

Shorts



South Fork PD seeks information in missing person case

STAFF REPORT
SOUTH FORK — South Fork Police Department is seeking information about a 49-year-old South Fork woman missing since early January.

Marlena Rena Mizell was last seen leaving the Rainbow Motel, 30359 Highway 160, in South Fork just before noon on Jan. 2. She has had no contact with family or friends since.

Mizell has brown hair and blue eyes. She's 5-foot-1 and weighs 140 pounds and was last seen wearing black pants and a black shirt.

The motel manager indicated Mizell drove from the motel in a blue Ford Focus hatchback. The vehicle had a Texas license plate number of NMK6052. The front bumper fairing is secured by wire on the driver's side, and the paint chipped away under the rear spoiler on the back making it appear like a gray stripe. Additionally, the rear window wiper was missing.

Mizell was reported missing by her boyfriend on Jan. 3.

The South Fork Police Department is requesting assistance from the public in locating Mizell. Call the South Fork Police Department at 719 873-1040 with any information connected to this case.

"Our investigators have been working this missing person case for nearly a month and are seeking any new information that might lead to the location of Ms. Mizell," said South Fork Police Chief Hank Weber.

The Colorado Bureau of Investigation has been requested to provide additional resources in this case.



Commissioners mend roads, constituents and staff

BY PATRICK SHEA
SAGUACHE — Commissioners discussed the health of Saguache County roads, citizens and employees during the morning session of their meeting on Feb. 2.

In the afternoon, they approved a motion to cover increased health insurance expenses for employees, a \$43.75 hike. Commissioners also approved a \$1,000 year-end bonus for full-time workers and \$500 for part-time staff.

Representing Public Health, Janet Beiriger provided multiple updates during the Board of Health discussion. Since the pandemic hit, Beiriger has looked ahead when working with state authorities. Refrigerating the Pfizer

Please see BOCC on Page 2A



Courtesy photo

Saguache County Commissioners addressed health concerns and heard quarterly updates from department heads during their meeting at the courthouse on Feb. 2.

Center store opens with snacks, fresh-prepared food



Photo by Patrick Shea

Brandon Rivera hugs his mom Isabela Dominguez the afternoon before they opened Isabela's Botanitas Y Mas in the heart of Center on Jan. 29.

BY PATRICK SHEA
CENTER — In the decade since Brandon Rivera and his mother Isabela Dominguez moved from

Aurora to Center, he developed a music career and received his high school diploma in 2020 while his mother sharpened her cooking skills

at Azteca De Oro. As Rivera explained the day before they opened Isabela's *Please see RIVERA on Page 4A*



Brian Williams

Valley Publishing hires Williams as GM-Editor

STAFF REPORT
MONTE VISTA — Valley Publishing has named Brian Williams as General Manager-Editor of its six weeklies — Monte Vista Journal, Del Norte Prospector, *Please see EDITOR on Page 2A*

Southern Rocky Mountain Ag Conference and Trade Show off and running

Presenter says potatoes were powerhouse during pandemic

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

MONTE VISTA — The 39th annual Southern Rocky Mountain Agricultural Conference and Trade Show started its three-day run Tuesday, Feb. 2, on Zoom and at the Ski Hi Complex in Monte Vista.

The annual conference shifted mostly virtual due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The first day's Zoom sessions were centered on potatoes and began at 8 a.m. and continued to about 1 p.m. The San Luis Valley is the second largest fresh potatoes region in the U.S.

John Toaspern, Potatoes USA Chief Marketing Officer, gave an overview of potato sales from March to December of last year during his 30-minute session. His report was

Please see AG on Page 4A



Photo by Brian Williams

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Saguache County continues to deliver COVID-19 vaccinations

Public Health has administered doses to 551 people

STAFF REPORT

SAGUACHE — Saguache County Public Health administered 90 COVID-19 vaccinations to first responders and county residents age 70-and-above on Jan. 27. Saguache County Public Health

has immunized 551 people with their first dose of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine. These individuals are scheduled to receive a second dose.

Saguache County Public Health is currently authorized to provide vaccinations to high- and moderate-risk health care workers, first responders, and individuals age 70-and-above.

Out of the necessity of using time-sensitive doses, there have been a few instances where people outside of these groups have received the vaccine, county health officials noted.

"We will not let one dose go to waste," said Bobby Woelz, Saguache County Emergency Operations Manager. "The benefits of immunizing the community as

quickly as possible far outweighs delaying until everything is perfect."

Individuals age 70-and-above who are interested in receiving a vaccine can call 719-655-2533 or sign up online at bit.ly/saguache-vaccine-reg. This will put you on a list to receive information as it becomes available. This is not a guarantee

for a vaccine, but it does help Saguache County gather information and plan.

"We will get a vaccination to everyone who wants one; however, this will take time," Woelz said.

For updates visit, www.saguachecounty.net/index.php/departments/public-health.

2nd Annual Steamroller Printmaking Event

STAFF REPORT

CREEDE — The Creede Arts Council is holding its 2nd annual Steamroller Printmaking event Sept. 18. This is an outdoor printmaking event held in Creede during the Crusin' the Canyon Car Show to fulfill the council's nonprofit mission to promote the arts and humanities in the community through education, exhibition and performance and to foster local artistic talent.

The Call for Entries opened Feb. 1 with an entry deadline of July 1. The Call for Entries may be found

online at <https://creedeartscouncil.com/>. Sixteen entries will be accepted on a first-come, first-serve basis. It is open to artists and woodcarvers.

The entry fee is a non-refundable \$40, \$20 for students (with identification), and includes the 24-inch x 32-inch x 1/2-inch woodblock. Payment must be made by July 1, via PayPal, cash, or check.

Participants will need to supply their own tools for carving. All works will be offered for sale the day of the event if the artist

chooses to do so with 50% going to the artist and 50% to support the Creede Arts Council.

Artists are to create and carve the boards with their own original design. The day of the event, the boards are inked by hand, placed on the street with paper placed over the boards where a Steamroller (Roadbed Compactor) will roll over them pressing the paper onto the board. The resulting outcome is a fine art print.

The Creede Arts Council will be following CDC guidelines the day of the event.

Adams State waives application fees for month of February

STAFF REPORT

ALAMOSA — The Adams State University Office of Admissions will waive undergraduate application fees for the month of February. Visit adams.edu/ apply and use the discount code: freeappday.

According to Sam Sargent, assistant director of admissions recruitment, Adams State wants to offer a form of relief by waiving admission fees throughout the month of February.

"With so much uncertainty and challenges brought on by the

pandemic, we want prospective students to know we care and want to assist them in achieving their academic goals," Sargent said.

For more information, contact the Office of Admissions at admissions@adams.edu or 719-587-8146.

BOCC

Continued from Page 1A

vaccine, for example, was out of the question for the county. So Beiriger placed early orders for the Moderna vaccine.

As of Feb. 2, Beiriger said they started the two-shot process for 567 Saguache County seniors and first responders. People have called with questions about the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, a single-shot option. Beiriger said it is not available yet, but she is researching it.

Beiriger said she orders 300 to 500 vaccines every Monday, and "they've been sending me 100. I was supposed to get 200 today, which will cover our second round on February 8, 9 and 10."

Beiriger said the following round falls on Feb. 22 and March 3 and 4. If she receives enough vaccines in the meantime, she will begin working on the next group.

"Next" depends on the circumstances as well. Once the bottle is open, Beiriger said, the vaccine is only good for six hours. So if people miss their appointment, she contacts other residents on the list to take it.

Other curious callers asked about COVID-19 testing options. Beiriger

said the state discontinued the oral Curative tests because they received too many complaints. Instead, state officials will conduct a different test in Center, Moffat, Crestone and Saguache starting Feb. 4.

Anyone can take the test, and officials request residents to register in advance to streamline the process. Nasal tests come in two varieties: nasal and nasopharyngeal. When people call about testing, they ask if samples are oral or nasal, according to Beiriger. When she says "nasal," they usually hang up before she can describe the less invasive tests the state will administer this week. The nasopharyngeal technique digs deeper into the skull.

Addressing grants, Beiriger recommended discontinuing the Communities That Care (CTC) grant before June 30. Meeting the metrics of an improvement plan for the last few months of the five-year grant would be challenging, particularly when many funds are being diverted at the state level for COVID-19 costs. In a state of emergency, County Attorney Ben Gibbons noted, the governor has discretion to shift funding.

According to Beiriger, Gloria Quintana performs multiple functions for Saguache County beyond managing the CTC grant. Beiriger secured other grant funds to continue paying Quintana's salary.

"She can give shots because she's a certified medical assistant," Beiriger said. "She also has a health management degree. She speaks Spanish, so I use her a lot for contact tracing. I'm going to put some of the immunization program back in her hands."

The board approved a motion to discontinue the CTC program, effective Feb. 2.

Next, the board appointed a new Public Health Director, Mona Lovato. Lovato accepted the three-year contract offer. Currently, Lovato distributes medications and serves as a backup in the Saguache County Jail. However, county policy forbids holding two positions on the payroll.

Road and Bridge Supervisor Randy Arredondo explained the 18-month delay between project completion and reimbursement. He also described prioritization for snow removal and repair along arterial streets that draw

the most traffic. In Baca Grande on the eastern edge of the county, plowing snow challenges staff in Crestone. To start, they drive to Moffat where the plow is parked. They work east from Highway 17, hopefully before school bus drivers start their routes.

Clerk-Recorder Trish Gilbert described the LEDS documentation system her department uses to securely scan and share documents with staff and the public. Other departments use Tyler Content Manager. As County Assessor Peter Peterson noted during his presentation, the Tyler system allows him to manage documents and overlay maps. Approximately one-third of Colorado's counties use Tyler for storage.

Gilbert also said they completed a map project recently to use the same scale for all map overlays. Free access to the public expedites searches and saves time for county staff. Gilbert said the department purchased a large filing cabinet to match how Peterson stores his maps. Physical storage backs up the digital systems.

Peterson said property assessments occur every odd year, and he will send out notices in May. Saguache county

page building, editing and supervising while working for daily and weekly newspapers in California, North Carolina, Arizona and Oregon. He has 20 years of experience in professional journalism.

Williams will work closely with long-time Division Manager Keith Cerny.

"The opportunity to work with and learn from Keith was a big factor for me in coming here," Williams said. "He has so much experience and is willing to share it. I'm a life-long learner and this is a great opportunity for me."

Valley Publishing is owned by News Media Corporation. Williams was editor of NMC newspapers in California in 2013-16.


"Brian proved himself with our company while we owned papers on the Central Coast of California," Cerny said. "We are glad we could reconnect and bring him back to the News Media family."

Williams relocated to Alamosa with his wife.

has roughly 16,000 parcels. Citizens have a right to protest the assessed value (and a process to follow).

Commissioners will meet with Saguache County Emergency Manager Robert Woelz on Feb. 9 for a work session at the courthouse to discuss coordination between Emergency Management and Public Health. This week, Woelz will work with state vaccination staff in Center, Moffat, Crestone and Saguache.

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OPINION & EDITORIAL

Marry for money



Trout Republic
by Kevin Kirkpatrick

The advice to “marry for money” will probably stir up some negative reactions amongst the still young at heart and those who are infatuated with the idea of true love, but, listen to me anyway.

Now Ol’ Dutch is no stranger to the Love Bug and has been bitten more times than is good for any one man. But if there is one thing I have found out, it’s that people are fickle and can change a whole lot given enough time and that hot passionate love can turn into something less than ideal.

Oh, I know all the old excuses, they “fell out of love” or they “outgrew the other person.” I really cannot ever see falling out of love as I am not built that way. On the other hand, given the massive caloric intake here in the United States, I get how people outgrow their relationships.

Other than love there are other reasons to join up in matrimonial harmony. Obviously, the most Hollywood reason seems to be money and that magic green commodity seems to grease the wheels allowing a bald, ancient centenarian to grab onto and marry a voluptuous vixen with youthful proportions.

Now while Ol’ Dutch never has had to worry about the curse of monetary abundance I did have enough to tempt several younger ladies to try and hook up their caboose to my locomotive. Luck did intervene in those attempts on the side of Ol’ Dutch and that train derailed on the way to the Station of Perpetual Vows. And I remain single to this day — albeit a-straddle a saddle with Miss Trixie, of a sort.

From the looks of things, it seems that another reason for tying that infernal knot of marriageable servitude is gaining a name that is better than the one you have. A person only has to remember the fabled twins Ima Hogg and Ura Hogg to know that surely those old gals probably pursued eligible men like a coon dog on a hot track to lose that infernal curse of a name. We can only hope they snagged onto someone with the last name of Angel or Darlin and not a man named Mr. Jinx or Mr. Butt.

What I have noticed is that people and women, in particular, are using a hyphenated name that combines their maiden name and married surnames into one long-winded spelling bee contest. My daughter chose to keep her maiden name of 11 letters as her husband’s last name

is 14 letters long and to hyphenate those two together would have driven the IRS and other form sending entities to distraction.

Having said all that however, there are some good names out there that once combined offer us not only a look into family origins but also a tad bit of hilarity that two people of such names somehow find on another and fall in love or, at least, lust.

One such couple a Miss Hardy and Mr. Harr found marital bliss and she became Miss Hardy-Harr. And that would be kind of a fun name to have actually, and certainly a conversation starter at any PTA meeting. With a little bit of Internet pursuing Ol’ Dutch was able to find some others including Miss Hunt-Moore, a Miss Gross-Panti, Miss Gorey-Butcher, and last, but certainly not least, Miss Poore-Sap, a portent of things to come for the unfortunate Mr. Sap.

We won’t even begin to comment on Miss Speedy-Zieper, Miss Crapp-Bear, or Miss Looney-Warde and if you think I am even gonna touch Miss Rump-Orefice you have another thing coming. Plus, Miss Trixie frowns on such touching, just to be clear.

From the looks of the long lists of strange hyphenated marrieds out there, it appears to Ol’ Dutch that maybe it would be a lot better to marry for money and avoid such foolishness in the long haul. At least if you have money you can change your name once you outlive the old codger whose wagon you hooked up to.

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 or on Twitter at TroutRepublic.



YOUR NIGHT SKY

Orion’s Winter Circle

By DARLENE DANKO

Since the full moon was on Jan. 28, it will start to get dimmer now making the sky easier to look at. Of course, if it’s cloudy and snowing, we won’t be able to see anything. But I love snow, and we’re finally getting some since last year was a massive drought.

What’s interesting about February is that although there are no meteor showers predicted, there are sporadic meteors and fireballs. So, you never know what you might see when you look at the night sky.

The morning and evening planets have taken a rest for a while. Every morning when I’d get up, I’d look out the window to see Venus rising in the east. But now it’s too low to see. Jupiter and Saturn were highly visible in the night sky all summer and fall. But now they’re too low for us to see with our mountains.

In a little while Jupiter, Saturn and Mercury will start rising in

the morning like Venus was doing in the sky. This will begin to happen mid-month, but they will be low, and the mountains will block them. But later in the month, they will get higher and will become visible to us.

Now that the constellation Orion the Hunter is standing up straight in the sky, you should be able to see the Winter Circle going around him. His left foot star Rigel is part of the Winter Circle. I usually tell you about this every winter. It contains a total of seven very bright stars. It is 65 degrees high and 40 degrees wide.

The top star is Capella and the bottom star is Serius, which is the brightest star in our sky. There are two stars on the right and three stars on the left. It is a large object and covers almost half of the southern sky.

To observe it, first find Orion. Then look below him and to your left. That’s where you’ll find the



bright star Serius. Then look to the left and start going up. The first bright star you’ll see is Procyon. A little farther up you’ll see the pair of Pollux and Castor. They’re the head stars of the constellation Gemini the Twins.

Then look above them to your right. That’s when you’ll find the upper star Capella which is very high in the sky. Then start looking down on the right to find Aldebaran which is the Bull’s eye star. A little below that you’ll see Orion’s left foot Rigel. Now you’ve seen all the stars. The best time to look for them is 8 or 9 p.m. So go out and have fun looking at the night sky!

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AG

Continued from Page 1A



Photos by Brian Williams

The 39th annual Southern Rocky Mountain Agricultural Conference and Trade Show began its three-day run, Feb. 2-4, at the Ski Hi Complex in Monte Vista. The bulk of the conference was being held virtually and the socially distanced trade show on Tuesday and Wednesday was inside the McMullen Building at the Ski Hi Complex.

mostly positive.

Retail sales soared and continue to do so as people stayed home during the pandemic.

“The thing that was exciting for our industry was that potatoes were the pandemic powerhouse,” Toaspern said. “We saw a significant increase in potato purchases. And this was for a number of reasons — comfort, familiarity, storability. Potatoes were the leading vegetable in terms of increases during that period.”

Toaspern said there was good growth across the core potatoes led by — russets, reds and yellows.

“Ultimately, Americans still love potatoes,” Toaspern said. “The number one vegetable sold in America, potatoes are on 84 percent of all food service menus and when surveyed Americans say that the potato is their favorite vegetable. So, we are in a great place. We need to try to lock in those retail gains but then also regain at foodservice.”

Record potato retail sales continued from October to December 2020, Toaspern said. All three months saw an increase in both dollar and volume sales, with the largest growth in December. Total store potato sales grew 9.3% in volume and 12.3% in value.

The fresh potato category at retail also showed a record growth of 12% in dollar sales and 8.2% in volume sales. Russets, reds, and yellow potatoes made up most fresh potato sales at retail, which all increased in dollars and volume. Five-pound bags of potatoes continued to make up the majority of volume sales and

increased by almost 7%.

Foodservice, which includes sales to restaurants, were the hardest hit sectors for the industry. According to Toaspern, 87,500 restaurants in the U.S. closed permanently between March and December.

While the international market was off overall by 4%, Toaspern pointed out that some significant gains were made in China and Japan.

“We are not in a terrible position and I think we can recover quite quickly this year,” he said. “We are already seeing exports recover so that is positive. Things are trending in the right direction.”

Toaspern said Potatoes USA conducted a total store study in the

fall and that they were wrapping up a presentation that will be available shortly.

While people logged into the virtual sessions, the socially distanced Trade Show was set up inside the McMullen Building of the Ski Hi Complex. The Trade Show was open from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Zoom sessions continued Wednesday and Thursday, Feb. 3 and 4, beginning at 8 a.m. and wrapping up around 1 p.m. each day.

The conference was sponsored by the Colorado State University Extension and the Colorado Ag Experiment Station. The trade show was sponsored by the Monte Vista Chamber of Commerce.



Photo by Patrick Shea

Brandon Rivera created the logo for the store he and his mother opened on Jan. 29 at the corner of 3rd and Worth Streets in Center.

RIVERA

Continued from Page 1A

Botanas Y Mas on Jan. 29, “She can really throw down some grill.”

Across from Town Hall and Big R on the corner of 3rd and Worth streets, Isabela’s Botanas Y Mas offers chips, drinks and snacks for people on the go. If customers want fresh-prepared tortas and other treats, the short wait is worthwhile.

Unlike other convenience stores, Isabela’s Botanas Y Mas features champurrado, horchata and fresh fruit smoothies. The mother-son team plans to open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. six days a week (closed Mondays).

During their final days before opening the doors for business,



Rivera designed the store logo and setup a Facebook page. Nearly 100 followers received early notice of fresh food coming to Center, cybersalivating until Jan. 29.

Two local churches working together to bring warmth to Monte Vista

STAFF REPORT

MONTE VISTA — Grace and Mercy Bible Fellowship and First Christian Church will be offering free soup and crackers to anyone in the community from 5 to 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 9. The event will be held at First Christian Church, 200 Washington St.

“Jesus teaches we are supposed to be involved in our community, and this is one way we are doing that,” said Grace and Mercy pastor Larry Foster.

To be compliant with local regulations, the soup will be served

“curb-service” style. Orders will be taken from people in their cars and the soup will be delivered to them while they wait in their cars. This way social distancing protocol can be maintained.

There is no charge for the soup. Any donations received at the event will be used for the mission trip to Thailand in November.

“We are hoping to make this a monthly event,” said Foster.

For information about the event, contact pastor Foster at 719-628-2498 or pastor@grace-mercy-bible.church.



TEMPORARY JAN/FEB HOURS

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THUR, FRI, SAT OPEN 9am - 5pm
SUNDAY OPEN 10am - 5pm

Starting January 18th we will temporarily be closed on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. We found ourselves in need of an extra day each week to catch our breath. We will resume normal hours again in March. Sorry for any inconvenience and THANKS for your support! - KMS Staff

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COVID Testing Events:

Thursday, Feb. 4
Saguache County Sheriff's Office, 9-11 am

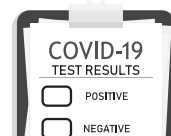
Thursday, Feb. 4
Crestone Fire Station, 2-5 pm

Friday, Feb. 5
Moffat School, 9-11 am

Friday, Feb. 5
Center School, 2-5 pm

Pre-registration is recommended.

Visit: SaguacheCounty.net for more information.



Public Health requests lesser COVID-19 status

By **LYNDSIE FERRELL**

RIO GRANDE COUNTY — Director of Rio Grande Public Health Department Dr. Bankole submitted a letter for approval to the Rio Grande Board of Health on Wednesday, Jan. 27, that was approved and then sent to the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) requesting a change in the county's COVID-19 status on the state dial.

Rio Grande County is currently operating under level Orange restrictions and according to Dr. Bankole, the county meets two of the three metrics needed to move to lesser restrictions on the COVID dial. Rio Grande County Commissioners, who also operate as the county's board of health, approved the request to CDPHE and are awaiting a response.

In the letter submitted to the state, "The purpose of this letter is to respectfully submit a formal request from the Rio Grande Public Health Department to the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE), to review and change our COVID-19 Dial color code variance from the Orange to the Yellow color, and its associated capacity restriction variance."

The letter further states, "According to our CDPHE report card from Jan. 21, 2021, it shows that there have been no more than two new hospitalizations per day of Rio Grande County residents reported in the past two weeks. Also, the Rio Grande Hospital has stated they have the capacity to meet community needs and to serve all people needing their care."

The county previously shifted to level Orange in late-November just after the Thanksgiving holiday due to a rise in positive active COVID-19 cases based on a 100,000 populace. County officials have been working on the change request and watching numbers since, hoping for a break in the pattern to open the county to help businesses and to strengthen the economy.

Dr. Bankole explained that though

he was willing to submit the request, he needed the board and the public to understand that the county only meets two of the three metrics considered when a variance request is made to CDPHE.

"My fingers are crossed that they will grant us our request, but we only meet two out of the three metrics needed," Bankole said. "Our COVID-19 metrics have been trending on a downward trend on all the metrics over time which show that our mitigation measures are working, and the community awareness and compliance are on the rise."

Like so many other countless counties throughout the nation, the San Luis Valley is being hit hard by COVID-19 restrictions though positive, active case counts have remained steady for several months. Rio Grande Public Health in partnership with several organizations and the Rio Grande Hospital recently hosted a mass-vaccination clinic that brought the first round of COVID vaccines to well over a hundred residents that were approved for the vaccine and plan to host other clinics soon.

As of Monday, Feb. 1, the State of Colorado is currently seeking input on changes to the COVID Dial and will be implementing these changes in the coming days. This includes, "Providing the ability to better balance disease suppression with economic hardships due to increasing vaccinations and decreasing disease rates, making the Dial Framework more responsive to local conditions and accounting for the benefits to hospital capacity from the vaccination of people over age 70 and frontline healthcare workers in adjusting metrics."

The state is gathering feedback on this and public comments were due by Feb. 1. The link to give feedback is: Safer at Home Draft Dial 2.0 - Feedback Form (google.com) Current COVID numbers and vaccination schedules can be found on the county's website at www.riograndecounty.org. Or by calling Rio Grande Public Health at 719-657-3352.



Coffee with the Chief returns to Center

By **PATRICK SHEA**

CENTER — Starting at 9 a.m. on Feb. 6, Center Police Department Chief Dale Meek will host citizens in the basement of the Center United Methodist Church. Meek's Coffee with the Chief sessions allow residents to ask questions, give opinions and share information.

Now 18 months on the job, Chief Meek continues to build his department while building trust with the community. He assigned a resource officer to the school — officer Deanna Lopez. He expanded the department's Facebook traffic, and he introduced a new canine recruit to the community.

For the Coffee with the Chief session on Saturday, Meek said he will concentrate on education about

the fire and a replacement strategy for the narcotics canine that passed away.

"He was a great, great dog," Meek explained. "But he managed to break out of his own professionally built kennel and got hit by a car."

Meek said they planned to get a second dog within a couple of years, but now he'll fill the position sooner. Instead of a five-year replacement plan, Meek said, "We have an inside track on a replacement dog. We'll have to certify the dog, which doesn't take much time."

The rush to get a new dog accelerates Meek's plan to have a primary dog for Sgt. Aaron Fresquez to maintain and to use for train-the-trainer sessions. This allows Chief Meek to get "a secondary dog"

sooner so another officer can be trained with the dog. Narcotics dogs are trained to track drugs, but they can receive "secondary imprints" for bomb detection and other tasks.

"Once the secondary dog is trained," Meek elaborated, "if we need it, we have it. If we don't, we can sell the dog. Then we roll the funds back into the canine program."

With more dogs, cadets and recruits, the Center Police Department is expanding. Meek said the department had 12 different chiefs in 18 years before he arrived in 2019. His career took him to Sante Fe, Kentucky and Florida before arriving in the San Luis Valley. His hometown of Clay City, Ky., would fit perfectly within Center's town limits, and Meek said he feels at home.

SAGUACHE COUNTY SHERIFF REPORT

SAGUACHE COUNTY — The following information was provided by the Saguache County Sheriff's Office for the period between Jan. 24 and 31.

The Sheriff's Office handled 73 situations in a week, ranging from personal to property issues across the county. In addition to phone

harassment, in-person harassment and a protection order violation, staff tackled fraud, theft, animal cruelty and two assaults. Deputies also conducted four welfare checks, four traffic stops to help motorists and assistance with four ambulance rides. A dozen controlled burns did not burn out of control.

Arrests

- Nicolas Hammel, 28, Saguache, third-degree assault, criminal mischief, domestic violence.
- Brittini Arndt, 25, Moffat, contempt of court, failure to comply.

Rotary accepting applications for Dick Boyce Memorial Book Scholarship

STAFF REPORT

MONTE VISTA — The Monte Vista Rotary Club is once again offering the Dick Boyce Memorial Book Scholarship to a qualifying high school senior from either the Monte Vista or Sargent high schools. It is also open to a Monte Vista Rotary member's child who is a graduating senior attending a high school elsewhere in the San Luis Valley. One scholarship is awarded annually. The application deadline is April 6.

"We strongly encourage all Monte Vista and Sargent high school seniors to apply for this scholarship opportunity," says Rotary Club President Gene Farish. "We really want to have a strong slate of candidates to choose from."

This scholarship is designed to pay book fees for a 2021 graduating high school senior who will be attending either Adams State University or Trinidad Jr. College on a full-time basis. More specifically, it will pay book fees for up to and including the sum of \$500 per year for a total of four consecutive years.

It is eligible for Adams State University for four consecutive years or Trinidad Jr. College for two years and then Adams State University for

the subsequent two years if the student transfers to Adams State University from Trinidad Jr. College.

"I so encourage eligible students to apply for this scholarship," said Gracie Burkhardt, 2019 scholarship recipient. "This scholarship has financially helped me so much with the purchase of my books, and it is not a difficult application to complete."

Dick Boyce was a very active Rotarian from the Sargent area who believed in his local community and the education of its youth.

The Monte Vista Rotary is a civic club that has been in existence since 1920, serving the Monte Vista community in many ways. They annually complete two highway clean-ups, a cemetery clean-up, and support financially many other community projects throughout the year. The Ski Hi Stampede BBQ is the club's largest fundraiser.

For more information, contact either the Monte Vista or Sargent high school councilors or contact Monte Vista Rotary members David Hinkley (852-3442), Diana Paulson (850-2004), Linda Weyers (850-1767), or Karla Shriver (850-5808) or any other Monte Vista Rotarian.



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NMLS#421822

CSU president commits to jump starting re-investment in SLV

By PRISCILLA WAGGONER

MONTE VISTA — Plans for increased investment in the San Luis Valley alongside continued existing support and greater focus on agricultural economic development were at the heart of Colorado State University President Joyce McConnell's comments when she addressed attendees at the virtual Southern Rocky Mountain Ag Conference on Tuesday.

Citing the importance of the "highly valued, long-standing relationship" between the SLV and the land grant college that goes back more than a century, McConnell said CSU is committed "to jump starting re-investment in the Valley."

CSU wants to see the local extension service fully staffed, to add positions at the research center and "to convene important conversations about issues that are so critical to the region."

In terms of ongoing efforts, McConnell also pledged CSU's continued support in existing areas, including the Valley's emphasis on lower water use cropping systems, new crop development, congregation strategies that improve soil health and

sending off crop tests and pathogens. Livestock is also in the mix as McConnell referenced CSU's recently added capacity on sustainable livestock systems to improve resilience and profitability of the animal industry.

"We understand how critical agriculture is in this area to the economic development of the community," she said.

McConnell touched on the land grant college's commitment to direct service and community support, pointing to the "Grow and Give" project, launched by CSU Extension during the pandemic, which encouraged Coloradoans to plant and grow vegetables to give to local food banks. CSU's research center in the SLV, which is the second largest in the state, specifically grew and donated a total of 48,000 pounds of potatoes for donation to the Care and Share Food Bank of Southern Colorado.

With an eye toward the future, McConnell discussed CSU's involvement in ongoing conversations between producers and buyers as part of the Colorado Blueprint for Agriculture and Food, including identifying opportunities to increase access and

prosperity for food producers.

Through community grants in the Valley, CSU will also seek ways to foster economic development with particular focus on investment in food systems. As an example of how ongoing efforts could portend potential programs in the future, McConnell highlighted current projects related to food asset mapping, in trading community modeling to evaluate trade offs as well as planning and technical support.

McConnell pledged for the extension and experimentation teams to be more visible in the region and to serve as a bridge to CSU and CSU's resources. Toward that end, two positions have been created: one devoted to Agricultural Business, to focus on economic development opportunities, and one for 4-H development in a nod to strengthening the transition from high school to post-secondary education with those students interested in a future in agriculture. Those two positions are fully funded for this year and next, and CSU will be reaching out to local county commissioners for support in extending those positions into the future.



Rio Grande Prevention Partners seeks new logo

By LYNDIE FERRELL

RIO GRANDE COUNTY — Rio Grande Prevention Partners (RGPP) is launching a contest to revamp the group's logo and give a facelift to the organization. According to RGPP representative Kathryn Trujillo, the organization is also seeking new members to help spread their message of prevention in Rio Grande County.

According to RGPP, Rio Grande County has received funding since February 2003 from the Persistent Drunk Driving (PDD) Cash Fund, through the Colorado Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division (ADAD) known today as the Division of Behavioral Health.

In receiving this funding, interested key leaders began forming a coalition in March 2003 to address the serious problem of underage drinking in our county. Due to the high rate of juvenile DUIs and underage drinking-related arrests, the Coalition began to address the conditions that allow and promote high-risk underage drinking.

Beginning with the 2004-2005 funding year, the PDD Project Coordinator began working with residents of Mineral County regarding the dangers and risks of drinking and driving. Funding increased as a result of this collaboration. After an invitation to the county to apply for the Strategic Prevention Framework-State Incentive Grant in early 2006, the Rio Grande County Coalition to Prevent Underage Drinking became

the membership foundation of the Rio Grande Prevention Partners representing both counties.

Coalition members consist of representatives of the local and state law enforcement agencies, youth, parents, grandparents, Monte Vista and Del Norte school districts, Rio Grande County Public Health Agency, Monte Vista Kids Connection, High Valley Community Center, San Luis Valley Behavioral Health, Rio Grande County Commissioner, Monte Vista Journal, Calvary Baptist Church, Early Steps for Childhood Success, and CSU Extension.

The Coalition's 25 members provide alcohol and drug prevention information to the community, such as at the health fairs, presentations to organizations, school boards and faculty, and local government, organizes workshops, and collaborates with schools and agencies at special functions such as pre-prom activities, Red Ribbon Week, and during Alcohol Awareness Month.

The activities of the coalition are designed as a deterrent to underage drinking and other drugs and to increase the perceived risk of the short-term and long-term effects of using alcohol and other drugs.

For more information or to become a new member please visit www.rgpp.org. To submit artwork to be considered for the logo contest please contact Juan at jmaravilla@riograndecounty.org or by calling 719-657-3352.

Creede Theatre awarded \$20,000 grant

STAFF REPORT

COLORADO SPRINGS — El Pomar Trustees approved a grant allocation to one nonprofit organization in the San Luis Valley region at the Foundation's December Trustees meeting. Through the Foundation's grant making process, the Creede Repertory Theatre, Inc. was awarded a regional council grant of \$20,000 for LED lights in the Ruth Theatre.

Founded by Spencer and Julie Penrose in 1937, El Pomar Foundation has an established legacy of general-purpose grant making throughout the state of

Colorado. The competitive process remains the Foundation's primary vehicle for organizations to receive funding, which accepts applications on a rolling basis.

Additionally, over the last 80 years, El Pomar has either developed or been entrusted with the stewardship of a number of other funds, as well as presenting Trustee merit grants.

In an effort to increase impact and establish connections across the entire state, the Regional Partnerships program was established in 2003. Each of the Foundation's eleven regional

councils advises El Pomar Trustees and recommends grants to help support its communities.

The San Luis Valley Regional Council recommends grants in Alamosa, Conejos, Costilla, Mineral, Rio Grande and Saguache counties. Council members are regional leaders in the business, nonprofit and public sectors and provide first-hand information about current needs in their own communities.

To view a full listing of El Pomar's funds and grant making areas, visit their website at www.elpomar.org/grant-making/.

Develop Your Vision Beyond What You Can See

Being a Christian and following God is a great adventure. It's also challenging because, to people who don't believe in Christ, we seem a bit odd in our way of thinking and doing things, like we're upside down compared to how the world generally operates. But the truth is, we're part of "the upside-down kingdom that is right-side up."

During His ministry on Earth, Jesus' message was, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near" (Matthew 4:17 NIV). His disciples believed Jesus had come to set up an earthly kingdom and rule the world, but that isn't what He was talking about at all.

The disciples didn't get it. They were thinking in physical terms, not spiritual ones.

As believers in Jesus who are born again, we are new creations in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17); we belong to God and are part of His kingdom (Colossians 1:12-14). The kingdom of God is unseen to the natural eye, and it is eternal.

Developing Spiritual Vision

The apostle Paul talked about seeing the unseen. In 2 Corinthians 4:16-18, he said, "Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal" (NIV).

Paul had been beaten, shipwrecked, imprisoned, and gone hungry many times, yet he considered these experiences to be "light and momentary troubles." He believed this because the kingdom of God—what is eternal—was more real to him than this earthly realm—what is temporary.

This is hard for us because we are so accustomed to only believing what

we can see with our natural eyes, and if we don't see God doing something, we assume He isn't doing anything. But instead of just looking at the world around us and our problems, we can learn to think about and see with spiritual eyes what God is in the process of doing in the midst of it all.

I've discovered that when I'm feeling discouraged because I've been praying for something a long time and I'm weary of waiting for breakthrough, instead of getting down in the dumps, I can stir up my faith and say, "God is working!"

If you want to have a steady flow of joy in your life and "the peace of God, which transcends all understanding" (Philippians 4:7 NIV), learn how to believe what you can't see more than what you can see.

Open the Eyes of My Heart

In Ephesians 1:18, Paul prayed "that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you" (NIV). The eyes of your heart can see the unseen realm of the spirit and give you hope—a confident expectation of God's goodness in your life—in every situation.

With this kind of hope, when hard times come, we can look beyond what we see in the world around us and realize that there are good things going on. God has done, and He's doing, so many things in our lives!

He loves us and has good plans for us to give us hope and a future. (Jeremiah 29:11)

He's always with us and will never leave us or forsake us. (Deuteronomy 31:6; Hebrews 13:5)

Jesus paid the price to heal and restore every kind of brokenness in our lives. (Isaiah 53 and 61)

And He's preparing a place for us so we can be with Him throughout eternity! (John 14:2-3)

THIS is the truth we need to live by.



Refuse to Give Up!

I wonder what God is up to in your life. I know it's easy to get discouraged and fearful when hard times come and it seems things will never change. But if you're a believer in Christ and you're praying according to the truth in God's Word, then you can be assured He is working. So don't stop believing because you're not getting an answer as quickly as you'd like.

Keep believing no matter how long it takes. And remember that just because you haven't seen the final outcome yet, it doesn't mean God isn't doing something. Make a determined decision to trust Him and believe what He says no matter what you think or feel or how things look. And pray for God to enlighten the eyes of your heart so you "know the hope to which he has called you" in His kingdom.

For more on this topic, order Joyce's three-CD series *The Invisible Kingdom*. 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 120 books, including *BATTLEFIELD OF THE MIND* and her newest devotional *QUIET TIMES WITH GOD (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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Wolf Creek Ski Resort strengthens COVID-19 message

BY LYNSIE FERRELL
WOLF CREEK — Wolf Creek Ski Resort spent the past year working countless hours to prepare for the 2020-2021 ski season and though the season is more than half over, the resort is continuing its efforts to make sure it can finish strong.

According to reports out of the resort, they have recently had difficulties getting people to comply with state and local COVID-19 guidelines.

“We have had such an awesome season so far. The snow we have received has been nothing less than a blessing for us and it has been a significant driver in how busy we have been. The northern mountains in the state have not received the amount of snow we have and in turn, people are coming from all over to get in some powder days. We just need to remind people that if they feel that they cannot or will not comply with state regulations then perhaps this isn’t the year to come out and ski,” said Wolf Creek Ski Resort owner Rosanne Pitcher.

Pitcher explained that over the last several weeks, just after the Christmas and New Year’s holiday, the resort has seen days where 3,500 people come to enjoy the slopes.

“This is great, and we are so happy that we have the facility and the snow for everyone to enjoy but we need everyone to comply with masks and social distancing,” Pitcher said. “If we are going to stay open and be able to continue to offer our resort, we need people to remember to comply with mandates. This is a different year for us and so we are going to start being more severe in our efforts to remain open.”

Pitcher stated that the resort had to strengthen its message to people



We're all in this together. Please take ownership in your part to keep Wolf Creek Ski Area open. Remember to Mask Up and Practice Social Distancing to keep the ski season going!
Thanks for your cooperation!
Wolf Creek Ski Area

coming to the resort and that efforts could potentially include asking individuals who do not comply to leave the resort.

“You have to wear a mask. You have to social distance while in lines,” she said. “Once people are up on the slopes and spread out it is OK to take the mask off, but in public areas, you have to have one on.”

In addition to dealing with customers that may not want to wear a mask, employees have also shown signs of frustration. The resort offered a stipend to employees to encourage that they purchase new masks and keep up the good work they have done so far this season.

“We are so proud and feel so blessed to be able to be here. We want to keep that going,” Pitcher said.

Over the next several weeks until the end of the ski season, the resort plans to be more aggressive in its campaign to comply with state and local COVID guidelines and ask guests to do the same.

“There are so many other factors that come into play with having this resort open. We are helping the economy in the surrounding communities by bringing in revenue and if we shut down, that goes away,” said Pitcher.

The resort is now preparing for the coming President’s Day and Spring Break holidays when they plan to only allow pre-purchased ticket holders to ensure the safety of guests. The resort will be updating the website to reflect plans on how it will be handling the remainder of the season. For more information or to pre-purchase tickets, visit www.wolfcreekski.com.

RISE Grant to benefit Trinidad State’s connection to area high schools

STAFF REPORT
TRINIDAD — Six Colorado community colleges and 70 high schools will benefit from the second round of Response, Innovation, and Student Equity (RISE) grants recently announced by Colorado Gov. Jared Polis. The grant totals \$2 million.

Trinidad State’s sprawling service area covers about 14,500 square miles in eight counties in Southern Colorado. That’s about the same size as Connecticut and New Jersey combined. This grant will allow Trinidad State to buy technology which will better allow college instructors to teach at far away high schools.

College classrooms will be equipped with high resolution screens (at the front and back), an instructor station, and cameras that will allow distant high school students an online experience that is as close to an in-person class as possible.

“We know students at small and geographically isolated high schools don’t have the same options as students attending schools that may be 10 or even 20 times larger,” said Trinidad State President Dr. Rhonda M. Epper. “These technology improvements will greatly increase the class choices of these students.”

Part of the grant will also pay for graduate-level tuition for high school teachers so they can receive

a college-level teaching credential. For an instructor to teach college-level courses, they are required by the college’s accrediting agency to possess either a master’s degree in the content field or a master’s degree in a different field plus 18 graduate-level credits in the content field.

Many high school teachers do not possess this level of education and are just a few courses short of being credentialed to teach at the college level. Having more graduate-prepared teachers will improve the quality of education available in rural areas and increase the number of qualified instructors available to teach at the

college level. Instructors will also be trained to more effectively use this technology and how to be an effective online teacher.

“Every Colorado student should have access to a quality education and these amazing ideas and innovative programs...will help improve our schools and build back stronger than before the pandemic,” said Governor Polis. “I’ve spent the majority of my life pushing for innovation and excellence in education and these focused investments will make a transformative positive impact on the lives of Colorado’s kids and families today and for the future.”

PUBLIC NOTICE
Colorado Gators Inc., 9187 Pyrite Circle, Mosca, Co, 81146, (719) 580-2306, has filed an application for a Construction Materials (112) Reclamation Permit with the Colorado Mined Land Reclamation Board under provisions of the Colorado Mined Land Reclamation Act. The proposed mine is known as Mystic Soil, and is located at or near Section 22, Township 41N, Range 10E, 6th Prime Meridian.
The proposed date of commencement is Spring 2021, and the proposed date of completion is, Fall 2032. The proposed future use of the land is industrial/commercial and rangeland.
Additional information and tentative decision date may be obtained from the Division of Reclamation, Mining, and Safety, 1313 Sherman Street, Room 215, Denver, Colorado 80203, (303) 866-3567, or at the Saguache County Clerk and Recorder’s office; 501 4th St. Saguache, CO, 81149, or the above-named applicant. A complete copy of the application is available at the above-named County Clerk and Recorder’s office and at the Division’s office.
Comments concerning the application and exhibits must be in writing and must be received by the Division of Reclamation, Mining, and Safety by 4:00 p.m. 10 days after the publication of this notice.
Please note that under the provisions of C.R.S. 34-32-101 et seq. Comments related to noise, truck traffic, hours of operation, visual impacts, effects on property values and other social or economic concerns are issues not subject to this Office’s jurisdiction. These subjects, and similar ones, are typically addressed by your local governments, rather than the Division of Reclamation, Mining, and Safety or the Mined Land Reclamation Board.
No. 1587 published in the Center Post Dispatch, Thursday, January 14, 21 and 28 and February 4, 2021.



Photo by Lyndsie Ferrell
The Rio Grande River is beginning to break free from winter’s cold grasp as the Valley heads into February of 2021. Other tributaries are beginning to melt signaling spring may just be on the horizon.

San Luis Valley Scoreboard Basketball 2021-2021

Girls

Del Norte 44.....	Alamosa 39
Pagosa Springs 61.....	Monte Vista 24
Centennial 58.....	John Mall 34
Del Norte 51.....	Swink 30
Sanford 62.....	Custer County 22
Centauri 56.....	Pueblo County 13
Centauri 68.....	Alamosa 37
Mountain Valley/Moffat 30.....	South Park 26
Sargent 38.....	Hoehne 33
Sangre de Cristo 59.....	Custer County 12
Sanford 63.....	Mancos 34
Salida 52.....	Center 37
Antonito 54.....	Primero 4
Sierra Grande 49.....	Custer County 43
Mountain Valley/Moffat 38.....	La Veta 28
Hoehne 47.....	Center 35
Rye 61.....	Del Norte 30
Sanford 51.....	Ignacio 41
Rocky Ford 49.....	Sargent 13
Alamosa 41.....	Monte Vista 34
Centennial 73.....	James Irwin 16

Boys

Alamosa 32.....	Del Norte 28
Monte Vista 43.....	Pagosa Springs 41
Del Norte 65.....	Swink 28
Sanford 56.....	Custer County 37
Salida 66.....	Center 41
Centauri 41.....	Alamosa 21
South Park 29.....	Mountain Valley/Moffat 27
Hoehne 56.....	Sargent 17
Mancos 62.....	Sanford 55
Sangre de Cristo 43.....	Custer County 35
John Mall 58.....	Centennial 34
Primero 70.....	Antonito 44
Sierra Grande 44.....	Custer County 42
La Veta 38.....	Mountain Valley/Moffat 27
Center 57.....	Hoehne 32
Del Norte 43.....	Rye 35
Sanford 53.....	Ignacio 48
Rocky Ford 70.....	Sargent 21
Alamosa 46.....	Monte Vista 36
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Courtesy photos
 Pictured on the left is Mike Bickelhaupt, owner of Colorado Ice Works, and on the right, employee Walter Ross. Colorado Ice Works created and donated an ice sculpture to healthcare workers at SLV Health's Regional Medical Center during the Rio Frio Ice Fest on Jan. 29 in Alamosa.

Colorado Ice Works 'thanks' frontline workers in ice sculpture

STAFF REPORT
ALAMOSA — Colorado Ice Works, in its delivery of sculptures to the annual Alamosa Rio Frio Ice Fest, wanted to do something "above and beyond," and they created and donated a beautiful bouquet of flowers suspended in mid-ice with a heartfelt "Thank

You" to the frontline healthcare workers at SLV Health's Regional Medical Center.
 "The donation came at a perfect time to boost the morale of our hard-working staff," commented Roberta Bean, Chief Nursing Officer of SLVH, noting that the nurses have been praising this

heartwarming gesture.
 SLV Health partners with the Alamosa Parks and Recreation each year to sponsor one of the downtown ice sculptures to offer something unique and fun for the whole family each January.
 Along with a 5K Rio Frio race, a bicycle fat tire race has been added

to the festivities. Due to careful planning during a pandemic, some of the normally "crowded" events are being held virtually this year, but the sculptures were in place for everyone's enjoyment.

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Lifestyles

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Mental Health Colorado convenes state and county partners to disentangle mental health, justice

STAFF REPORT

DENVER — Mental Health Colorado, the state’s leading mental health advocacy organization, will host the Colorado Counties Virtual Summit on Mental Health and Criminal Justice on Feb. 4 to identify opportunities for state policy change and to promote changing practices statewide.

Attendees will hear from a variety of law enforcement officials, state and national leaders, and mental health advocates. This event is the latest in a series of summits since 2016 which have produced recommendations from and consensus among leaders in the state who are advancing the objective of reducing reliance upon law enforcement, jails, and prisons for meeting the population’s mental health needs.

“Responding to the chronic and acute mental health needs of the population with police, sheriffs, and the criminal justice system is neither appropriate, nor healthy,

nor sound fiscal policy, said Mental Health Colorado President and CEO Vincent Atchity. “Police and sheriffs feel stuck in the awkward position of being the only game in town when it comes to mental health crisis response and providing secure transportation and in-patient settings and they are some of our best co-advocates for passing laws and changing practices so that jails and prisons don’t remain the state’s primary mental health facilities.”

The keynote speaker for the virtual summit is Florida Judge Steve Leifman from Miami-Dade County, who helped launch Miami-Dade County’s jail diversion initiative. Like most jails in the U.S., Miami-Dade County had a high prevalence of inmates with unmet mental health needs. Leifman was frustrated by how many people with mental illnesses kept repeatedly cycling through his court. Under its diversion initia-

Please see HEALTH on Page 3



Photo courtesy of ASU

ASU engages with community K-12 students through many events, including the 2019 Chemistry Magic Show. The newly awarded RISE grant will take the relationship between Adams State and SLV school districts to a new level.

State awards Adams State University \$2.5 million to address COVID-related challenges in local schools

STAFF REPORT

ALAMOSA — Adams State University was awarded \$2.5 million under the state of Colorado’s Response, Innovation, and Student Equity (RISE) fund to address learning challenges in San Luis Valley schools related to the economic, social, and health impacts of COVID-19.

“We are thrilled to have the state

investing in efforts to address inequities facing our rural schools here in the San Luis Valley, and we are grateful to Gov. Polis for his vision and leadership in creating the RISE fund and to the RISE selection committee for recognizing and funding our efforts,” said Adams State President Cheryl D. Lovell.

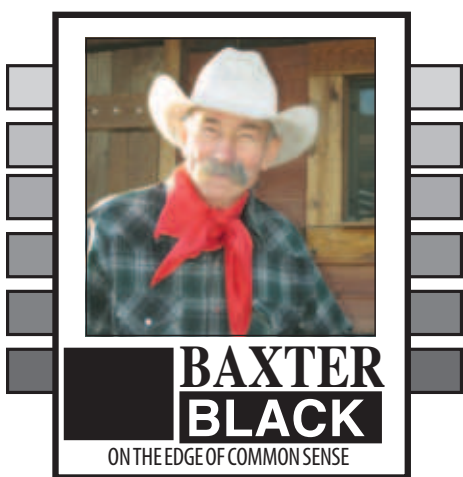
Adams State will lead an SLV col-

laborative that includes seven K-12 school districts in the San Luis Valley as well as the Boys & Girls Clubs of the San Luis Valley. The collaborative has developed an innovative plan for a model to transform learning systems in rural schools that ignites students’ motivation for learning by engaging them in career pathways that develop

Please see ASU on Page 2

Marginal Quotes

- “As long as you’ve got good elimination, you’ve got it made.” Uncle Leonard
- “If a man can’t drive in a bar ditch, he’s got no business on the highway.” Tink
- “When asked how she got to be president, Anita replied, ‘I missed the meeting.’”
- “You can’t used too much tape.” Dr. Allen
- Tom Hall says, “I enjoy all company. Some when they arrive, some when they leave.”
- “A true friend will tell you if yer hat’s on backwards.” Calvin
- “I’d rather be at the head of the ditch with a shovel than at the bottom with a decree.” Tom on irrigation rights
- “If they won’t come, you can’t stop ‘em.” Jim B.
- “He’s stooping to new heights.” Sandy
- “His eyes are so squinty they could blindfold him with dental floss.” Buck



- “They teach chickens to lay eggs by walkin’ back n’ forth in front of them with a hatchet humming, ‘Um, um, good, um, um, good...’” Doug
- “The right to be heard does not include

- the right to be taken seriously.” Hubert H.
- “If you wanna put out a fire, start yer own!” Hoot
- “Cowboys walk in parts.” Peter
- “You have to know Mr. Dewey well in order to dislike him.” Margaret T.
- “Bank examiners come in after the battle and shoot the wounded.” Boyd
- “Horse shoein’s not so hard. It’s just the dread of doing it.” Carl
- “His sleeping bag smelled like they drove geese into it and beat them to death.” Oly K.
- “You are what you eat”... but I say, “You are where you walk.”
- “It’s been a month of Mondays!” Sheryl
- “I don’t deserve this award, but I’ve got sinus and I don’t deserve it either.” Ace R.
- “Sometimes you have no choice, so

- take it!”
 - On fund-raising, “Don’t put all your hands in one pocket.”
 - “If yer smart you’ll always believe in Santa Claus.” Judy
 - “Sure you can sell out when things are good. But then what will you do?” — John
 - “Of course your waffle is tough, you ate the potholder.”
- 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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ASU Continued from Page 1

essential 21st-century skills relevant to workforce needs.

The following key goals and supporting activities will guide the Collaborative in creating a sustainable model and the infrastructure with the potential to grow the initiative across all 14 SLV school districts post-grant:

- Develop and build out the Entrepreneurship & Innovation (E&I) career cluster with Career Technical Education (CTE) and Concurrent Enrollment (CE) options and stackable credentials to empower students by engaging their imaginations, creativity, and leadership potential; Pathways in business, business development, and marketing include building skills in information technology, graphic design, communications, and/or media production; Project- and work-based learning, including a high school internship program and innovative learning technologies, inspire innovation and entrepreneurship and develop essential employment skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, teamwork, and communication.
- Increase the capacity of seven districts across the San Luis Valley for CTE course delivery through professional development, with Adams State as the hub for teacher, administrator, and school counselor training for certification via summer institutes, workshops, and course development with an initial focus on Business and Marketing.
- Leverage partner resources, including teacher certifications, and improve technology, transportation, and family support services to remove barriers to career exploration, experiential learning, and credentials for all students.
- Expand advising, coaching, and mentoring to encourage career and postsecondary explorations and promote personal goal setting and

achievement. Specialized supports will surmount technology, “college knowledge,” and language barriers for migrant, EL, and other students and families furthest from opportunity.

“The RISE grant underscores Adams State’s forward-thinking efforts to engage students in career pathways that develop essential 21st-century skills relevant to the workforce,” said Adams State Vice President of Academic Affairs Kent Buchanan. “The partnerships of the SLV Collaborative are meaningful and will help propel the San Luis Valley and its students in a positive way.”

The RISE funding supports high-needs school districts, charter schools, and public institutions of higher education to address the learning challenges related to the economic, social, and health impacts of COVID-19. Grantees are expected to create sustainable innovations that improve student learning, close equity gaps, and enhance operational efficiency for pre-K-12 through higher education.

In its RISE grant application, Adams State made the case that the pandemic has intensified, as well as highlighted, the inequities in access to education and employment across the remote, rural San Luis Valley. Opportunities and support for students to access career exploration, experiential learning, and concurrent enrollment are uneven due to rural isolation, multi-generational poverty, and low regional educational attainment rates.

As a result of COVID-19, rural student populations and their families including those who are low-income, minority, migrant, English language learners, and others who are high-needs have become even more marginalized due to reduced income, access, and resources. In a superintendent focus group conducted in

October 2020, SLV districts reported a sharp rise in home-schooling and absenteeism. Despite best efforts on the part of schools, some students have disengaged completely from school.

Based on input from students, parents, educators, and the business community, the SLV Collaborative identified the Entrepreneurship & Innovation career cluster as the initial focus of its efforts to develop credential/degree and career pathways. Collaborative projects, multi-district activities, apprenticeships and internships coordinated jointly by the SLV Boys & Girls Club and Adams State University, and other opportunities for mentorship and innovation, will actively engage students with the local workforce.

On Monday, Governor Polis announced the second round of RISE Fund awardees to innovate and transform public education. In November 2020, Gov. Polis shared the first round of RISE grantees, following his September 2020 announcement of the RISE fund, which supports innovation in high-needs school districts, charter schools, and public institutions of higher education to address the learning challenges related to the economic, social, and health impacts of COVID-19 in a manner that creates sustainable innovations that improve student learning, close equity gaps, and enhance operational efficiency for pre-K-12 through higher education. These grants bring the total amount awarded through RISE to over \$40 million.

As before, all the recipients were chosen by a group of parents, students, and education leaders.

“Adams State University is excited to lead the efforts of the San Luis Valley Collaborative to reduce the inequities in access to education and employment in our communities,

and ease the impacts of COVID-19,” said President Lovell. “RISE support and the formation of the SLV Collaborative of P-20 educators and community partners present a rare opportunity to improve the futures of our students, especially those who are furthest from opportunity, and

our region’s vitality. Youth development, expanded capacity in Career & Technical Education across seven school districts, and paid internships for high school students will energize and inspire our youth and begin to develop the skilled workforce the San Luis Valley needs.”

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Adams State Migrant Education appreciates local support

STAFF REPORT

ALAMOSA — The Southwest Region Migrant Education Program (MEP) celebrated the 7th annual Adopt A Migrant Family for Christmas program. MEP delivered over 230 presents to children and parents and had 50 sponsors who donated.

“Our hearts are filled with joy and appreciation for all the continued support from numerous sponsors making this event so successful. Every year we look forward to this event as it supplements some of the needs of our families,” said Esmeralda Martinez, director of Southwest Region Migrant Education Program. “We are extremely grateful and feel

fortunate to receive support from so many agencies, community members, and volunteers who continue to participate in this initiative year after year.”

She also appreciates her Adams State MEP staff including Stephany Rodriguez-Moreno, Minga Francisco-Miguel, Edgar Martinez, Marisa Aguilar, Jennifer Valadez, Simona Guillen, Shanda Taylor, Matias Francisco, and Kaylee Gomez. “They worked diligently to ensure the event was a success.”

Current Adams State College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) and MEP students hosted a food drive to provide complete Thanksgiving

meals for 15 MEP families. Donations were received by Adams State faculty, staff and students.

In December, MEP provided 30 students with laptops, a generous donation from the MEP and Community Resources Housing Development Corporation (CRHDC).

This year, the Southwest Region Migrant Education Program served a yearly estimate of up to 620 students, aged birth-22, from 23 school districts in the San Luis Valley and Southwest Colorado. The program connects families of seasonal agricultural workers with community resources, monitors children’s achievements, and provides continuity as



they change school districts.

The Southwest Region Migrant Education Program is located on the Adams State University campus at the southeast corner of Second St. and Richardson Ave. To learn more about the Southwest Region Migrant Education program, or to refer a family who may benefit from services, call 719-587-7612 or email mep@adams.edu.

Supporters for MEP include: Blanca Potato Co, Conejos Dept of Social Services, Weiss Dry Cleaners, Aguilar’s Automotive Alignments, Adams State University President Cheryl Lovell, Carole Counihan

and Jim Taggart, High Altitude Convenience, LLC, Post Commissary, LLC, Joe Jr. and Shanda Taylor, BOCES, Valley Educators Credit Union, Kevin Daniel ASU Campus, Computing Services, Silvia Saldivar, Karla J. Hardesty, State Patrol, Farming Technology Inc, Mtn. King, San Luis Valley Federal Bank, Lauren R. Sonderegger, James H. Martinez, Emelin Martinez, Heidi Richardson, Ronald and Arlene Quintana, Carolyn K. Davis, Krista Martinez, Thomas Mejia, Jenny Lerner - Lerner Consulting Services, Zapata Seed Company, Trinchera Ranch, Miranda J. Sandoval and Derrick Corsentino.

MV Coop Education Foundation opens scholarship application process

MONTE VISTA — The Monte Vista Coop Dedication to Education Foundation is accepting scholarship applications.

The scholarships are in honor of the Coop’s founding members and in remembrance of Dennis Kay and Mike Kelley, former employ-

ees who whole-heartedly believed in supporting young people. The Monte Vista Coop Dedication to Education Foundation was instituted to establish scholarships to assist students with financial support to the college of their choice.

Visit the Monte Vista Coop

website, www.mvcoop.com to download a scholarship application or stop by the Monte Vista Coop main office to pick one up. The deadline to apply is Jan. 31. For more information, call Brenda Cooper at 719-852-51812 Ext. 1049.

HEALTH

Continued from Page 1

...ive, Miami-Dade County closed a jail facility — saving taxpayers \$12 million per year — and dramatically reduced the number of shootings and injuries of people with mental illnesses.

“We’ve truly seen a cultural shift in how the community addresses mental illness,” Leifman said. “Police injuries have gone down almost 100%, people are getting better access to care, family members of people with a mental illness are no longer afraid to call the police, and everybody is working much more cohesively and collaboratively.”

The United States has only about 5% of the world’s population, yet almost 25% of the world’s incarcerated population — confining more people in jails and prisons per capita than any other country. People with untreated mental health needs are 16 times more likely to be killed during a police encounter than other civilians stopped by law enforcement. The number of incarcerated

people with mental health needs vastly exceeds the number of people receiving treatment in state psychiatric hospitals, making the criminal justice system the de facto mental health system.

The summit will be from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and participants include —Director of the Office of Behavioral Health Dr. Robert Werthwein; Arapahoe County Commissioner Nancy Jackson; Boulder County Sheriff Joe Pelle; Boulder County District Attorney Michael Dougherty; Summit County Sheriff Jaime FitzSimons; Sheriff Tony Spurlock and Barbara Drake of Douglas County; Vail Police Chief Dwight Henninger; Evans Police Chief Rick Brandt; Chris Richardson with Denver’s STAR Program; Lake County Judge Jonathan Shamis, and many others.

The summit is free and open to the public. Register online at <https://secure.everyaction.com/Sc0-NLGDgi0acxy1Tj5JCYg2>.

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	1							5

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Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you’ll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Here’s How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

Solution to last week’s puzzle

	P	A	S	C	A	L		S	C	H								
M	U	L	B	E	R	R	Y		R	A	M	A						
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 03 MEMORIALS
 04 LOST & FOUND
 05 NOTICES/BAZAARS
 06 PERSONALS
EMPLOYMENT
 07 HELP WANTED
 08 WORK WANTED
 09 EMPLOYMENT SERVICES
FOR RENT
 10 APARTMENTS
 11 ROOMS
 12 HOUSES
 13 MOBILE HOMES
 14 BUSINESS PROPERTY
 15 WANTED TO RENT
 16 VACATION
REAL ESTATE
 17 REAL ESTATE
 18 LOTS & ACREAGE
 19 FARM & FARMLAND
 20 BUSINESS PROPERTY
 21 MOBILE HOMES
 22 PROPERTY WANTED

MERCHANDISE
 23 LAWN & GARDEN
 24 GARAGE SALES
 25 AUCTIONS
 26 ANTIQUES
 27 APPLIANCES
 28 HOUSEHOLD GOODS
 29 MUSICAL ITEMS
 30 ELECTRONICS/COMPUTERS
 31 HEALTH
 32 FUEL & HEATING
 33 BUILDING MATERIALS
 34 OFFICE EQUIPMENT
 35 HEAVY EQUIPMENT
 36 MISCELLANEOUS
 37 WANTED
 38 MACHINERY, TOOLS & EQUIPMENT
 39 SPORTING GOODS
 40 AUTO PARTS
FARMER MARKET
 41 FARM EQUIPMENT
 42 FEED & SEED
 43 FARM PRODUCTS
 44 FARM SERVICES

ANIMALS
 45 ANIMAL BREEDING
 46 PASTURE FOR RENT
 47 HORSES & CATTLE
 48 PETS & SUPPLIES
 49 ANIMAL CARE
 50 LIVESTOCK
RECREATIONAL
 51 BOATS & EQUIPMENT
 52 CAMPING EQUIPMENT
 53 TRAILERS
 54 SNOWMOBILES/ATV'S
 55 R.V.'S/CAMPERS
FINANCIAL
 56 BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY
 57 INVESTMENTS
TRANSPORTATION
 58 MOTORCYCLES
 59 VEHICLES WANTED
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tunity Employer. CLOSE DATE: February 8, 2021. (02/04)

CNA/Bath Aide, needed FULL TIME at Rio Grande Hospital. Amazing opportunity to join our incredible patient-centered and service-oriented team. Must be motivated and available to work flexible shifts. Apply at 310 County Road 14, Del Norte, CO 81132 or online at www.riograndehospital.org FULL BENEFITS. Please see hospital website for more information. Contact Candice Allen for more information Equal Opportunity Employer. CLOSE DATE: February 8, 2021. (02/04)

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ment, development and delivery of courses and workshops designed to improve and sustain quality of life for people in their second 50 years. A bachelor's degree with relevant experience is required. For more information, please visit <https://www.adams.edu/hr/administrative-positions/02/18>

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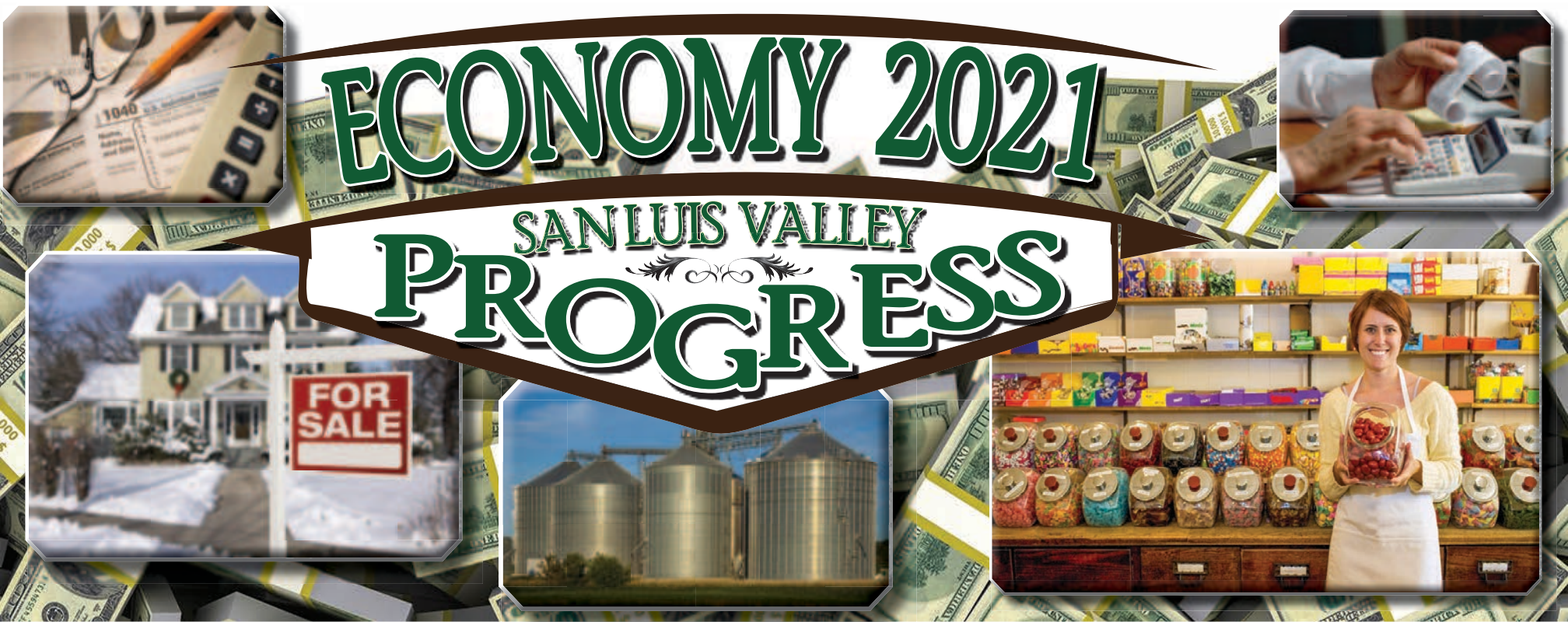
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ECONOMY 2021

SAN LUIS VALLEY

PROGRESS

Local restaurants staying strong and creative

BY REBECCA COPLEY

MONTE VISTA — The coronavirus has changed normal operations for many industries. Since last year almost every type of business has had to adapt and get creative to stay afloat during these challenging times. The restaurant industry has been one of the hardest hit.

During the spring of 2020 some surveys reported that about 82% of hourly employees working in the food service industry had experienced reduced hours or unpaid leave. Many restaurants had to lay off their servers and other employees due to shutdown orders across the country.

According to Yelp.com's Local Economic Impact Report, 97,966 businesses have permanently closed due to the pandemic. The report

came out in September of 2020.

However, despite the difficulties many San Luis Valley restaurants are still doing their best to adapt and continue to serve their communities.

At the beginning of the COVID-19 restrictions, Rhoda Koehn, owner of the Sunflour Café, got creative and started offering frozen homemade casseroles, and cookie dough mixes to take and bake at home. Along with offering her regular menu and delicious cinnamon rolls and bread.

Locavores is another restaurant that has adapted quickly and made innovative changes so that they could continue to provide fast, and healthy food to their customers. At the beginning of the restrictions, they started offering delivery within a five-mile radius and online

ordering.

Locavores also started an online grocery service, when owner Wendi Seger noticed the need in the community for basic grocery items that had been out of stock at local grocery box stores.

Since then, the grocery service has evolved into a store called, "Wendi's Good Things Market." The market now carries a variety of fun and unique, specialty items.

Despite all of the challenges and hardships 2020 brought to the food industry many local restaurants also continued to give back to the community.

Woody's Q-Shack teamed up with Century Property Management back in the spring to serve free meals to truck drivers, law enforcement, first responders, medical workers,

and others working the front lines at the beginning of the pandemic.

Nino's in Monte Vista also served students free meals on March 23, 2020, as Monte Vista School District's food services didn't start until the next day.

Already a month in to 2021 relief for many struggling businesses still seems far off. For almost a year now restaurants have had to overcome lock downs, limited seating restrictions, shortages, and other difficult challenges.

As they continue to tough it out in the months ahead remember to support these important parts of the community. Get a cup of coffee from your favorite coffee shop, if you're able, or something to eat from a local restaurant. We're still all in this together.

Carther's Roadhouse opens doors, let the games begin

BY LYNSIE FERRELL

DEL NORTE — A new establishment opened their doors in Del Norte, and it is nothing less than one of a kind for the Valley. Proprietors Dave Garrison and Kevin Van Dyke began planning for their dream business in December of 2019 after moving here from the Denver area.

"We came down to do some work for the Wilson Ranch three years ago and I instantly fell in love," said Garrison.

Originally the two partners thought about opening an art gallery having dealt in art for several years.

"We were gently swayed away from the idea of another art gallery and started planning for the restaurant-roadhouse in December. We decided to move forward with our plans in late January and then COVID hit. We figured, well we are in it this far, might as well finish. So, we did," continued Garrison.

Local resident and business entrepreneur Stan Johnson purchased the old Carther's Motor Company from previous owner Charlie Prease. Prease had established an antique store where the current restaurant resides, and it wasn't until Garrison and Van Dyke became involved that the history of the building came to light.

According to local historian and Rio Grande County Museum Director Louise Colville the neighborhood where the building sits used to be a kind of industrial area of Del Norte from the late 1800s to the mid-1900s. First the location was home to a Livery owned by Dan O'Neil in the late 1800s but

the building that housed the Livery was torn down. In its place, Arthboth Car Dealership took up shop and then it was changed to Carther's Motor Company, then the antique store and now Carther's Roadhouse.

On Thursday, Oct. 15, Garrison and Van Dyke welcomed an intimate group of family and friends to help them celebrate the opening of Carther's Roadhouse. It was during this celebration that a sound came from down the street, it was the distinct toot of an old-time horn. As everyone turned to look, a 1926 Chevrolet one-ton tow truck trundled up Spruce Street and stopped in front of the roadhouse.

Building owner Stan Johnson had reached out to Moonlight Customs owners Ryan and Kyle Black who set out on the difficult task of finding the 1926 Chevrolet tow truck and once tracking one down, taking on the task of restoring the vehicle. When Ryan Black drove the vehicle up to the front of Carther's, no one could have anticipated the story that would follow.

According to Black he set out to find a 1926 tow truck similar to the one that is photographed in front of the original building in the 1920's, little did he know he would find the actual truck from the picture. Black tracked the vehicle down through research and finally found one in Utah. He traveled to pick up the vehicle and after getting it home, worked on finding all of the missing parts in order to piece it back together.

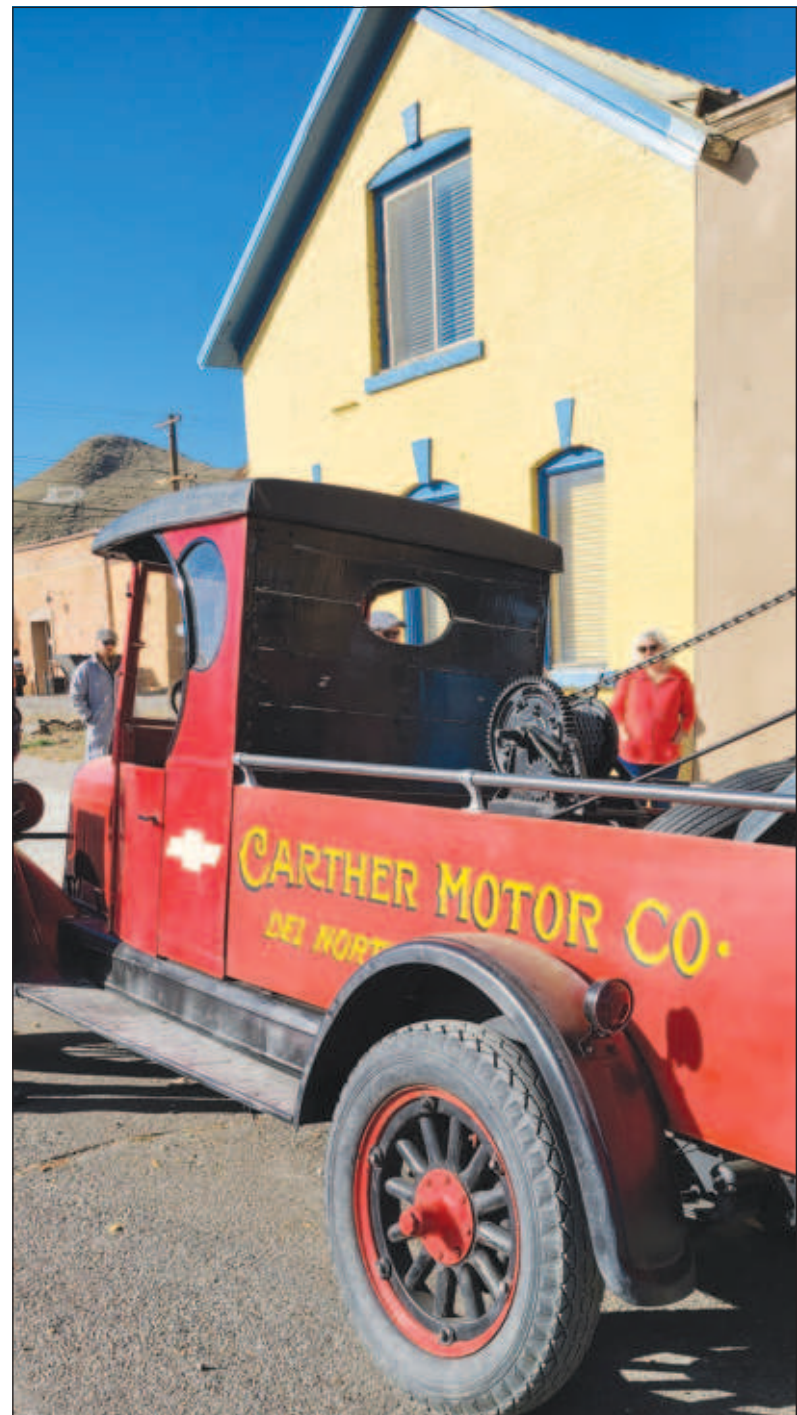
It was through this process and after referring to the original photograph that he was able to deter-

mine that it was in fact the original Carther's Motor Company tow truck. It was a wonderful surprise for those in attendance and it will now reside inside the restaurant after making its long journey home. Before parking the tow truck in its new home, local photographer Amber Lynn Newhouse helped recreate the original photograph which is included with this article.

Garrison and Van Dyke have created a wonderful new establishment for the San Luis Valley that offers a family friendly environment with games like, pool, Connect Four, Shuffle Board, Darts, Table Hockey and will be bringing a new Karaoke machine in soon. The restaurant will be open soon and will offer several delectable dishes like hamburgers, hotdogs, Brats, Cheese Steaks, Rotisserie Chicken meals and so much more. "We hope to do specials throughout the week and add to our menu as we go along," said Garrison.

The restaurant will also have a snack bar and offer gaming events. The front room has been set aside for young customers, local sports teams and large crowds. "We also plan to have a hot cocoa and lemonade stand that local students can use to raise funding for different reasons. Students can come and use our stand which will be placed outside the restaurant. It is our way of giving back to the community," said Garrison.

For now, Carther's will be open Monday through Thursday 3 p.m. until 11 and from 11 a.m. until 11 p.m. on the weekends. Hours will increase as more of the restaurant is opened up.



ECONOMY 2021

SAN LUIS VALLEY PROGRESS



New business sings a tune for children in South Fork

By LYNDSIE FERRELL

SOUTH FORK — Hookten Harmony is a new business in South Fork and owner Keeley Hookten is eager to begin voice lessons for area children. Hookten has been visiting the South Fork area since early childhood, having vacationed here with family.

“I always wanted to live in Colorado,” Hookten said. “I love the mountains, the snow and we enjoy hiking, skiing and everything in between so this is a dream come true.”

In March of this year while visiting family, Hookten and her husband decided that they were going to begin looking for their forever home in the town they loved.

“It was so great. My husband had a job interview and we had come down to look at homes and everything just kind of fell into place,” she said. “In March, when we got here, everything shut down because of the pandemic and I told my husband that I didn’t want to go back to Texas. His job interview worked out and we were able to find a beautiful home, so we made the move.”

Hookten noticed that there was not a lot of activities for children in the area outside of what is offered in surrounding towns like Del Norte and Creede, so she decided to make one more leap of faith and began looking for students.

“I have a bachelor’s degree in music and anthropology and have been teaching voice and piano lessons for eight years. I also have a Masters in vocal performance and pedagogy, so I thought I would try to make a living out of what I love,” she said.

Hookten is also looking to expand beyond voice and piano lessons and eventually offer dance as well as offer date night childcare for the area.

“I am currently looking for commercial space for my business but in the meantime, I am accepting students at my home,” she said. “I hope to expand and offer a wide range of artistic programs for children in the area. My father was a musician, and I grew up watching him play and sing, I absolutely loved it and knew that was what I wanted to do.”

As of right now, Hookten has four students and she is hoping to gain more interest. She is even going so far as to build a temporary dance floor and bar in her home to be able to offer her dance lessons sooner.

“I am hoping people will let me know what programs they would be interested so that I can use that to offer other services sooner,” she said. “It is just so great that when you jump in feet first, things have a way of working out and



I hope to continue.”

Hookten is asking interested parents or guardians visit her on Facebook Page at Hookten Harmony, through their website at hooktenharmony.com/lessons and leave feedback on what programs they may be interested in coming to South Fork.

“I am accepting students right now and will be expanding as soon as I find the right building to meet our needs. I really look forward to bringing artistic programs to the area and can’t wait to see what we do next,” she said.

Those interested in signing up for a class can also reach Hookten at 719-873-3598.

Business in Del Norte aims to please, keep dirty bits clean

By LYNDSIE FERRELL

DEL NORTE — A new business has hit the street in Del Norte and with it comes cleanliness with a side of fantastic. Dirty Bits Soapery, where their motto is “We help you keep your dirty bits clean” is a welcomed addition to the community of Del Norte and they opened their doors just before the holiday season last year.

Located on Grande Avenue just down the street from the Del Norte Public Library, the new soapery is owned and operated by a family of mixed backgrounds, amazing personality and soap that is simply divine. Co-owner Brenda Hannah, her husband Donald and her brother Brent Bunn have spent the last year learning just how special Brenda’s soap really is.

“I started making soap for family and friends about forever ago and over the years never even considered selling it to customers, but it was after this past year selling my products at the local farmers markets that I learned just how much people really like my soap. My brother and husband both agreed that I should take the next step. I always wanted a store front and now, well, here I am,” Brenda said.

Brenda moved to the Del Norte area with her husband and children about eight years ago and have since taken up residence in Donald’s family ranch.

“My husband grew up here. His family has been in the area since the 1800s and we used to come here to visit all the time,” she said. “It was about eight years ago when he came to me and asked if I wanted to do something crazy. I said uh, yeah! So now we’re restoring an 1800 log cabin on his family ranch.”

While living in the country for the first time in her life, Brenda decided to start making soap again. It wasn’t long before she started getting requests

from family and friends.

“My brother decided to move out here with us and one day, was like I think you need to try the farmers markets,” Brenda said. “We started at the market in South Fork, and it wasn’t long before the markets in Pagosa Springs and Alamosa called and invited us to come there as well. I just couldn’t believe the response I was getting from my soap.”

Brenda and her brother worked countless hours getting the shop ready for their big opening which was on Black Friday.

“My husband is an amazing carpenter and has made all of the shelving and countertops in the shop,” Brenda said. “He even made our new sign and I just love it.”

The Dirty Bits Soapery will offer beautiful, unique handmade soaps that have taken on the personality of their maker.

“We always say that we are just a little bit off but in the most fantastic way,” Brenda said. “Everything we do here is so that I can help someone relax, be clean and enjoy every moment of it. Our shop is going to be ADA accessible which is something that is very close to my heart and we hope to have it so that it is open and available to everyone.”

Brenda offers everything from lightly scented, invigorating soaps to fun, colorful soaps of all shapes and sizes for the younger crowd or even the young at heart.

“There are soaps for men, children and everything in between,” she said. “It was always a hobby but now it’s a passion. I make everything as organic or as close to organic as I can. I want everyone to be able to read the ingredient labels on my soaps.”

Dirty Bits is located at 728 Grand Ave. in Del Norte. For more information or even to slide in an order, visit them on Facebook or on their website at www.dirtybitssoapery.com.



The Colorado LEAP program is a federally funded state-supervised, county-administered system and is designed to *assist* with your winter heating costs. The LEAP Program eligibility period runs from **November 1, 2020 through April 30, 2021**

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3. Your **gross** monthly household income is within the guidelines set annually (see below). “Household” means the people who reside with you within your dwelling at which you reside and apply for assistance and for whom you, as applicant, are financially responsible for. The maximum **gross** monthly income is based on 60% of the State Median Income level as listed in the table below.

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2	\$3,425
3	\$4,231
4	\$5,038
5	\$5,844
6	\$6,650
7	\$6,157
8	\$6,801
8	\$6,952

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Rio Grande agencies come together for COVID-19 vaccination clinic

STAFF REPORT

DEL NORTE — Rio Grande Hospital and Rio Grande County Public Health realized a need in the community and quickly found a solution.

Both Rio Grande County Public Health and Rio Grande Hospital had doses of COVID-19 vaccine along with waiting lists with over 600 people on their combined lists.

Rio Grande County Public Health was willing to share vaccine doses with Rio Grande Hospital during a mass vaccination clinic but needed help organizing the event. Rio Grande Hospital Chief Nursing Officer and the team then went to work.

The Del Norte Fire Department was contacted and donated a large space for the event and provided five volunteers. They also donated tables, chairs, and ensured the building was ready for use as well as plowing snow off the parking areas to ensure safety.

The United States Forest Service assisted with traffic control, parking, patient assistance and brought 15 volunteers.

Trinidad State Junior College assisted with patient screening and vaccinations with 30 students and three instructors.

Rio Grande County Public Health staff brought vaccines and entered all vaccines in real-time into the Colorado Immunization Information System with two volunteers.

All three local EMS agencies in the county sent staff to assist with vaccinations.

Del Norte Emergency Medical Services, Monta Vista Emergency Medical Services, and South Fork Fire and Rescue brought an additional seven volunteers in total.

Rio Grande County Social Services sent staff to assist with registrations and directed flow with four volunteers present.

San Luis Valley Behavioral Health sent staff to assist with monitoring with three staff available.

Two semi-retired physicians assisted with patient flow and monitoring.

The Del Norte Police Department and the Colorado State Patrol assisted with any security issues or concerns as patients moved about the facility.

Rio Grande Hospital staff sent 15 volunteers to register patients, draw up vaccines, administer vaccines,



Courtesy photos

More than 300 people were vaccinated for COVID-19 at the clinic in Del Norte.

screen patients, direct patient flow, organize all necessary supplies, and lunch.

Rio Grande Hospital Clinic staff and Rio Grande County Public Health staff called and scheduled all 300 individuals in the 70-year-old and older population to attend.

Rocky the service dog and his handlers visited and helped comfort patients as they were monitored.

Over 88 volunteers throughout the day assisted with over 300 COVID-19 vaccinations. The event came together in less than five days under the direction of Candice Allen, Rio Grande Hospital Chief Nursing Officer.

For information on a future COVID-19 vaccination clinic, call 719-657-2418 and asked to be placed on the list or visit www.riograndehospital.org and click on the COVID19 Vaccine Sign Up Form in the yellow box.



Right: A local United States Forrest Service Wildland Fire Unit assisted with the COVID-19 vaccination clinic in Del Norte.

Local EMS partners pictured left to right, AJ Fresquez, DNEMS, Stefan Ortega, MVEMS, Tammy Hanynie, DNEMS, Shannon Goldsberry, Linette Schmidt, and Woody SFFR, assisted with the COVID-19 vaccination clinic in Del Norte.



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- Alamosa - 587 - 589
- Antonito - 376
- Blanca-Ft. Garland - 379
- Center - 754
- Creede - 658
- Del Norte - 657
- La Jara - 274
- Manassa - 843
- Moffat-Crestone - 256
- Monte Vista - 852
- Mosca-Hooper - 378
- Saguache - 655
- San Luis - 672
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Photo by Rebecca Copley

Snowmen and their obscure history

BY REBECCA COPLEY

Every year children and those young at heart make the best of the heavy winter snows by sculpting magical snowmen. From Frosty to Olaf, snowmen have also taken a beloved role in many winter stories. But have you ever wondered who was the first person to make a man out of snow?

It's a question that will we'll probably never know the exact answer to as snowman art doesn't last long enough for archeologists to discover.

However, from what historians have discovered it seems that snowman making has long been a favorite activity of humans in the winter. Bob Eckstein when writing his book, "The History of the Snowman," discovered the earliest known depiction of a snowman in a manuscript of "The Book of Hours" which dates back to 1380.

Making snowmen seems to have been a fairly common practice in the Middle Ages. Although their snowmen were often crafted with a great deal more artistic effort than modern-day equivalents.

In 1494, a prince who was called "Piero the Unfortunate," commissioned the then 19-year-old Michelangelo to create a snowman for his mansion's courtyard. Although very little was documented about the creation, one can imagine it was probably quite impressive.

In 1511, people in Brussels found a way to use snowmen as a political protest. It was during the "Winter of Death," when the poor people of Brussels were struggling to survive hunger and the freezing

temperatures that hung over the city for months. During this time, the local government decided that a snowman festival would lift the spirits of the townspeople. Snow artists in the town surprised them by covering the city in graphic snowmen caricatures of the town's prominent citizens.

Mary Dillwyn would become the first person to photograph a snowman in 1845 soon after the camera was first invented. The photo was one of the earliest photos ever taken.

Along with its artistic history, snowmen have also had a long history of record-breaking snow creations. In 2008, the largest snowman ever made at the time was a snowwoman made in Bethel, Maine. They gave her the name of Olympia which seemed fitting for the 122-foot tall snowwoman. Olympia was quite the building project with eyelashes made out of skis, a 130-foot-long scarf, lips made out of car tires, and arms made from two 30-foot spruce trees. She was constructed out of 13 million pounds of snow.

However, Olympia's long reign as the tallest snowperson was recently beat in February 2020 by Riesi who stood at 124.8 feet. Riesi was built in Donnersbachwald, Austria.

In contrast, the smallest snowman ever recorded was in December 2016 by Todd Simpson at the Western University Nanofabrication Facility, in Ontario, Canada. The "snowman," was made up of three roughly 0.9-micron spheres of silica, platinum arms and nose, with a face made from an ion beam.



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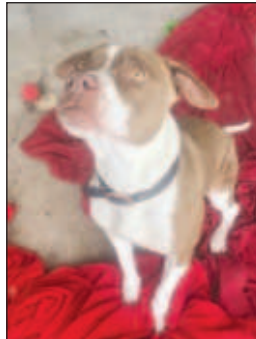
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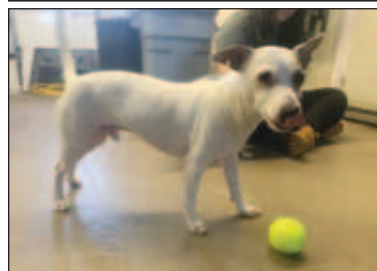
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We would like to express our deepest gratitude and appreciation to all those who have contributed to the success of the Upper Rio Grande Animal Society by contributions, donations, volunteering and general support at Conour Animal Shelter.

Maggie is a very friendly, and energetic girl who loves attention and snuggles. She was found as a stray in the town of Center. She will need a home with the ability to give her a lot of exercise so she can get out her huge stores of energy and plenty of play time. She tolerates other dogs but a meet and greet is highly recommended as her breed can be very physical and energetic in their play style



Buster is looking for a home that can give him plenty of attention because he is not a fan of being left alone. He is cautious of men at first but opens up quickly and loves to get attention and to be played with. Buster is young and hasn't been taught very many manners but he is eager to learn. If you do have another dog at home, it will be required to bring that dog to the shelter to allow Buster to meet them



Pee Boo is an older but energetic Jack Russel who is looking for a home where he can snuggle and sit in the lap of anyone who will pet him. He had someone interested in taking him but they were unable to do so, so he is back on the hunt for his forever home! If you are interested in this tennis ball loving cutie please call the shelter at 719 832 3366.



Freya is energetic, playful and loving. She knows how to sit and loves to get attention from people. She loves car rides and wants to say hi to everyone. She rushes up to every dog she sees to say hi, but because she is so excited about it some other dogs may not want to say hi back so it is recommended to bring any other dogs she will be living with to the shelter to meet her before adopting.



Riley we believe is an American Bulldog/ Australian Shepherd mix. He is about 2 years old. He is very friendly and affectionate. He has done well with all people he has met. We feel he has good potential with other dogs with a little work. Riley is currently staying in a foster home so if you are interested in meeting him call the shelter at 719 852 3366.

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Rio Grande County Public Health Department Director gives update

BY LYNSIE FERRELL
RIO GRANDE COUNTY — Rio Grande County Public Health Department Director Dr. Kolawole Bankole stepped into his role two months ago and has spent a considerable amount of time working to fix issues within the department. Rio Grande County Commissioners have worked closely with Dr. Bankole to ensure that the department is running smoothly, and the director has come through with results.



“I said when I first started that there were things that would need to be done and we are working day and night to make sure that those things are completed” Bankole reiterated. The new director is working diligently to restructure the department and is working closely with new Rio Grande County Administrator Leslie Klusmire to create and implement new policies that will help keep things running as smoothly as possible.

every day.” Dr. Bankole will be giving weekly updates to commissioners to enhance transparency that has been an issue in the past. “The commissioners have informed me that transparency has been an issue in the past so I will be giving weekly (email) updates on our public health efforts-intervention COVID1-9 (testing, vaccinations, outbreaks), to the board every Friday to ensure that we have strong communication from here on out,” Bankole said.

“We are fixing things and putting policies in place to ensure that they are handled correctly in the future,” said Bankole.

Dr. Bankole has a background in modern medicine beginning with his study of medicine and surgery at the University of Benin and a postgraduate medicine at Lagos University Teaching Hospital in Lagos, Nigeria. He practiced as a physician in Nigerian before coming to the United States in 2001. He also spent a considerable amount of his education receiving the US Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG) certificate, master’s degrees in Business Administration and Health Policy and Management, among others.

On top of everything the department is working through, Dr. Bankole is navigating the ever-changing COVID-19 situation and administering vaccinations per state guidelines.

Dr. Bankole is an executive healthcare leader with more than two decades of healthcare industry experience with a rich and diverse professional background covering clinical, public health, and policy and program management.

“Things change daily. We are navigating through the pandemic and state guidelines to the best of our ability,” Bankole said. “We are administering vaccinations according to the state guidelines which change all the time. We will get through this together even as this is an unprecedented time.”

Throughout his career, he has been successful in solving problems, resolving conflict, and contributing to shared business objectives. He is passionate about public health, healthcare delivery, and quality-driven patient-centric care, achieved by stakeholder buy-in, system integration and standardization, collaboration and partnership.

County commissioners are thankful for Dr. Bankole and the experience he has to sift through the issues within the department while navigating the pandemic.

“We are putting out fires that were created before I arrived and little by little, we will get the department back on track,” Bankole said. “Our crew is working very hard, and I am proud of how hard they work. We are getting closer



Courtesy photo

High Valley Community Center students had an awesome week back to in-person learning and fun. Students enjoyed bowling, cooking classes and enjoyed just being back with friends and staff.

Busy week at HVCC

CONTRIBUTED
DEL NORTE — HVCC was busier than usual preparing for the first week of basketball skill-building. We were happy to see the turn out and would love to see more children join us in the upcoming weeks.

A reminder to parents: registration is available via the HVCC website under the “sports” section. If your child is not registered with High Valley and they would like to play basketball, no problem. We ask that you please call the front desk and register your child. It will only take a few minutes. If you would like to watch your child practice, you are more than welcome! Please be prepared to wear your mask while you are in the gym.

This week the HVCC staff introduced the theme of “integrity”

to the children. They were prompted to complete a word scramble and answer what integrity means to them. The staff witnessed several examples of integrity this week. Jojo offered to help Angelina carry heavy buckets, Felix volunteered to take out the trash and Brianna paid a genuine compliment to one of the staff members.

Our first Fabulous Friday went well. The kids bowled at Stars and Strikes in Monte Vista in two separate sessions. The kids that stayed at High Valley made their own waffles, played outside and watched some movies.

Interested in joining the HVCC team? We are always looking for new individuals to join us! Applications are available on the HVCC website under the section, “Forms.”

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Helping historic mining structures stay upright

By LYNSIE FERRELL

MINERAL COUNTY — A drive on the Bachelor Loop outside of Creede invariably leads to the moment where onlookers first lay their eyes on the Nelson Tunnel/Commodore Superfund site structures — ore houses, adits, cribbing and workshops. They stand perched atop scree fields, tower over the dusty road, and nestled between volcanic cliffs. Mouths fall open, cameras click, and folks ask themselves how on Earth such beautiful structures can still be standing.

The sight has become emblematic of the rich mining history of Creede, where miners extracted metals for almost 100 years through ingenuity and grit. In fact, not only are the buildings representative of the mining boom in Creede but also mining in the state of Colorado. Eric Twitty, a mining historian, archaeologist, and author who has worked in Colorado for over 25 years, believes that the site is an incredibly rare and unique look at Colorado mining history because so many details are still intact.

Whereas most old mining sites are either taken apart and used elsewhere or vandalized, the Nelson Tunnel/Commodore site experienced several boom and bust cycles, remaining in operation for decades. Equipment was reused, buildings repurposed, creating a site with several layers of history.

One explosive example is the dynamite thawing shack which still stands a hundred yards to the south of the mid-level sorting house. Yes, you read that correctly, a dynamite thawing house. Before TNT was reformulated to have a lower freezing temperature, it froze at around 50 degrees Fahrenheit. In order to blast through tunnels, workers had to thaw the TNT with heating elements. What a job!

Unfortunately, these iconic buildings, the stolid subjects of so many photographs, are becoming increasingly fragile. In fact, Twitty estimates that the mid-level ore sorting house that dates back to around 1900 may fall down in the next couple of years.

This Fall, Twitty and Erica Warzel, a historic preservation specialist and owner of Clerestory Preservation, discussed the fragility of the site, its historic importance, and the push to save the structures from a fate sealed in talus slopes. The two have paved the way for the historic structures to be placed on the National Register of Historic Places, which would simultaneously place it on the State Register.

The National Register looks for sites that have historical significance and site integrity. In that respect, the Nelson site is the crown jewel of mining in Colorado. Preserving the structures, however, won't be accomplished by a National Historic designation alone, which is expected to occur in summer 2021. Designation opens the door for funding opportunities, but as Twitty explained, some structures need immediate attention.

After hearing Twitty's and Warzel's plea for action, representatives from Mineral County, Headwaters Alliance, Rio Grande National Forest,



Courtesy photo
Folks meet at the Nelson Tunnel to talk about historic structures, Fall 2020.

Colorado Department of Health and Environment, EPA, and Colorado Division of Mining Reclamation and Safety discussed ways to fund emergency measures such as getting a roof over the mid-level ore house and constructing reinforcements to prevent collapse.

Eventually, the County plans to restore the entire site, preserving one of the most iconic examples of mining history in all of Colorado with the help of grants and donations.

"There are still a lot of puzzle pieces that have to fit together before all of this can be finalized but each of the three County Commissioners are committed to making this venture a reality because they see the urgent, vital and imperative nature of preserving these beloved structures," said Mineral County Administrator Janelle Kukuk.

The project will be costly and time-consuming, but as part of the identity of Creede and Colorado, it has long-term cultural and historic benefits. For now, the site remains in a precarious situation. Someday soon, on the other hand, onlookers may be asking themselves how people built and worked in such beautiful buildings as opposed to wondering if it's the last time they'll ever see them standing.

For more information, contact Development and Engagement Coordinator Alex Handloff, at the Headwaters Alliance at coordinator@headwatersalliance.org.

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Saguache and San Luis Creek conservation legacy grows

STAFF REPORT

MOFFAT — The Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust (CCALT) is announced on Jan. 22 the completion of another conservation project in the San Luis Valley. The 2,300-acre Saguache Creek Ranch outside of Moffat is now conserved.

The project was made possible with leadership from landowners Dale and Andrea Gerstberger and with support from Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) and the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA), a program administered by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

The Gerstbergers purchased Saguache Creek Ranch in 2014 after moving from Kansas to Colorado. As fourth-generation ranchers, Dale and Andrea didn't waste any time re-establishing their agricultural operation in the Centennial State. Today, the lush hay meadows on Saguache Creek Ranch support their cow-calf operation.

The family was introduced to conservation easements through their neighbor John Werner. His property borders the Gerstberger's ranch, and Werner has been a supporter of CCALT since conserving his property in 2014.

With the addition of Saguache Creek Ranch, there is now a contiguous block of conserved land along the eastern boundary of Werner's property and an additional 2.3 miles of Saguache Creek, and 3.5 miles of the North Branch of Saguache Creek conserved in the San Luis Valley.

"The Saguache Creek corridor is an inspiring conservation success story, with nearly the whole stretch of river



Courtesy photo

The 2,300-acre Saguache Creek Ranch outside of Moffat is now conserved.

perpetually conserved from where it flows off public lands, through the town of Saguache, and now for several miles south of town as it merges with the North Branch. This landscape-scale conservation outcome would most certainly not be the success it is today without tremendous support from partners like GOCO and the USFWS, which have invested heavily in the area over the past 25 years," said Brad Cory, CCALT conservation manager.

With over 1,840 acres of dense wetlands, Saguache Creek Ranch is a rarity in Colorado, where wetlands cover only 2% of the state. The ranch is prime habitat for Sandhill Cranes, a state species of special concern.

Ducks Unlimited has identified the San Luis Valley as the most important breeding area in the state for migratory birds, including Sandhill Cranes, which migrate annually through the area in the spring and fall.

Additionally, the ranch offers habitat

for big game species such as elk and pronghorn, which utilize the lower elevation rangeland on the valley floor as winter range.

"Congratulations to the project partners for this impressive milestone in the San Luis Valley conservation movement," said Chris Castilian, GOCO executive director. "And our sincere gratitude to Dale and Andrea Gerstberger for their generosity of spirit in thinking long-term about Colorado's lands, people, and wildlife."

The Gerstbergers turned to conservation due to mounting threat from development and increasing financial pressures related to the current drought and their recent purchase of the property. Conservation of the property will alleviate some of those pressures and allow the Gerstberger family to continue their long ranching tradition. Conservation will also ensure that the scenic views and wildlife habitat associated with the ranch will remain pristine.

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