

SAN LUIS VALLEY — Long-time Alamosa resident Larry Brown in May accepted the “challenging” job of “rebuilding” the CSU Extension Service program in the San Luis Valley.

“The San Luis Valley Extension Service is not a lost cause,” said Brown, “it is a just cause! Look around our communities and it is hard not to see a mess. I believe now more than ever we need the positive influence of Extension.”

Believing in Extension is believing in the empowerment of continual life learning, that any person at any age who continues to learn is much more likely to be healthier, happier, more prosperous, and contribute more positively to their community, according to Brown.

“In Extension, everything we do fosters healthier kids and families, more prosperous farms, ranches and businesses, and

stronger, more resilient communities with more pride,” said Brown.

Brown moved to the Valley in 1986 serving as the CSU Extension Livestock Agent for the San Luis Valley Area, a position he held for almost 9 years.

Raised on a family crop and livestock farm in southern New Mexico, he is also a third-generation Extension agent.

“I’ve got Extension in my DNA,” said Brown jokingly. “And because of my generational experience with Extension, I know better than most just how powerfully Extension educational programs can contribute to the health and prosperity of a community. Beginning with our flagship 4-H youth program and continuing with farm, ranch, and business management, family health, nutrition, and finances, and community development, the potential value of the Extension model of learning from experience is huge.”

Because he also had the desire to be in

business for himself, he resigned as the livestock agent in May of 1995 and has been self-employed since.

Brown has served on the Extension advisory committee for the past four years and reports that despite a genuine effort by good people on staff and on the committee, the program has lost funding, lost agent positions, and as a result, lost effectiveness.

“It is hanging on by a thread. In our own business we’ve had successes and failures,” said Brown. “What I’ve learned from both is what has prepared me to step up and lead this very challenging mission. With a dedicated, skeleton staff, and with help from the community, we will rebuild Extension, creating great service and value for the Valley community, and restoring it to the highly respected organization it can be.”

Brown added that Extension is “here to serve you. And to serve you well and successfully rebuild, we need your help. Let



Larry Brown

us know your needs, ideas, suggestions and requests.”

To reach Brown or to learn more about CSU Extension Service programs, call 719-852-7381.

Young is new CSU Extension 4-H Agent in SLV



Morgan Young

STAFF REPORT

SAN LUIS VALLEY — Morgan Young is the new Colorado State University Extension 4-H Agent in the San Luis Valley Area.

Young is a sixth-generation cattle rancher. She grew up in Fruita, where she was involved in 4-H as well as FFA, and played softball, before earning her associates degree at Lamar Community College and her bachelor’s degree in animal science and her master’s in agricultural commu-

nication and media from West Texas University. She wrote her master’s thesis on the Beef Quality Assurance program.

After college she interned with the Mesa County 4-H program.

“I realized that I wanted to work with the 4-H program and show kids what I loved growing up,” Young said.

So, she became the 4-H Youth Development and Family Consumer Science CSU Extension Agent in Chaffee County where she has been for the last two years. She grew the 4-H program there even in a year with COVID-19 with the help of her leaders and members.

“When the job became available here in the San Luis Valley, I knew it was meant for me,” Young said. “I felt a calling to come here, and it all fell into place. I’ve been here less than three weeks, but so far, I really love it here. I’m still learning each county within the San Luis Valley as to their needs from me and what they want from the 4-H program.”

Young said she would like to encourage the participation in

the 4-H program either as a 4-H member or volunteer because 4-H is so much more than just “cows and plows.”

She wants to offer an opportunity to all youth within the San Luis Valley to recognize their potential whether it is in animal projects, leadership, or “indoor” projects such as cake decorating, model rocketry, just to name a few.

There are many leadership retreats that youth can participate in as well. Her passions lie with giving youth the tools they need to be responsible and respectful,

leaders within their communities.

She believes in creating programming that is unique to each of the different cultures and communities in the San Luis Valley. With so many children struggling to reach their full potential, 4-H believes that young people, in partnership with adults, can play a key role in creating a more promising and equitable future for youth, families and communities across the country. 4-H believes every child should have an equal opportunity to succeed. They believe every child should



have the skills they need to make a difference in the world.

“I want them to have all the tools they need for their future,” Young said.

When she isn’t working, Young is a country girl at heart and loves being outdoors hiking, hunting and fishing.

She likes working with cattle, snow and water skiing, spending time with her family and working with her dog Sage.

To learn more about how you can get involved, visit www.4-h.org/ or www.colorado4h.org or call the San Luis Valley Area Colorado State University Extension Office at 719-852-7381.

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San Luis Valley Fair Schedule August 7-14, 2021

Saturday, August 7, 2021

8 a.m.-Noon Set Up – *Horse exhibitors please see the fair book for horse specific set up times*

10-11 a.m. Mandatory Livestock Exhibitors' Meeting

11 a.m.-Noon Horse Exhibitors' Test

5 p.m. Ranch Rodeo

Sunday, August 8, 2021

SOFTBALL FIELDS

8-9 a.m. 4-H Dog Check In

9 a.m. 4-H Dog Show

LIVESTOCK PAVILLION

2 p.m. Dairy Goat Judging Followed by Milking Competition

6 p.m. Mike Kelley Memorial Open Barrow Show

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11-1 p.m. Dairy Goat Check In
Breeding Livestock Check In
Barrows For Barrow Show Check In

INDOOR BUILDING

6-8 p.m. Open Class Check in

Monday, August 9, 2021

INDOOR BUILDING

7:30-9:30 a.m. Open Class Check in

8-11 a.m. 4-H/FFA Project Check In

9 a.m.-2 p.m. 4-H/FFA Project Judging

10 a.m.- 12 p.m. Open Class Judging

ARENA

8-8:30 a.m. Horse Check In

9 a.m. 4-H Horse Show

LIVESTOCK PAVILLION

9 a.m. Breeding Beef Show/ Dairy Calf

1 p.m. Breeding Sheep Show

3 p.m. Production Meat Goat Show

5 p.m. Breeding Swine Show

5:30 p.m. Swine Showmanship

MCMULLEN BUILDING

7-11 a.m. Poultry Check In

9-11 a.m. Market Swine Check in/Weigh in
BREEDING STOCK MUST CHECK OUT BY 9 PM

Tuesday, August 10, 2021

INDOOR BUILDING

10 a.m.- Noon 4-H Fashion Revue

7:30 p.m. 4-H Fashion Show

ARENA

8-8:30 a.m. Horse Check In

9 a.m. 4-H Working Ranch Horse Show

LIVESTOCK PAVILLION

5:30 p.m. Market Swine Show

MCMULLEN BUILDING

8-10 a.m. Market Lamb Weigh in/ Check in

10 a.m.- 12 p.m. Market Goat Weigh in/ Check in

1-3 p.m. Market Beef Check in

9 a.m. Poultry Show/ Release birds

1 p.m. Rabbits check in

Wednesday, August 11, 2021

ARENA

8 a.m. 4-H Gymkhana
The Horse Awards Ceremony will be held after completion of the Gymkhana & Clean Up in the Arena

LIVESTOCK PAVILLION

2 p.m. Market Goat Show Followed by Market Goat Showmanship

5 p.m. Market Lamb Show Followed by Lamb Showmanship

MCMULLEN BUILDING

10 a.m. Rabbit show

INDOOR BUILDING

8:30 p.m. Community movie Night (if possible)

Thursday, August 12, 2021

LIVESTOCK PAVILLION

9 a.m. Market Beef Show followed by Market Beef Showmanship

3 p.m. Round Robin

OUTDOOR

7 p.m. Goat Roping
RELEASE OF NON-SALE ANIMALS MAY BEGIN AFTER LAST SHOW. NON-SALE ANIMALS MUST BE OUT OF MCMULLEN BUILDING BY 6 p.m. Thursday August 12, 2021

Friday, August 13, 2021

MCMULLEN BUILDING

4 p.m. Sale birds back in pens

LIVESTOCK PAVILLION

8 a.m. Blue and Gold showmanship

6 p.m. SLV Fair Junior Livestock Auction

INDOOR BUILDING

Street Dance immediately following the Sale

Saturday, August 14, 2021

8 a.m. Tear Down/Clean up

INDOOR BUILDING

8-10 a.m. Indoor projects picked up that did not make state fair

**Schedule subject to change*

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Local farmer talks about this year's growing season

By Marie Mccolm

MONTE VISTA — "I've been farming since I was about 12 years old, I remember knee-high boots, and irrigating with no sprinklers. I also remember many Ski-Hi Stampede rodeos and parades," eighty-one-year-old farmer Billy Dean Claunch said with a smile, as he reminisced about his past experiences with farming and the Ski-Hi Stampede in Monte Vista.

A prominent farmer in the San Luis Valley since 1967, Claunch and his wife, Shirley, have been farming in the Valley for as long as they have been together, nearly 55 years. The Claunch family originates from Oklahoma and moved here in the early 1900's.

Billy Dean and Shirley own and operate their farm — Bar 32 Ranches LLC — on 320 acres. The Claunch's farm hay, and grain, and they also raise hogs.

Billy Dean said that "so far, the 2021 farming season is going very well."

The couple agrees that their farm could use more rain though.

"They would have welcomed rain for their hay, and just bailed it for their animals," Billy Dean said.

Billy Dean said his farm was not really affected by the COVID-19 pandemic last year, and the only thing they really noticed from this year to last year, was the shortage of flour and sugar.

Billy Dean said, "that there are a lot of people who don't really



know what farmers do and how much responsibility farmers have in bringing staples to the table."

The Claunch family is well known for their farming, and known, for often being a part of the Ski-Hi Stampede's annual celebration. The Claunchs have appeared in many rodeos and parades. Shirley was well recognized in the rodeos for running barrels.

Billy Dean and Shirley are the grandparents of the late Dusty Claunch, who was a well-known crop duster in the San Luis Valley. He lost his life in a tragic airplane crash in 2016.

Keri Rogers, granddaughter of Billy and Shirley, was present when her grandfather, was talking about his years as a farmer, and about the Ski-Hi Stampede.

"The last time the Claunch family was all in a parade together was when Dusty passed away in 2016. I remember it being Dusty's idea for all of us to ride horses and be in the parade together that year," Rogers said.

When asked what his favorite thing about farming is, Billy Dean said, "I guess I like being my own boss."

Claunch's wife stated that her husband's favorite motto is "don't put off until tomorrow, what you can do today."

Granddaughter Keri Claunch said his age does not slow him down one bit.

"Claunch roped calves until he was 73 years old and is still going strong at 81, with his wife and his farm," Keri Claunch said.



Photos by Marie Mccolm

A brief history of agriculture and water in the Valley

By Lyndsie Ferrell

SAN LUIS VALLEY — While reading through the San Juan Prospector from 1874 when Rio Grande County was on the brink of being designated a county, one can see how and why the San Luis Valley was homesteaded even from the very beginning.

In one passage it reads, "There is 4,000 square miles of prime land, probably, most definitely more. Cattle and sheep herds prosper here. Oats, barley, wheat, potatoes, and other vegetables do well, and the soil is rich and has high yields. Water is pure and drinkable with no alkali at 14 to 16 feet. There is an

abundance of timber pine, spruce, fur and cottonwood. It is untouched land of natural resources that boggles the mind and stirs the spirit."

Articles such as this follow a long and endearing history of the San Luis Valley which was, at one time, the place that was "up and coming". People boast about the beauty here and the unique landscape that offered so many rich resources from water to agriculture to minerals like silver and gold as well as the abundance of trees and wildlife, enough to sustain a large population which slowly made its way from Pueblo and the front range to this

wide Valley and called it home and many still do.

The Valley has long been known as one of the top producing valleys in Colorado for crops such as potatoes, sugar beets, oats and more. Through the years, the crops have changed with the conditions, but other crops have come in to replace those no longer being sown. Communities sprang up along the Rio Grande and from that irrigation was formed and traveled to the farmlands that exist today.

In a paper printed in 1937 the author states, "San Luis Valley not only ranks first among counties of Colorado in potato production but is one of the leading potato producing counties in the United States. Total carlot shipments of

potatoes from the 1936 crop exceeded 7,000 cars, which were marketed at an average price to farmers of approximately \$1.60 per hundredweight, making a total valuation of more than four million dollars distributed among 83 per cent of the 730 farms upon which potatoes are produced on a commercial scale in the Valley."

It is easy to see how much has changed over the years including the water that has flowed from the headwaters of the Rio Grande and down through the Valley. In another article printed in 1935 it states, "The Rio Grande Canal provides irrigation water for 125,000 acres of the most productive land in the entire United States. At one time, this was the largest irrigation

canal in the world and is now exceeded only by several English and American government-constructed projects. The system includes over 150 miles of main canal and laterals, without a single cut, fill or flume. The canal diverts 1,700 cubic feet of water per second of time and provides the cheapest water right known. Actual cost of water to water users under this canal in 1935 was five cents per acre foot of water, or 10 cents per acre of land."

The cost of water and potato crops is significantly different in this day and the way agriculture is handled but one thing remains the same and that is there is passion and beauty in the everyday life here in the Valley and it comes from the echoes of our past.



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Organic potato, barley and alfalfa fields in the San Luis Valley.

Photos by Mechel Meek

Organic farming slow to take hold in Valley

By **MECHEL MEEK**

SAGUACHE COUNTY — The future of organic agriculture in the San Luis Valley has yet to be decided. Thanks to the warm sunny days and cool nights, the Valley has near-perfect weather for growing organic crops.

The cool nights help control the pest population and control weeds without the need to apply pesticides or herbicides. The warm days have plentiful sunshine, which creates a natural system of fertility for the plants.

While the growing season is shorter than many areas of the country, most crops grown here have been selected and bred to take advantage of the unique climate and high elevation. This is especially true of potato and barley crops.

The San Luis Valley is home to over 55,000 acres of potato fields with around 15,000 of these acres entered for certification each year.

According to the Colorado Certified Potato Growers Association, “Growers routinely produce in excess of 125 different cultivars of potatoes as seed.”

Barley production in the Valley is more than four times the production in the rest of Colorado, with the Valley planting over 54,000 acres of barley each year.

With these types of production

numbers, you would expect that the Valley would have a large amount of organic farms. The consumer demand for organic produce and organically produced goods continues to show double-digit growth nationwide, according to the USDA this year.

While demand is skyrocketing, the amount of organic farming has not kept pace with this demand.

The number of certified organic farms in Saguache County number at 15, organic animal product farms number at three, with one organic nursery providing starts.

Organic farms must adhere to specific criteria and farming principles in order to receive the coveted USDA Organic certification. The certified organic farms must use crop rotation to create the correct nutrient environment to improve the soil.

Alfalfa is used to impart nitrogen to the soil, so that other high-income organics can be planted in rotation, such as potatoes and barley.

While alfalfa in a necessary part of the rotation, it also utilizes the most water. Since water is the hardest resource to acquire in the San Luis Valley, it is a hotly debated topic among farmers and the general population. This differentiation of ideas can lead to conflict among the various stakeholders in the farming communities.

Mountain Valley Produce, a certified organic farm based in southwest Saguache County, specializes in organic alfalfa, barley, barley straw and several varieties of potatoes. The owner, Ernie Myers said, “I’m not sure how sustainable organic farming is going to be for the Valley. We need to be more creative in our management practices because here, everyone is sensitive to how much water is being used.”

Myers also explained that in order for organic farming to expand, new methods will need to be developed in order to replace the nitrogen in the

soil. Specific technology and more manageable fertilizer will need to be developed in order to continue organic farming growth.

“Right now,” Myers explained, “alfalfa is what makes organic farming work, but this is not sustainable long term.”

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Scientists warn western U.S. drought could be 'new normal'

By JOANNA THOMPSON

By now, you've probably heard about the historic drought gripping the Western United States. Forecasts for wildfires, water shortages and bone-dry riverbeds abound. It's a scary situation, both for those living in the region and for those who don't.

Whether you live in the Southeast or the Northwest, you might have a few questions about this megadrought and its impacts. If so, you're in luck — that's what we'll be breaking down today.

Let's start with the basics.

What Is a Drought?

Though it may seem straightforward, it can be difficult to boil down to a simple definition — there's no magic number, be it inches of rainfall or water levels, that signals when a drought begins or ends.

"Drought can mean different things in different places," says Stephanie McAfee, an applied climatologist at the University of Nevada, Reno. "It can actually even mean different things to different people in the same place." But like many in her field, McAfee ascribes to a definition coined by the late climate researcher Kelly Redmond: Drought is "insufficient water to meet needs."

By most accounts, the current drought in the Western United States has been ongoing since the early 2000s. While it might not be the longest drought the region has ever seen (one in the 1200s lasted more than a century), it's one of the most severe. Water levels in the Colorado Basin and Lake Mead have hit new lows; Las Vegas didn't see rain for a record-breaking 240 days between April 20 and Dec. 17, 2020.

"It's really dry," says McAfee.

The 'New Normal'?

The drought has gone on long enough that climatologists are considering new terminology for it. Some have proposed labeling it a "megadrought" to convey the scope of the situation. Others argue that the megadrought moniker still doesn't do this event justice. "Something that we might be looking at is actually more like aridification," McAfee says.

Aridification occurs when a region becomes permanently dryer. In other words, it marks a shift in the baseline for the amount of water that is considered "normal." As the effects of climate change play out, it seems that less rainfall in the Western U.S. might become the standard.

"I think it's accurate to say that that area, at least statistically speaking, has been drying out," says Curtis Riganti, an atmospheric scientist at the National Drought Mitigation Center at the University of Nebraska. "Connecting that to the dynamics of climate change I think makes sense."

As they become increasingly common, you might be wondering: What are some of the dangers associated with



Photo courtesy of Justin Sullivan via Getty Images

The tall bleached "bathtub ring" is visible on the rocky banks of Lake Powell at Reflection Canyon June 24, 2021, in Lake Powell, Utah. Lake Powell is currently at 34.56 percent of capacity, a historic low. The lake stands at 138.91 feet below full pool and has dropped 44 feet in the past year. The Colorado River Basin supplies water to 40 million people in seven Western states.

severe drought?

An Empty Lunchbox and a Full Tinderbox

One of the most obvious risks is wildfire. We saw a series of horrific and devastating fires along the West Coast in 2020, particularly in California. This year, some areas of the Golden State have received as little as 11 percent of their typical rainfall to date, which could spark even worse burns than last year as the summer progresses. "We're already starting to see that crop up in some areas in June," Riganti says.

Another concern is food production. Agriculture is incredibly important to the economies of many Western states, including California, Oregon, Washington and Arizona. Common crops in these states — like almonds, wheat, avocados and apples — require lots of water to grow well, which can lead to shortages of those crop in times of drought. That's devastating to those states' economies.

And then there's ranching. With less rainfall in states like New Mexico, Nevada and Arizona, ordinarily lush

grazing lands have suffered. "Ranchers have to bring water and food into specific areas for their cattle," says Erinanne Saffell, the assistant state climatologist of Arizona. It's contributed to a worldwide deficit in livestock feed.

But it's important to remember that drought isn't just a West Coast thing, says Riganti. Other areas are in the midst of their own drought. "I've been getting reports of crops struggling in parts of the upper Midwest," he says, "Northern Iowa, Minnesota, parts of Michigan, and then even up into parts of New England are all experiencing various levels of drought right now."

And that means everyone across the U.S. can expect to feel the effects of Western drought as it continues to ripple across rest of the country. For example, last year California wildfire smoke made it as far east as New York City and Boston, and potentially even impacted air quality in the Netherlands. On the economic side, smaller crop yields out West would likely drive up produce prices nationwide.

The floodgates of the Berenda Reservoir in Chowchilla, California, were completely dry June 21, 2021. Almost three-fourths of the Western U.S. is gripped by drought so severe that it's unlike anything recorded in the 20-year history of the U.S. Drought Monitor.

Photo courtesy of Kyle Grillo/Bloomberg via Getty Images



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Pioneering potato breeder Dave Holm retires

By ANNA GERBER
CSU Extension

SAN LUIS VALLEY — Dave Holm was destined to work with potatoes. He was raised on a potato farm in south-east Idaho, where his dad and grandfather instilled in him a love of one of the world's most important crops. The first in his family to go to college, he studied plant science during his undergraduate and graduate studies at the University of Idaho as he narrowed his focus to potato breeding and physiology. "My career started when I was born," Holm says. "My dad was a big supporter of education. I also had a good seventh-grade science teacher who told us we needed to start thinking about what we wanted to do in life, and I knew what I wanted to do, generally, was to work with plants."

This June, Holm retired after 43 years of service to Colorado State University's San Luis Valley Research Center and Department of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture. After graduating with a doctorate from the University of Minnesota in 1977, Holm and his wife, Vonda, packed a small trailer and moved to Colorado's San Luis Valley, where the ideal climate and near-constant sunshine help make for what is now the second-largest fresh potato growing region in the United States.

Passion for potatoes

Holm's passion for potatoes is driven by many childhood memories on his family farm, and his interest extends to the complexities of the tubers, as well as their nutritional properties.

"Potatoes have many specific health properties that we have discovered and enhanced over the years, and they offer a lot in terms of what consumers like," said Holm. "They are generally easy to grow but can be challenging; grow in a lot of places around the world; and there is a lot of industry built up around potatoes, including growing, storage, marketing and processing into other foods."

In 1978, Holm started at the SLVRC as an assistant professor focused on physiology and potato management. He took over as project leader for the Colorado Potato Breeding and Selection Program in 1982, focusing on developing new potato cultivars through traditional hybridization methods. Holm served as superintendent of the research center from 1983-1997, and was promoted to associate professor in 1992, and ultimately, full professor in 1996.

Under Holm's leadership, 33 potato cultivars have been released by the breeding program, and he has cooperated with other universities and entities on the release of an additional 21. His potato cultivars are well known and adopted by producers, and many have significantly reduced nitrogen and fungicide input requirements. His work grew to include plant variety protection on potato cultivars and developing more materials with resistance to Potato Virus Y, one of the most prevalent plant viruses affecting potato production.

Today, many of Holm's cultivars are still doing well, though he has seen firsthand the ups and downs of the potato industry.

"We don't know how the market is going to evolve over the years based on consumer preference, and sometimes there are conflicts with acceptance of the products we have developed. We try to optimize the probability of success," Holm says. "The thing that gives me the most personal satisfaction is taking potatoes in various directions to meet the needs of the potato industry, and the impact that I have had on the ag industry in Colorado and around the world."



Dave Holm

Courtesy photo

Impact on industry, San Luis Valley

Through his service to his profession and his community, Holm has made a significant impact on the San Luis Valley. For the past 26 years, he has been volunteering with the San Luis Valley Regional Science Fair, many years as the board president, and has served 25 years on the Colorado Science and Engineering Fair board of directors, including two years as president. He regularly guides kids with projects to the annual SLVRSF and the CSEF at CSU in Fort Collins. He has also mentored local students at the research center, as well as graduate students and early career professionals. During that time, he and Vonda also raised two children, who also participated in the science fair and went on to study at CSU before starting careers and families of their own.

"Dr. Holm's career impacts are remarkable in their significance to the potato industry, the San Luis Valley community and Colorado State University," said James Pritchett, dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences and director of the Colorado Agricultural Experiment Station. "Dave is the epitome of a land-grant scientist, weaving the discovery of knowledge, active engagement, and community service for everyone's benefit. His selfless legacy is a testament for which we are all grateful."

After more than four decades of working full time, Holm is looking forward to spending two weeks in Alaska this summer with his family before settling into a new routine. He will remain at the SLVRC in a part-time capacity to ensure a smooth transition and to mentor his successor. He hopes to continue mentoring graduate students and collaborating on regional projects related to evaluating potatoes, and to maintain relationships with people and industry connections around the world.

Holms said he will always have potatoes.

"When I was an undergraduate at the University of Idaho, I always enjoyed the rare treat of walking down the hall when the cooler door was open — the aroma and the smell of the potatoes was like going home," he said. "When you work with a crop for so long, it just kind of gets in your blood."

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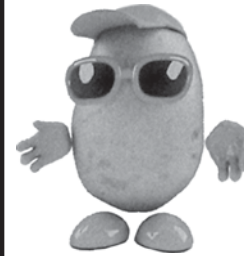
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Green Acres Hemp farm offers new products

BY LYNDSIE FERRELL

SAN LUIS VALLEY — Jim and Lisa Strang, owners of Green Acres Hemp Farm have been in business here in the San Luis Valley for well over 10 years and have taken their products across the nation as more and more consumers become customers. Throughout the years, Jim Strang and his wife have adapted to the many changes in federal laws and regulations and have somehow managed to navigate it all on their road to success.

This year, Green Acres Hemp Farm began their crop indoors, which as it turned out was the right decision as most of the southwestern part of the US experienced a colder than normal spring with freezing temperatures occurring until late May.

“We grew indoors for the first part of the year and have just finished harvesting that crop. We planted our next crop outside about a month ago and our plants are just about a foot in height. I think we will have a great year so far,” said Jim Strang.

Strang has been hearing from customers that they are wanting to try a smokable hemp that has been making waves on the market for about two years now after gaining popularity, so Strang hit the books and learned what he could about the new strains.

“We have been getting several requests for smokable hemp. Usually, it is either topical or edible and that is what we have always done. We decided to give it a shot this year and so far, things have turned out great,” said Jim Strang.

Jim Strang stated that their strains are high in CBDs and that he will start to offer his product once the test results come back from the state which ensure that the strains are low in THC.

“People are not smoking this to get high like you would off of a marijuana strain. The low THC in the hemp plant prevents that effect but those who have tried the smokable hemp say it is all day long pain relief for a wide variety of ailments. And I believe them,” said Jim Strang.

Strang has always prided himself in the fact that he provides top of the line hemp products to customers from around the US and even discourages those who come to him with doubts until he has gained their trust.

“There is so much awful stuff out there on the market today. It’s so important to know your providers. Know the people farming the hemp for you because honestly, the fake stuff can get you pretty sick or it won’t work, and people will give up on a really great opportunity for medicinal help,” Jim Strang said.

Once the Strangs gets results from the lab, Green Acres Hemp Farm will be offering six different strains of the smokable hemp that contains about 14% of CBD per leaf.

“What we will be offering will be all buds, no seeds. Every person that has tried smokable hemp has reported a calming, relaxing pain relief that lasts all day and does not have the marijuana high and that is our goal. Our goal is to offer pain relief with this product, and we will be offering deals on quantity once it hits our website,” said Jim Strang.

The Strangs will be offering Pineapple Destress, Cherry Wine, Mountain Mango, and Quick Kush which are all popular strains.

For more information or to order products and keep an eye out for the new smokable hemp, visit www.greenacreshempfarm.com.



Courtesy photos

Green Acres Hemp Farm recently started their outdoor crop which consists of Black Jack and Boax strains used in their products. Owners Jim and Lisa Strang will also be adding four new smokable strains to their line of hemp products in coming weeks.



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