

Shorts

Saguache County receives Moderna COVID-19 vaccine

BY PATRICK SHEA

SAGUACHE COUNTY — According to Janet Beiriger from Saguache County Public Health, staff received 300 doses of the Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine for the county's first two clinics this week. Across Colorado, the Phase 1 distribution plan for the winter has been rolled out in two waves.

"We are vaccinating first responders first — EMS, Fire, Police, Healthcare workers — and also starting on our 70-and-older crowd," Beiriger said. "We have allowed the immuno-compromised ones to join in that group as they are high risk."

The Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine requires a thermal shipping container with dry ice storage chilled between -80°C and -60°C (-112°F to -76°F). Even the coldest recorded date in the state would have been too hot for leaving vials outdoors overnight (-61°F on Feb. 1, 1985, in Maybell, Colorado).

"We opted not to order that one because of that," Beiriger explained. "We do not have the capacity to keep that one at those temperatures. The vaccine also has to be warmed up before it is given. Once it is warmed up and the vial opened, we have six

Please see VACCINE on Page 2A

Poncha Pass crash results in fatality

ALAMOSA COUNTY -

The Colorado State Patrol is investigating a 2 vehicle crash on Highway 285, milepost 119, at the summit of Poncha Pass, which resulted in one fatality.

At approximately 12:05 p.m. on Dec. 29, 2020, a black 2019 Dodge Durango was northbound on Highway 285. A red 2006 Dodge Ram 2500 was southbound on Highway 285. The Durango lost control and began to rotate counter clockwise. The Durango crossed the center line into the southbound lanes. The Durango struck the Ram's front with its right side. The Durango came to rest on its wheels on the southbound white line. The Ram came to rest on its wheels off the southbound edge of the highway.

The driver of the Durango was pronounced deceased on scene. The two juvenile passengers of the Durango were transported to Heart of the Rockies with serious injuries. The driver and passenger of the Ram were transported to Heart of the Rockies with serious injuries.

The crash is still under investigation by the Colorado State Patrol Vehicular Crimes Unit.

COVID-19 dial positions drop for some SLV counties

BY TREY SPAULDING

SAN LUIS VALLEY - Positive COVID-19 cases in the San Luis Valley (SLV) dropped during the past two weeks but began to increase after the new year. Alamosa and Costilla counties went from "Level Red" on the state's COVID-19 dial to "Level Orange." Only Saguache county is at "Level Yellow" in the SLV.

Jan. 6, 2021, the SLV had a two-week

positivity rate of 2.16%. According to the Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center Colorado has seen an uptick in positive tests in the past two weeks with a 7-day statewide average increasing from 7.76% to 8.5%.

Wednesday, Jan. 6, the number of active cases increased above 200 again with 209 active cases. This was an increase of 28 active cases from the previous day. Alamosa County

continues to lead the Valley with the highest number of cases with 108. Rio Grande County active cases increased by 28 active cases since Jan. 4 to 56 active cases on Jan. 6, 2021.

According to the San Luis Valley Health Partnership, "Vaccinations to fight COVID-19 illness are still in limited supply. We are currently authorized to provide vaccinations to those in the Colorado Phase 1A

and those "above the dotted line" in Phase 1B. This includes high- and moderate-risk health care workers and first responders, as well as individuals age 70 and above. Those in long-term care facilities are scheduled to receive vaccinations in January as well. Vaccinations are intended to prevent COVID-19 illness, but it is untested how well the vaccines may prevent

Please see DIAL on Page 4A

Saguache County COVID-19 vaccination appointments



SAGUACHE COUNTY - Saguache County Public Health is now making appointments for COVID-19 vaccinations for county residents that are high- and moderate-risk health care workers, first responders,

and county residents age 70 and above. Supplies are limited. Appointments are required. Call 719-655-2533.

COVID-19 vaccination clinics are in:

• Saguache; Thursday, Jan. 7, 10,

a.m. - 4 p.m.

• Center; Friday, Jan. 8, 10, a.m. - 4 p.m.

• Crestone; Wednesday, Jan. 13, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Wear your mask and stay in your car until instructed to come inside.

Simpson and Valdez join forces with Los Promotores del Valle de San Luis

BY KATIE DOKSON

Senator-elect Cleve Simpson and Representative Donald Valdez joined together with the Los Promotores del Valle de San Luis and Schulz Realty to spread some holiday cheer among the residents affected by COVID-19 in Center, CO. Mr. Simpson and Mr. Valdez masked up and visited porches with over 100 stockings full of gifts, assembled and donated by Schulz Realty.

The households each gave their story about how COVID-19 affected their lives in different ways. Some had lost family members, some had their whole family fall ill, some were put out of work and some were hit with both cancer and the virus.

Cleve stated "I was both humbled and inspired by the opportunity to participate with community members helping other community members in the Valley struggling with the reality of COVID 19. We don't always speak the same language, but the pain of losing loved ones is evident beyond spoken words. It was inspiring to see our community rise up to help

Please see JOIN on Page 6A

Commissioners reopen Saguache County courthouse

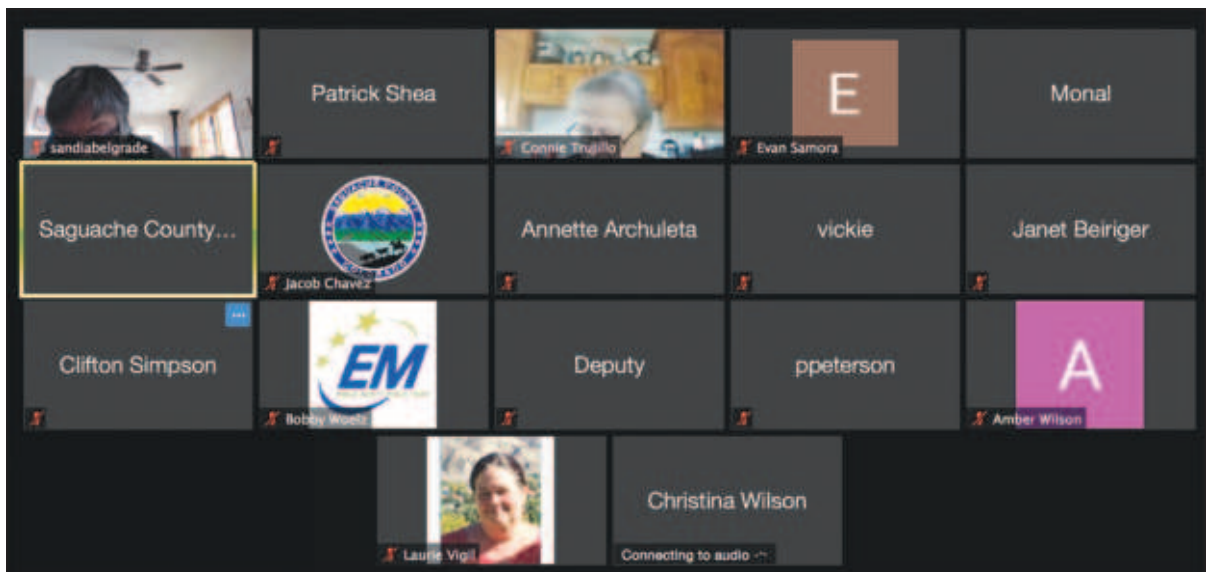
BY PATRICK SHEA

SAGUACHE — After closing the courthouse twice in December in response to COVID-19 cases, Saguache County commissioners approved a plan for reopening the building and other county offices during their regular session on Jan. 5.

Commissioners agreed to open the courthouse on Jan. 6 with the following restrictions. Residents are encouraged to make appointments to visit departments, and the capacity is limited to 14 people on the main floor. Masks are required.

As commissioner Jason Anderson explained during their discussion, "Our lobby isn't big enough for social distancing." A large table obstructs traffic flow to county offices on

Please see COUNTY on Page 6A



With the Saguache County courthouse closed, commissioners held their public meeting via ZOOM on Jan. 5 to discuss reopening the building.

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OBITUARIES

Kirk Ray Thompson, 52

north of Monte Vista. Kirk spent summers building forts and reading Tolkien with his cousins at the Sanderson family cabin and developed a love of the mountains and nature before later working summers as a carpenter with his dad. Kirk was a dedicated student, musician (like his mother), and runner at Sargent High School. Kirk earned a Bachelor's and Master's degree in Agricultural Engineering from Colorado State University. While in Fort Collins, he met his first wife Laura Locker and they returned to the San Luis Valley where they had daughter Kaylie Ray and son Joshua Stewart. Kirk was preceded in death by Laura and Kaylie. Joshua is currently an airborne Ranger in the U.S. Army, stationed at Fort Benning, Georgia.

Kirk was an owner and principal at Agro Engineering, Inc. and helped build a successful company that has served the agricultural communities of the San Luis Valley. At Agro Engineering, Kirk was a prominent water engineer that was known for fair and innovative solutions and worked to maintain the water resources of the San Luis valley. Kirk also served numerous area farmers with water management and other crop consulting services.

In 2018 Kirk married Tess Christensen. He became a loving step parent to his step daughter Cysco Sol Claunch. Kirk and Tess welcomed son Cillian Skye in December 2018 whose joyful spirit was a delight to Kirk.

Kirk developed a love of Irish and Scottish music, taught himself to play the bagpipes, and played his Highland pipes, Fireside pipes, and Uilleann pipes at



numerous services and events. He loved all things Celtic and it led him down the path of learning his own family history; Kirk became the family genealogist in his quest to trace his roots back to Scotland. Kirk was a man of many other hobbies and activities. He enjoyed downhill skiing, cross-country skiing, backpacking and hiking. He liked good scotch, made the best margarita around and his door was always open to family and friends. He was also excellent at architectural design, woodworking and brewing beer.

Due to covid-19 conditions, a small service will be held at the Sargent Church on Jan. 8, 2021. A portion of Kirk's ashes will be placed in the Monte Vista cemetery and a portion will be spread in the summer under one of Kirk's favorite trees above the family cabin. Rogers Family Mortuary in Monte Vista is in care of the arrangements. To express condolences please visit www.rogersfuneral.com.

Ernesto "Ricardo" Velasquez, 48

Ernesto "Ricardo" Velasquez was born on Oct. 15, 1972, in Del Norte to Richard and Cora Velasquez. He passed away on Dec. 25, 2020.

His love for driving heavy equipment led him to enroll in a lineman apprentice program in California. He became a certified lineman and started a family in Las Vegas, Nevada. He furthered his lineman knowledge by working as an Electrical Compliance Specialist in California and Florida. His love for mountains and family brought him back to Colorado. He was enjoying his second career as a Heavy Equipment Driver/Operator for local farms.

Ricardo was a kind-hearted, loving, spiritual soul who had an infectious smile and laugh. His kindness and ability to always help others was an example of his character. He loved sports, being in the mountains, watching the Broncos and enjoying movies. Ricardo loved spending time with his mother, family and friends. His good-natured demeanor and thoughtfulness made him unique and he will be missed by all who knew him.

He is survived by his mother, Cora

E. Velasquez; two children, Karly Velasquez and Cody Velasquez; sisters, Yvonne (Dale) Weaver, Roxanne (Jim) Velasquez.

He is preceded in death by his father, Richard E. Velasquez, brothers Anthony and Joseph Velasquez; Paternal Grandparents, John and Beatrice Velasquez; Maternal Grandparents, Bonifacio and Antonia Gallegos.

A rosary was held on Jan. 2, 2021, at 10 a.m. at Strohmayer's Funeral Home with interment at Del Norte Cemetery immediately following. Reception to follow at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Del Norte, Colorado

Arrangements by Strohmayer's Funeral Home, Monte Vista CO.



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VACCINE

Continued from Page 1A

hours to administer all the vaccine that is in it before we have to throw it away."

The Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine requirement isn't quite as chilling (-13°F and 5°F), and Rio Grande County health officials have offered storage for their neighbors to the north, if necessary. According to Beiriger, "We can store several doses in both the vaccine freezers we have, but if we need Rio Grande as a backup, we are very grateful they are there for us."

Both approved vaccines in the United States require a second dose. Doctors recommend waiting 21 days for the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine, and as Beiriger explained, "The Moderna vaccine recommends that a second dose be given at 28 days. We are hoping that we get enough vaccine to do that for everyone."

As of Sunday, Jan. 3, 111,679 people in Colorado received their first COVID-19 vaccine.

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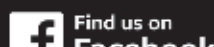


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OPINION & EDITORIAL

Trying to measure up

As many of you know, Ol' Dutch loves to peruse the internet for local garage sales, farm stuff and other items that can be found on such places as Craigslist and Facebook Marketplace. Being near a bigger city during the winter, there are a lot of people who either need extra money, are liquidating estates or selling stolen merchandise, all of which can mean good deals.

The internet is a real boon to those wanting to sell items as in the former situations and the latter have also found it an easy way to get rid of hot stuff. Now this isn't the "hot stuff" that we all talked about in the 70s when mentioning the new girl at school but it's things that people have used the five discount to obtain. Yes, stolen.

So, yesterday I was perusing the local ads and saw a nice dresser for sale. Now I am not in the market for one necessarily but I did notice this ad for its use of a peculiar vernacular. Now I don't know where these people are from but it seems that wherever that is, they use a strange and unique form of measuring things.

The picture of said dresser was with a cat stretched out beside it and they simply stated, "We don't know how tall the dresser is but it's about one cat tall."

It reminds me of when I took #1 child, Cricket, to college and got her all set up in her dorm room with a loft bed. As soon as I get home, she calls saying she needs a board for an additional piece to the bed. I told her to go to the lumber yard and get one and that they would cut it for her. Not having a tape measure close at hand, she showed up at the lumber yard with a piece of string cut, yes you guessed it, the exact length she needed. She said the men there got a good laugh and I don't think she even had to pay for the lumber in the end. I guess whatever works?

I got to thinking (a dangerous thing according to Miss Trixie) and realized that we have used all kinds of things to measure with down through history. Things like bushels, feet -- yes, it was literally a person's foot -- steps, cubits and hands.

Most of these are not too accurate as they depend on the size of the member being used. A cubit as you recall from your Bible School days



Trout Republic
by Kevin Kirkpatrick

is the length of an arm from elbow to fingertips and I guess that was good enough for Noah to build a heck of a boat so how can you argue with success. But if you get some long armed Saipem running around the jobsite you may end up with real problems during construction. And they say size doesn't matter?

And speaking of hands as a measurement, you don't have to be from Texas to recognize that is how they size up a horse. Typically, it's the width of a closed hand including the thumb and about 4 inches on average. Obviously if you are selling big horses it's best to find a tiny handed person to do your measuring so that you appear to have horses of immense stature as some big ole ham-hock-handed country boy measurer would reduce your sales price immensely.

Since Miss Trixie does not appear to be running away very soon, I am starting to build a pad for a house for the winter month, which has required some new tape measures among other tools all necessary to get a tad more accurate than maybe Noah had.

But I guess if he was able to house them "two by two" and since there is just Miss Trixie and me, with a small yorkie that may just work.

Kevin Kirkpatrick and his yorkie, Cooper, fish, hunt, ATV of hike daily. His email is Kevin@TroutRepublic.com. Additional news can be found at www.troutrepublic.com or on Twitter at TroutRepublic



BEWARE OF UNSCRUPULOUS ALTERNATIVES...

YOUR NIGHT SKY

Jupiter, Mercury and Saturn

By DARLENE DANKO

This is the month that the three planets join up in the sky. They're getting very low in the Southwest, and you need to start looking for them a half-hour after the Sun sets. The days for this conjunction are Jan. 8, 9, 10 and 11, with Jan. 10 being the closest grouping. This is the first time since October 2015 that we'll be able to see this planetary trio in conjunction.

Mercury is always low in the sky and close to the Sun, but this is the best month for viewing it. Because it's so close to the Sun, it's always a bright planet. Jupiter and Saturn have been the sky highlights for a long time this year, but they're getting very low and will soon be gone. Jupiter is always very bright, but Saturn is fading and

you will most likely need binoculars to see all three of them together.

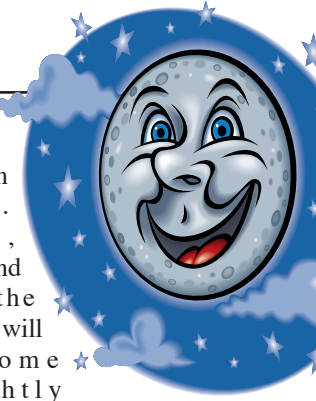
The best time to look for them together is around 5:30 after the Sun sets. I'm sure they'll be below the horizon close to 6 p.m., especially if you have mountains in the SW that will block your view. Since the new moon is on the 13th, it'll come up late and not be bright. So it won't interfere with your viewing.

On Jan. 8 Jupiter will be on top with Mercury on the bottom and Saturn in between them. Jan. 10 is their peak day when they make a small circle. On Jan. 11 Mercury will be climbing upward while Jupiter and Saturn will be sinking in the sky toward the Sun and will soon fade away.

Mercury will soar to its greatest evening elongation on Jan. 24. So, it will be a good item to view this month, as it's the second brightest object in

our sky. On Jan. 14, 15, and 16 the moon will become slightly visible as a very thin crescent with Mercury just below it. Just remember that Mercury is only visible for a little while after sunset. In this area it sets one hour 15 minutes after the Sun.

If you get up before the Sun rises in the morning, you'll be able to view Venus. It comes up in the Southeast about 30 minutes before the Sun. The thin moon will be joining it for a few days. Just look for a bright object rising in the Southeast before the Sun.



LETTER

Sharing Christmas Project

To the editor,
I would like to express an appreciation on Sharing Christmas Project. It is not a single individual but many. One support group that was accidentally omitted was the Center Kiwanis. The Center Kiwanis members have provided 15 food baskets with a gift certificate for years. This year, they provided 18 food baskets with a generous gift certificate. Thank you!

I would also like to thank the Center Promotoras members Anita and Gabby Rodriguez for wrapping presents and organizing the food boxes. The seniors who gave of their time to volunteer for food

and present shopping, as well as wrapping presents. It was so appreciated by me and the families who received the gifts. K & J's for ordering the food and getting it all organized as well as Carlos Ramos for helping unload the large pallet of food at the school.

I especially want to thank the Center Cafeteria staff for ordering food items and the Center Schools staff for donating food items and cash. There were many staff members who donated an hour here and there to complete the project. Thanks!

It is with a grateful heart that I thank Adele Alfson and Brian Ullery for their extra work on the

two delivery days. I truly could not have pulled it off without your generous help and wisdom.

Finally, any good project is only as good as the people who are willing to deliver the items. I want to thank Tony Garcia and the transportation staff for delivering the 55 baskets throughout town and the country.

Once again, I would like to thank the financial support and supplies donated by Del Norte Bank, Warsh Farms, Biel's Consulting and Malouff Farms.

Thank you so very much for your assistance one and all!

*Susan Banning
Center Schools*

LETTERS POLICY

Letters are welcome and encouraged. They should be fewer than 300 words, unless arranged beforehand with the editor, and they are subject to editing for length and clarity.

All letters must be signed by the author and include a phone number and address where the author can be reached (these are not for publication). Letters forwarded from other organizations or sent to staff and not for print must be designated as such. Letters over 300 words and without contact information

will be returned to the sender or discarded.

We will accept one letter per person, per subject, per four issues. We reserve the right to reject letters for reasons we believe are appropriate. Please send letters to Letter to the Editor/c/o Valley Publishing, PO Box 607, Monte Vista, CO 81144 or e-mail to montevistanews@gmail.com (Attention: Letter to the Editor). Deadline for letters is 5 p.m. Friday.

Political letters may be limited due to space constraints.

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Colorado needs substitute teachers

BY REBECCA COPLEY

COLORADO - Currently schools across Colorado are experiencing a shortage of substitute teachers as the pandemic is still spreading. During these uncertain times teachers and schools are having issues with teachers being unavailable as they are sometimes in quarantine. Whether they are sick or have been exposed to someone with COVID-19. Forcing schools to have to cancel that in-person class and go remote with specific classes.

In an effort to still provide students with in-person learning, there is a need for more substitute teachers. If this is something you have ever considered, now is a great time to go for it and be there for students in our communities. According to the Colorado Department of Education's (CDE) website, "Classroom substitute teachers come from all walks of life and can positively impact students' lives. Substitute teaching compensation ranges from \$100 to \$200 a day across the state. Earn

money, influence lives and make a difference in your community." There are three types of substitute authorizations that the State of Colorado issues. These are based on a person's educational background and experience, which allows them to work as a substitute teacher in a Colorado public school district, charter school or BOCES. They have also added a fourth authorization just for the 2020-2021 academic school year in an effort to help districts and students during these difficult times.

If you are interested in more information, or you want to find out if you qualify to be a substitute teacher you can go to http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeprof/licensure_subapp?fbclid=IwAR3hSL7SIWZ0j_dymCQ9jFkdz6_7OseRWuDWboYANFCBBZyGII6y7R10CXE. There you will find resources and everything you need to know to get started in helping your community and students during these uncertain times.



DIAL

Continued from Page 1A

the virus from spreading from one person to another. Those in long-term care facilities are scheduled to receive vaccinations in January as well."

At a meeting of the San Luis Valley Healthcare Coalition Tuesday, Dec. 29, it was reported that so far only mild side effects, such as temporary arm soreness, are being observed as early vaccinations for COVID-19 continue this week. According to the most recent state guidelines, Colorado's Phase 1A includes health care workers in settings with high risk of COVID-19 exposure. Phase 1B includes health care workers in settings with moderate risk of exposure, first responders, those ages 70 and up, and certain other front line workers. Phase 1A and 1B vaccinations will continue in January 2021. Vaccination planning will include providing a second dose for each vaccine recipient.

As of Wednesday, Jan. 6, 2021, among the SLV counties, Mineral County had the highest COVID-19 positivity rate of 21.4% followed by Costilla County with 13.8%. Although Alamosa County had the highest rate of active cases its positivity test rate was 2.3%. Rio Grande County had the lowest positivity rate in the Valley with only 1.0% of tests being positive.

Staff and residents of long-term care facilities are also part of Phase 1. Vaccinations for long-term care facilities have been allocated and contracted at the federal level separately from hospitals, clinics and public health agencies. Long-term care facility vaccinations will begin in early January.

Each county will be able to move through Phase 1A and 1B at different rates, based on vaccine allocations received and the unique makeup

of each county. Vaccine providers have not been authorized to provide vaccinations to those beyond Phase 1 at this time. Doing so could jeopardize their ability to continue providing vaccinations.

According to the SLVPH there were 209 known active cases in the SLV Wednesday, Jan. 6, "Active cases" means that the cases are confirmed positive for COVID-19

and are currently being supported by Public Health during their isolation period. Active cases by SLV county were as follows as of Wednesday, Jan. 6:

- Alamosa: 108
- Conejos: 27
- Costilla: 8
- Mineral: 8
- Rio Grande: 56
- Saguache: 2

According to the Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center Tuesday, Jan. 5, Colorado continues to have a lower seven-day positivity moving average test rate of 8.3%. Neighboring states rates were Wyoming 8.3%, Kansas had a COVID-19 positivity rate of 39.8%, Utah 23.5%, Arizona 16.1%, Nebraska 10.0% and Oklahoma 23.3%.

PHASE 1

Winter

1A

Highest-risk health care workers and individuals:

- People who have direct contact with COVID-19 patients for 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period.
- Long-term care facility staff and residents.

1B

Coloradans age 70+, moderate-risk health care workers, first responders, frontline essential workers, and continuity of state government:

- Health care workers with less direct contact with COVID-19 patients (e.g. home health, hospice, pharmacy, dental, etc.) and EMS.
- Firefighters, police, COVID-19 response personnel, correctional workers, and funeral services.
- People age 70 and older.

- Frontline essential workers in education, food and agriculture, manufacturing, U.S. postal service, public transit and specialized transportation staff, grocery, public health, frontline essential human service workers, and direct care providers for Coloradans experiencing homelessness.
- Essential officials from executive, legislative and judicial branches of state government.
- Essential frontline journalists.

Health officials are currently authorized to provide vaccinations to those in the Colorado Phase 1A and those "above the dotted line" in Phase 1B.

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Winter activities in the San Juan's are boundless

By **LYNDSIE FERRELL**

SOUTH FORK - The holidays have come and gone but winter is still holding on to the San Juan Mountains which can make for a difficult time after spending a year indoors due to the pandemic. It is however a great time to get outside and enjoy all that the San Luis Valley and surrounding areas has to offer. There are plenty of safe and family friendly activities to participate in while enjoying the January cold.

South Fork offers free ice skating at Rickel Park located just south of Highway 160 as travelers enter town from the east. The ice skating rink is set up in a picturesque location next to the playground and the South Fork of the Rio Grande River. Last year the Town of South Fork was able to build

a small skate shed to house free skating equipment that can be used by anyone. All the town requests is that users return equipment and consider making a small donation to help keep the program free and available for the public. A donation box is located inside the shed.

While at the park, families can also enjoy the playground equipment, though caution is advised because surfaces can be slick during the winter months. There is also a really fun beginner friendly sledding hill that shoots people down into the small valley where the playground and ice rink are located. It is a great way to spend the day laughing and having some fun with family and friends.

While venturing around the area, there are more skating ponds

located just north of Creede. These ponds allow visitors to enjoy some outdoor fun at 9,000 feet in elevation so be sure to stay hydrated and be prepared for the cold. Located just below the famous caldera cliffs, these ponds are easily accessible and some free skating equipment can be found in the skating shed located between the two ponds.

In upcoming weeks, the Creede ponds will be crowded with hockey players for the annual Golden Pick Hockey Tournament put on by local businesses Tommyknocker Tavern and Kip's Grill. During the weekend of Jan. 16 and 17 this is a great time to come out and watch some good old fashion hockey competition or families can sign up for the event by visiting www.creede.com.

Wolf Creek Ski Resort is not only the best place for downhill skiing but offers groomed trails for cross-country or Nordic skiing as well. Alberta Park has one long Nordic and one shorter Nordic loop that is groomed regularly.

At the top of Wolf Creek Pass there are some snowmobiling and sledding opportunities just off the highway, however both are not groomed or patrolled for potential dangers. It is best to always seek information from the Colorado Avalanche Information Center or speak with local Wolf Creek Ski Resort officials before heading into the back country.

Now is the time to enjoy a Colorado winter but be sure to dress accordingly and know before you go.



Rio Grande Public Health (RGPH)

Will be offering **COVID vaccinations** for individuals who are **70 years and older**

Please contact RGPH as soon as possible if you are interested. Quantities are limited. Appointments are required. Please wear your mask. We will provide increased social distancing and disinfection measures to help reduce COVID exposure.

To schedule or obtain more information please call **657-3352**

www.riograndecounty.org

CLIPS FROM THE CLERK

By **TRISH GILBERT**

Saguache County temporary registration permits

Individual to Individual Sale - The following paperwork can be submitted as proof of the sale:

- The assigned title; or
- A Bill of Sale (notarized or signed under penalty of perjury) with proof of ownership, (registration, copy of title, etc.).

Delays in the Filing of the Mortgage - A temporary registration permit may be issued when there is proof that there has been a delay(s) in the filing of the mortgage.

Request from Financial Institution on a new purchase:

- Letter from a financial institution indicating that a temporary registration permit may be issued; or Security Agreement

Tow-Away Vehicles - Temporary registration permits may be issued to a tow-away vehicle when both of these criteria are met:

- Proof that the vehicle has been made roadworthy through a Statement of Fact and supporting receipt documents; and
- Proof of ownership - title in the applicant's name or title assigned to the applicant.

Colorado Assigned ID - When an application for an Assigned ID has been completed, a temporary

registration permit may be issued to have the ID affixed to the vehicle by the Colorado State Patrol.

Salvage Title - A salvage title is an

ownership document to a vehicle that is not roadworthy. A temporary registration permit may be issued at the County's discretion to obtain a Certified VIN Inspection upon submitting the following:

- Proof of ownership.
- Receipts indicating repair of the vehicle.
- DR 2424 Salvage Title Statement of Fact verifying the vehicle is in a roadworthy condition.

Dealer Complaints - When a complaint has been filed against a dealer, and the case is under investigation, a dealer investigator may provide authorization for the issuance of a temporary registration permit.

Print on Demand - A Temporary permit is issued for all Print on Demand (POD) transactions.

Note: Temporary registration permits may be issued not to exceed 60 days. The expiration date should always be on a business day. In no event is the temporary registration permit expiration date to exceed sixty days.



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Local business wins lawsuit in Creede

By LYNSIE FERRELL

CREEDE- For over a year, local business owner Kip Nagy has been fighting the City of Creede in three lawsuits filed against Kip's Grill. According to Nagy, his establishment has won the first lawsuit filed against him in 2019.

City of Creede Attorney Karen Lintott declined to comment on the lawsuits stating only that she highly suggested reading the court transcripts from the respective lawsuits. Those documents were unavailable at the time of this article. However, Nagy has been open with his side of the story.

Nagy began his plight in the summer of 2019 when he applied for a renewal of his liquor license for the upper portion of Kip's Grill located on Main Street in Creede. In the fall of 2019, Nagy was denied the renewal of the license due to concern of the upper bar's safety and the fact that there was only one fire exit from the upper level.

In a meeting in September, Nagy asked for leniency from the board only to be told that he would have to become in compliance with the city's building codes before the license would be granted. This was only the beginning of a long legal process that partially came to a close in Dec. 2020.

In a statement provided by Nagy to Valley Publishing he explains his plight, "This all started in July 2019 when we were told our liquor license renewal was being tabled. We had leased out the upstairs of our building to someone who wanted to run a cocktail lounge up there. The city council said that citizens of Creede had concerns about the business being open late and disturbing neighbors. We met with all the neighbors and they signed a letter stating that they were OK with the business and we agreed upon hours that were reasonable for everyone," wrote Nagy.

Nagy continued to state, "We went to the next meeting to answer any questions the board might have. When we got there, they told us that someone from the community had called and told them that our outside stairs (from the upstairs to the patio) had been removed and they were concerned that we only had one form of egress from the upstairs. Based on that, they tabled the liquor license

renewal again and asked us to put a sign at the bottom of the interior stairs warning patrons that there is only one exit from the upstairs. We were asked to put in a secondary egress and we immediately drew up plans for an emergency exit from the upstairs. We filled out the permit, had it signed by the building inspector and got to work."

"Two days later, the City Manager, who had been in Creede about six months at this point, contacted us and said he was not accepting the permit that the building inspector approved, and that the building inspector had quit, and they were looking for a new one. At this point, we discovered that we actually, per code, only needed one means of egress because our occupancy load was low. So, we began taking steps to bring our interior stairs up to code as best we could. Note, these stairs and the upstairs were built in 2011 and the upstairs was permitted and approved with just one set of interior stairs."

It was at this point that Nagy reached out to the Alamosa Fire Marshall to invite him to come and look at the property and was told that although the stairs were not up to code, they should be grandfathered in. A letter from the Fire Marshall was submitted to the board for consideration. The upper portion of Kip's Grill was subsequently shut down per the direction of the city board until a solution for the egress could be found. "On Sept. 3, 2019, at the next meeting, the board voted to make us shut down the upstairs until the egress issue was resolved. So, we shut it down. We had a structural engineer present 5 different egress plans over the next several months. Each one was wholly denied with no explanation of why. The new building inspector, who lives two hours away, just kept saying, "I'm not doing your job for you" As 2019 turned into 2020, the list of demands from the city grew. Every time we would correct an issue, they either did not like how we did it or they added another item to the list."

The City of Creede then filed a lawsuit against Kip's Grill with appeals filed afterward and according to Nagy they have won one of the two lawsuits.

The first lawsuit was an order to reverse the city's determination to withhold Nagy's liquor license and



the court order is as follows, "THIS MATTER comes before the Court on Kip's Grill, LLC's Complaint Pursuant to C.R.C.P. 106(a)(4). The Plaintiff, Kip's Grill, LLC ("Kip's Grill"), filed its complaint on April 27, 2020. The Defendants, the City of Creede, Colorado ("Creede") and Creede's Board of Trustees ("Board of Trustees"), filed an answer on May 21, 2020. As explained below, the Court concludes it is appropriate to grant the relief Kip's Grill requests in its complaint. The issue of Kip's Grill's liquor license is remanded to the Board of Trustees for proceedings consistent with this Order."

According to Nagy, the board of trustees has yet to bring this to a meeting and have yet to issue the liquor license. The final lawsuit will be discussed in court in August 2021 and is the city seeking to condemn the building in which Kip's Grill resides.

DISTRICT COURT, SAGUACHE COUNTY, COLORADO	
Court Address: 501 4 th Street PO Box 197 Saguache, CO 81149 Phone Number: (719) 655-2522	
In the Matter of the Estate of: TRAN ROBERT ELLIS, also known as TRAN R. ELLIS and TRAN ELLIS	
Deceased Attorney: Peter J. Enichen 885 Arapahoe Avenue, Boulder, CO 80302 Phone Number: 303-544-6000 Email: Peter@Enichenlaw.com Atty. Reg. #: 18784	
▲ COURT USE ONLY ▲	
Case Number: 2020PR30016 Division: C Courtroom	

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Estate of TRAN ROBERT ELLIS, also known as TRAN R. ELLIS and TRAN ELLIS, Deceased
Case Number 2020PR30016
All persons having claims against the above-named estate are required to present them to the Personal Representative or to the District Court of Saguache County, Colorado on or before April 24, 2021, or the claims may be forever barred.

Constance Crosby, Personal Representative
c/o Enichen Law Office, LLC
885 Arapahoe Avenue
Boulder, CO 80302

No. 1585 published in the Center Post Dispatch, Thursday, December 24 and 31, 2020 and January 7, 2021.

SAGUACHE COUNTY SHERIFF REPORT

SAGUACHE COUNTY — The following information was provided by the Saguache County Sheriff's Office for the period between Dec. 28, 2020, and Jan. 3, 2021.

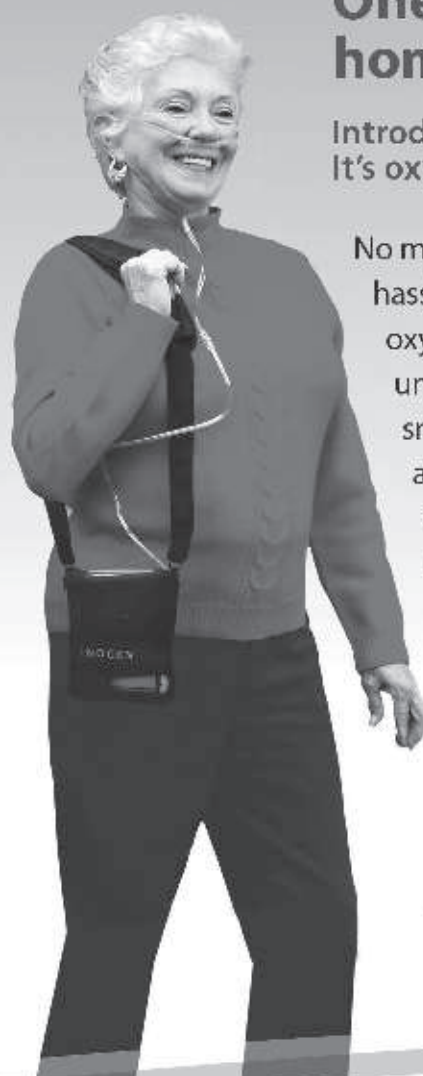
The Sheriff dispatched staff to a two-vehicle crash that took the life of Ernest Burge on Poncha Pass Dec. 29. Deputies also handled a deceased person, three assaults, a suicidal subject, an intoxicated person, a case of harassment and a drunken driver. Other personal calls involved two civil disputes, three civil standbys and a protection order violation.

Three fires and 11 controlled burns required attention, and dispatchers received only three noise complaints on Dec. 31 and Jan. 1. Three speeders owe \$445.

Arrests
• Darrell Wadsworth, 36, Mosca, driving under the influence of



alcohol, drugs or both.
• Taylor Trujillo, 27, Center, driving when license under restraint, possession of weapons by previous offenders, prohibited use of weapons and driving under the influence of alcohol, drugs or both.





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MKT-P0108



Golden Pick Hockey Tournament next week

By **LYNDSIE FERRELL**

CREEDE- It is hard to believe that this year marks the 14th annual Golden Pick Hockey Tournament in Creede and it is just over the horizon. It has been a strange year in the small mountain towns and like other communities, the year was fraught with uncertainty in regard to local events taking place. The good news is 2021 is going to start off with some predictability and one can only hope this sets the stage for the coming year.

Tommyknocker Tavern in partnership with Kip's Grill will be hosting the annual Golden Pick Hockey Tournament at Silver Ice Park underneath the steep caldera cliffs that Creede is known for. The tournament kicks off the weekend of Jan. 16 and 17 with teams coming in from all over southwestern Colorado. Some parts of the event will be subject to state and local COVID guidelines, but the event is still scheduled to take place.

The event began with two business owners from the Creede area wanting to have some friendly fun among residents during the slow winter months and had now

turned into one of the largest pond hockey tournaments in southwestern Colorado. Tommyknocker Tavern and Kip's Grill came together with a few people at the beginning and allowed it to grow into a full-on hockey event that spices up the chilly, slow winter months in town.

Several years ago, when, while visiting a neighboring bar that Kip Nagy, owner of Kip's Grill happened across a friend that owned a production company called Pride of Gypsies. After hearing about the steep caldera cliffs and picturesque scenery, the company decided to come and film a series of commercials for Carhartt. After filming was completed, a shed that was built for prop purposes was donated by Carhartt to be used as the new warming hut during the hockey tournament. The new shed now has a permanent home next to the lower pond.

In the years since, the ponds above town have gone from mere recreational ponds to becoming a designated city park, suitably named for Creede's unique mining history as Silver Ice Park. The City of Creede adopted the ponds during a series of

meetings in 2015 and helped with funding that purchased several lights that now line the outer edges of the ponds to allow for night skating.

The ponds are lined with burn barrels to keep players warm and bleachers for cheering fans to come and enjoy the two days of friendly hockey fun. The ponds are located at 8,900 feet elevation which adds an additional challenge to the tournament and its players. The views surrounding the rinks add an incentive to those who travel from all over the southwestern US to take part in the hockey tournament. Players from all walks of life travel to Creede just to enjoy the laid-back fun tournament that caters to all levels of experience.

The tournament consists of two levels of competition and is set up in a way that ensures each participating team gets to play at least one playoff game by the end. The schedule is known to hockey enthusiasts as a round robin format with a three-on-three team play. Registration is now open, so be sure to visit www.creedepondhockey.wordpress.com to get signed up.

Valley welcomes first baby of 2021



Photo by Dawn Krebs
Aaliyah Liliana Hurtado is the first baby in the San Luis Valley in 2021. She was born at 10:35 a.m. on Jan. 2, 2020 at San Luis Valley Health in Alamosa. She weighed 5 pounds, 3 ounces and measured 19 inches long. Aaliyah is the daughter of Rebecca Calderon and Saul Hurtado of Center, and is welcomed by her three siblings—Yadir, Yael and Xavier. Her maternal grandparents are Benito Calderon and Susanna Gallegos of Alamosa, and her paternal grandparent is Maria Isabel Lopez of Texas. Her great-grandparents are Maria Christina Juarez and Jose and Bertha Calderon.

Top new year's resolutions and how to keep them

By **REBECCA COPLEY**

January the first month of a whole new year. A time for reflecting and planning as 12 months stretch before us clean and with no mistakes in them. Most people use this time to set new goals and resolutions for the coming year. Here are some of the most common new year's resolutions:

Lose weight

Losing weight is one of the most classic new year's resolutions. After a holiday season of feasting it's no surprise that this a No. 1 goal for most of us.

Monetary goals

Another common goal for many people is to get their finances in order. After the holiday season lightening most people's wallets, getting a budget in place for the next year is a priority for many.

Learn something new

This is actually one of the most common goals most people make as a new year begins. A larger percentage of people will make self-improvement and education related resolutions over getting in shape.

Getting Organized

Decluttering and organizing is another very popular new year's resolution. Having things in order helps us feel ready to take on whatever the year throws at us.

Quit Smoking

This is another very common new year's resolution and one with great health benefits.

Overall health

Improving overall health is another popular goal as a new year begins. Whether it's just to take better care of yourself or to do a 5K run, many people try to create a healthier lifestyle as they start another year.



These maybe some of the top resolutions people make each year but studies have been done that show most of us don't keep them for very long. According to U.S. News 80% of people will give up on their new year's resolutions by the second week in February.

Thankfully there are a lot of tips and tricks out there you can use to help you stick to your goals. One of the most helpful is to be sure to choose a specific goal. Most of us set very ambiguous goals for ourselves like, "lose weight," "save more money," or, "be more productive." It can really help if you find a specific achievable step you can take to achieve these bigger goals.

Putting a plan into place can also help you achieve your goals. Choose your resolution carefully and don't get spread too thin by having too many goals. Pick one or two and really focus on them. Brainstorm on how you will actually reach your goal. Start by taking small steps and making easy changes.

Getting support can also be a game changer when it comes to sticking with your resolution. Having someone who is also working toward the same goal can give you accountability and make you much more likely to actually keep your new year's resolution. It can also make it more fun!

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Lifestyles

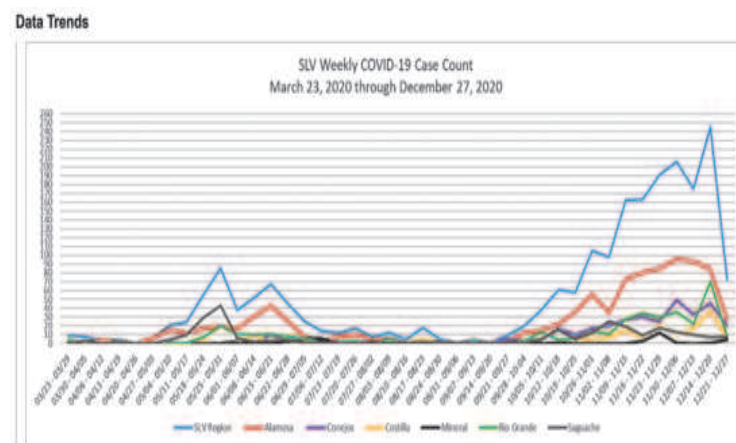
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CDPHE provides latest information on COVID-19 vaccine distribution

COLORADO - The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) has been working to fine-tune a phased approach to vaccine distribution in order to save lives and end the crisis that has been brought on by the pandemic as quickly as possible. More than 91,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccines have already been administered to frontline health care workers since the first shipments of vaccine arrived in Colorado in mid-December. Updates to the vaccine distribution plan include an expansion of phase 1B and changes to the age *Please see VACCINE on Page 2*



COVID-19 cases drop over the holidays

SAN LUIS VALLEY - Positive COVID-19 cases in the San Luis Valley (SLV) have dropped during the past two weeks. Some have stated that the decrease in cases may be due to a decrease in the number of people being tested. Dec. 31 the number of active cases remained below 200 at 181 in the Valley. This was an increase of 11 active cases from the previous day. Alamosa County continues to lead the Valley with the highest number of cases with 119. Rio Grande County ranks second with 27 active cases and 70 new cases in the past two weeks. As of Jan. 4, 2020, within the SLV Mineral County had the highest COVID-19 positivity rate of 21.4% followed by Costilla County with 12.1%. Although Alamosa County had the highest rate of active cases its positivity test rate was 2.3%. Rio Grande County had the lowest positivity rate in the Valley with only 0.9% being positive. San Luis Valley Health Partnership stated Dec. 30 that there are many seniors in the San Luis Valley who are anxious to be vaccinated, and they are asking for patience, as vaccines are still very limited. Governor Polis announced that the state will expand who will be able to receive COVID-19 vaccinations in Phase 1. During the coming *Please see UPDATE on Page 2*

PHASE 1 Winter

1A

Highest-risk health care workers and individuals:

- People who have direct contact with COVID-19 patients for 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period.
- Long-term care facility staff and residents.

1B

Coloradans age 70+, moderate-risk health care workers, first responders, frontline essential workers, and continuity of state government:

- Health care workers with less direct contact with COVID-19 patients (e.g. home health, hospice, pharmacy, dental, etc.) and EMS.
- Firefighters, police, COVID-19 response personnel, correctional workers, and funeral services.
- People age 70 and older.
- Frontline essential workers in education, food and agriculture, manufacturing, U.S. postal service, public transit and specialized transportation staff, grocery, public health, frontline essential human service workers, and direct care providers for Coloradans experiencing homelessness.
- Essential officials from executive, legislative and judicial branches of state government.
- Essential frontline journalists.

PHASE 2 Spring

2

Higher-risk individuals and other essential workers:

- People age 60-69.
- People age 16-59 with obesity, diabetes, chronic lung disease, significant heart disease, chronic kidney disease, cancer, or are immunocompromised.
- Other essential workers and continuity of local government.
- Adults who received a placebo during a COVID-19 vaccine clinical trial.

Revised date: 12/30/2020

An embarrassing column

Embarrassing moments. Nobody likes to talk about them. Oh, they'll talk about slipping on the ice on their first date or getting bucked off a gentle horse. Other folks empathize and usually they laugh. But it makes people uneasy when it's really embarrassing. They might titter nervously but if it's really awful it makes us uncomfortable. It could happen to me!

Like the time I leaned into a car window and asked a new acquaintance to dance and she didn't have any legs. It was shattering to a high school boy, not to mention the girl. Or introducing an old friend and his wife to my family and calling his wife by his ex wife's name.

Faux pas are always exaggerated when you are in the company of someone other than your family. Cocktail or diner parties with guests are fertile ground for embarrassment: Halfway through dinner you glance in the



mirror and discover you should have blown your nose an hour ago: finding gravy (dried, off course) on your black dress; sneaking off to powder your nose, quietly closing the door, gently running the water – then you flush and

it sounds like a dump truck unloading nine yards of gravel into an empty grain bin.

In veterinary work there is an association of vets who have spayed tomcats. Cowboys take a great delight in runnin a rangy ol' steer in with a bunch of cows at cow workin' time. I've preg-checked a thousand steers – but at least I've never called one bred.

Then there was poor ol' Fred (an alias) who was worried about climbing on his roof to shovel off the snow. So he took his rope and tied it to the back bumper of his pickup in the front yard. Looping it around his waist he went up on the roof and over the peak. His wife left for town... in his pickup. Broke both his legs, his pelvis and one wrist.

During recovery he was sitting around the house in a cumbersome body cast. His wife had the habit of filling her cigarette lighter with fluid over the commode. Later that afternoon ol' Fred creaked his way into

the bathroom like a NASA moonwalker. He maneuvered himself into position and lowered himself, cast and all, down on the seat. Exhausted, but smugly satisfied with his achievement, he lit a cigarette and dropped the match into the lurking lighter fluid. It blew him into the tub and broke his other wrist!

Were talkin' hot cross buns! If you ever wondered where the word "embarrass" came from...

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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UPDATE

Continued from Page 1

week, local public health agencies will be planning with healthcare partners how to expand vaccination opportunities to these new groups. The state does not have enough doses of the vaccine for everyone in Phase 1, but it's expected to receive vaccines in small but regular shipments during the coming weeks.

At a meeting of the San Luis Valley Healthcare Coalition Tuesday, Dec. 29, it was reported that so far only mild side effects, such as temporary arm soreness, are being observed as early vaccinations for COVID-19 continue this week. According to the most recent state guidelines, Colorado's Phase 1A includes health care workers in settings with high risk of COVID-19 exposure. Phase 1B includes health care workers in settings with moderate risk of exposure, first responders, those ages 70 and up, and certain other front line workers. Phase 1A and 1B vaccinations will continue in January

2021. Vaccination planning will include providing a second dose for each vaccine recipient.

Staff and residents of long-term care facilities are also part of Phase 1. Vaccinations for long-term care facilities have been allocated and contracted at the federal level separately from hospitals, clinics and public health agencies. Long-term care facility vaccinations will begin in early January.

Each county will be able to move through Phase 1A and 1B at different rates, based on vaccine allocations received and the unique makeup of each county. Vaccine providers have not been authorized to provide vaccinations to those beyond Phase 1 at this time. Doing so could jeopardize their ability to continue providing vaccinations.

In December, the SLV had 31 people hospitalized with COVID-19, and there were 12 deaths among cases. The number of active cases is beginning to come down, but the coronavirus is still here.

VACCINE

Continued from Page 1

ranges under phases 2 and 3. Moderate risk health care workers and first responders are still covered under phase 1B, which has been expanded to include frontline essential workers and continuity of state government. Phase 1B also now covers Coloradans age 70 and older, who represent 78% of all COVID-19 deaths in the state. Many people in phase 1B will have the opportunity to begin getting vaccinated in the next few days as federal supplies allow and as phase 1A is completed. We expect that we will get through the majority of phase 1A health care workers by Jan. 15 and as we get closer to that date will be able to provide more information for Coloradans on next steps. In the meantime, we encourage Coloradans to visit <https://covid19.Colorado.gov/vaccine-FAQ>. The state is currently coordinating with local public health agencies, health care providers, pharmacies, and diverse community partners to distribute the vaccine as equitably and efficiently as possible to people in phase 1A and 1B. Some phase 1 recipients will receive the vaccine through their employer, local public health agency, enrolled COVID

vaccine provider, or through the federal government's <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/long-term-care/pharmacy-partnerships.html>

For individuals not receiving a vaccine through one of these options, the state is actively working with local public health agencies to determine which additional providers will vaccinate members of the 1A and 1B groups. Several counties are planning to hold mass vaccination clinics for members of their communities. In the coming days and as more information becomes finalized, we will publish additional locations for vaccine distribution on the state's website. For more information on vaccine distribution locations, Coloradans may call COHELP at 303-389-1687 or 877-462-2911, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. - 10 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. or visit <https://covid19.Colorado.gov/for-coloradans/vaccine/vaccine-for-coloradans>

The state is continually onboarding providers and coordinating with local public health agencies to determine additional points of distribution.

Colorado has first case of COVID variant in U.S.

COLORADO - Tuesday, Dec. 29, Gov. Polis and state health officials announced the first case of the of COVID-19 variant B.1.1.7, the same variant discovered in the UK.

The Colorado State Laboratory confirmed and notified the Center for Disease Control (CDC) of the case. The individual is a male in his 20s who is currently in isolation in Arapahoe County and has no travel history. Another possible variant case has been identified and this person is in isolation in Lincoln County. Both individuals were members of the Colorado National Guard and were working at a nursing home with a COVID-19 outbreak.

Public health officials are doing a thorough investigation. The individual who tested positive for the COVID variant is recovering in isolation and will remain there until cleared by public health officials. The individual has no close contacts identified so far, but public health officials are working to identify other potential cases and contacts through thorough contact tracing interviews.

"There is a lot we don't know

about this new COVID-19 variant, but scientists in the United Kingdom are warning the world that it is significantly more contagious. The health and safety of Coloradans is our top priority and we will closely monitor this

case, as well as all COVID-19 indicators, very closely. We are working to prevent spread and contain the virus at all levels," said Governor Jared Polis. "I want to thank our scientists and dedicated medical professionals for their swift work and ask Coloradans to continue our efforts to prevent disease transmission by wearing masks, standing 6 feet apart when gathering with others, and only interacting with members of their immediate household. Masks are 50-75% effective against contraction and vaccinations are 95% effective."

The Colorado state lab was the first in the country to quickly identify the variant through sophisticated analysis of testing samples. The lab initially performed the diagnostic PCR test on the sample and found that the sample was positive for COVID-19 with strong signals for the N gene and ORF1ab (both are detected when a person has

COVID-19), but the signal for the S gene was not detected. When the S gene doesn't register in the testing, it is called an "S Drop Out Profile," and it is considered an essential signature for the variant. The sample was flagged for further investigation. Scientists then sequenced the viral genome from the patient sample and found eight mutations specific to the spike protein gene associated with this variant. Genome sequencing is a molecular profiling of the entire viral RNA sequence.

Scientists in the United Kingdom believe the B.1.1.7 variant to be more contagious than previously identified strains of the SARS-CoV-2 variant, though no more severe in symptoms. Health officials warn that the new variant is believed to be 50-70% more transmissible. In addition, the currently approved vaccines are thought to be effective against this variant.

"The fact that Colorado has detected this variant first in the nation is a testament to the sophistication of Colorado's response and the talent of CD-PHE's scientist and lab operations," said Jill Hunsaker Ryan, executive director, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. "We are currently using all the tools available to protect public health and mitigate the spread of this variant."

New variant is believed to be 50-70% more transmissible

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Local donkey sanctuary saves lives

By LYNDIE FERRELL
SOUTH FORK- Hidden in the foothills of the South Fork area is a special place for wandering burros of all shapes and sizes. Little do the residents of the Valley know, the Forever Home Donkey Rescue has been healing, loving and comforting donkeys for the past three years as a satellite location for the larger operation that is located in Benson, Arizona.

Linda Childs and her husband first became involved with the Forever Home Donkey Rescue in Benson, Arizona during an annual birthday trip to the location in 2016. "I am a huge animal lover so every year for my birthday, my husband takes me to different animal sanctuaries and in 2016, it happened to be the Forever Home Donkey Rescue. We fell in love with what the owners Don and Tish Hiestand were doing, and everything just seemed to fall into place," said Childs.

Childs stated that after they returned to their home in South Fork, it wasn't long before local Creede Veterinarian Doc Howard told her that she loved donkeys enough that she needed her own herd. Just after the conversation with Howard, Childs and her husband saw an ad in a local classified listing for a donkey looking for a new home. "This was a dream come true for us and we wanted to do something to help so we opened the satellite location here in South Fork and we bring donkeys that are well enough to travel up for the summer months and bring them back down to Arizona in the winter."

Childs explained that most of the donkey's range in ages three to 40 years in age and have a variety of ailments including obesity. "Most of the donkeys we get are obese. A lot of owners typically surrender their donkeys because of old age, believe it or not, donkeys have a tendency to out live their owners when taken care of or people who can't financially take care of the animals anymore. Each donkey comes with their own unique stories."

Childs and her burros participate in events throughout the Valley

including parades and pack burro racing. "This gives us the unique opportunity to introduce what we do to the public and the donkey's love it. We really enjoy what we do and we do it for the animals."

Childs also helps owners that need assistance with training and handling. "Most people get a donkey and think that they can be trained and handled like a horse. That is not always the case and we are more than happy to come out and help owners with their animals. We teach handling techniques and feeding habits. We also network with other sanctuaries throughout the area to make sure every donkey gets what they need. They are amazing animals, and you wouldn't believe the number of donkeys we have in the Colorado, New Mexico and Arizona regions."

Forever Home Donkey rescue also works closely with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in their donkey program. "We have donkeys that are sometimes born in the wild and then trained through an inmate program with BLM. Once the donkeys pass training, they come to us for rehoming."

The sanctuary works with all of their animals and as long as they are young enough, healthy enough and social enough, they look for new homes. "We want people to be ready to accept a donkey so there is on-site visits and an adoption application, but we work with owners who want to make a donkey part of their lives. They are such diverse, amazing animals."

During the summer months and depending on COVID restrictions, the South Fork Satellite location does on-site tours by reservation only for those who may be looking to make a visit this coming summer. The sanctuary also always accepts donations and is typically in need of halters, lead ropes, fly masks and supplies for their donkey first aid kits. More information about the Forever Home Donkey rescue can be found on their website at www.foreverhomedonkey.com or through their Facebook page under Forever Home Donkey Rescue.



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		2	7				8	
			8		6	3		

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Solution to last week's puzzle

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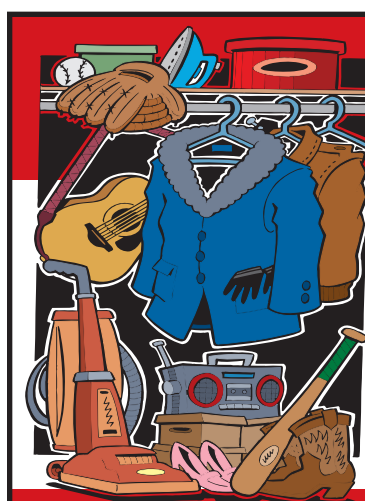
Marketing Assistant-Rio Grande County Tourism Board is seeking bids for part-time Tourism Assistant in marketing for Rio Grande County to ensure potential visitors are seeing the latest and most relevant information about Rio Grande County. Individual would be responsible for working with the board on all aspects of Marketing including both print and online media. Individual is also responsible for attending monthly meetings and preparing various reports for the board as well. Applicants must have previous marketing including but not limited to print ads and social media. The board is asking for a cover letter, resume, and examples of work. **Please submit bid packets to Rio Grande County Tourism Board, 925 6th Street, Room 207, Del Norte, CO 81132. Bid packets must be submitted by 12:00PM on Friday, January 15, 2021. (1/20)**

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on the envelope by January 15, 2021 at 3:00 PM to: Saguache County, Attention: Wendi Maez, County Administrator, PO Box 100, Saguache, CO 81149. For questions please contact Wendi Maez, County Administrator at 719-655-2231 or you may email your questions to wmaez@saguachecounty-co.gov.(01/21)

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Ice fishing bite is on in western end of Valley

By LYNDIE FERRELL

SAN LUIS VALLEY- There are many things to do in the San Juan Mountain Range that lies on the western edge of the San Luis Valley and many anglers look to the winter months for some of the best fishing of the year. Though some destination lakes, ponds and reservoirs are only accessible with snowmobiles or cross-country skiing, others offer easy access and a great opportunity to get the fishing poles out even though the Valley is in the midst of winter.

According to Aquatic Biologist Estevan Vigil with Colorado Parks and Wildlife, this year is expected to be pretty normal as far as ice fishing in the area goes. "We haven't received a lot of reports about the fishing conditions yet as many of the bodies of water are only now frozen enough to access, but past years indicate that we will have a fairly normal ice fishing season until things slow down later in the winter."

Vigil explained that right now is the time to get out and hit the ice especially at Beaver Creek Reservoir which is a favorite among winter anglers. "Beaver Creek and Minion reservoirs are located just outside of South Fork and are great locations to ice fish. Fishing is pretty consistent at Beaver Creek, plus it is easily accessible for the average angler wanting to get out and hit the ice. The reservoir was stocked with Kokanee salmon three years ago so populations should be up. It being early in the season there is still a good chance to catch a salmon until later in the winter when fish slow down and are not as active."

Another reservoir that is only accessible via snowmobile or cross-country skiing but has good ice fishing is Big Meadows. The reservoir is frozen, but caution is always advised when participating in winter fishing or any



outdoor recreational activities. "There is usually decent fishing at Big Meadows, but the road is closed to regular traffic and those venturing into the area with snowmobiles should use caution, be aware of surroundings and is for more experienced anglers."

Pass Creek Pond is another easily accessible location that sits

just off Highway 160 on Wolf Creek Pass just below the Wolf Creek Ski Resort. "I have a friend that fishes Pass Creek Pond every year and always says the fishing is good. AS I have said before, with it being early in the season, fish should be active and hungry."

As anglers head up toward the Creede and Mineral County area,

they will have luck at the Road Canyon Reservoir, which is easily accessible and a great place to get out on the ice. Snow in the immediate area is on the rise and local Rio Grande National Forest officials caution drivers to be sure they can get in and out when traveling on several roads.

Another area favorite is not

available this year. Rio Hondo Reservoir has been drained in preparation for dam repair later this coming summer. "From reports I am hearing the reservoir has no water in it. We are repairing the dam for safety reasons and hopefully will have the reservoir filled back up as soon as work has been completed."

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THE CONJOS COUNTY CITIZEN

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Saguache resident remains identified

CONEJOS COUNTY — The second set of human remains located on a Conejos County property in November has been identified.

A Forensic Odonatologist assisting task force investigators identified the second set of the human remains recovered as Shayla Jenna Hammel (11/3/86) of Saguache. Hammel was reported missing to the Saguache County Sheriff's Office on Nov. 26, 2020. A family member reported they had not been in contact with Ms. Hammel since late October.

Investigators contacted the family of Ms. Hammel to make the official notification of her death.

The task force has not determined the cause and manner of death; however, investigators believe foul play was involved.

With the remains of Ms. Hammel identified, members of the task force are currently working to determine the circumstances surrounding her death. Adre Baroz, who is currently being held in the Alamosa County Jail on unrelated charges, has not been charged in the death of Ms. Hammel. Law enforcement cannot comment on any other specific information or connection to the remains found in Conejos County due the status of the active investigation. Work continues to identify the other set of human remains located in Conejos



County in November.

Anyone with information about Ms. Hammel or the other unidentified human remains located in Conejos County is asked to call a designated tip line at 719-270-0210. There have been more than 60 tips reported since last month.

A Forensic Odonatologist identified the first set of the human remains recovered as Myron Robert Martinez (DOB: 11/15/1982) of Del Norte earlier this month.

No further updates will be provided, as this remains an active investigation. The charges against Mr. Baroz are merely an accusation and he is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

Poncha Pass crash results in fatality

SAGUACHE COUNTY- The Colorado State Patrol is investigating a two vehicle crash on Highway 285, milepost 119, at the summit of Poncha Pass, which resulted in one fatality.

At approximately 12:05 p.m. Dec. 29, 2020, a black 2019 Dodge Durango was northbound on Highway 285. A red 2006 Dodge Ram 2500 was southbound on Highway 285. The Durango lost control and began to rotate counterclockwise. The Durango crossed the center line into the southbound lanes. The Durango struck the Ram's front with its right

side. The Durango came to rest on its wheels on the southbound white line. The Ram came to rest on its wheels off the southbound edge of the highway.

The driver of the Durango was pronounced deceased on scene. The two juvenile passengers of the Durango were transported to Heart of the Rockies with serious injuries. The driver and passenger of the Ram were transported to Heart of the Rockies with serious injuries.

The crash is still under investigation by the Colorado State Patrol Vehicular Crimes Unit.

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Photo by Tyler Schmidt

Del Norte resident killed in crash on Wolf Creek pass

MINERAL COUNTY- The Colorado State Patrol investigated a two vehicle crash on Highway 160 at Mile Post 179.3. The crash occurred in Mineral County at the bottom of Wolf Creek pass.

At approximately 5:14 a.m. Christmas Day, Vehicle #1, a 2008 Ford F350, driven by Ernesto Velaquez, 48, of Del Norte Colorado was westbound on Colorado 160 at a high rate of speed. Vehicle #2, a 2018 Kenworth truck tractor and semitractor-trailer driven by Arturo Romeo, 55, of Commerce City Colorado and front seat passenger Desiree Van Hartesrett, 53, of Commerce City Colorado, was eastbound on Colorado 160. Vehicle #1 traveled into the eastbound lane to negotiate the curve. The driver of Vehicle #1 lost control of the vehicle and began to rotate counterclockwise. Vehicle #1 traveled back across the westbound lane out of control before traveling off

the north side of the roadway. Vehicle #1 then traveled westbound off the northside of the roadway, along the ditch and embankment, striking several rocks and a delineator post, before striking a large boulder with the front of Vehicle #1. After striking the large boulder Vehicle #1 rotated clockwise coming back onto the roadway, rolling one-half time and, rotating 180 degrees striking the front of Vehicle #2 with the driver's side of vehicle #1. Vehicle #1 rotated back counterclockwise coming to final rest on its top facing east. Vehicle #2 was almost stopped when it was struck by vehicle #1. Vehicle #2 came to final rest on its wheels facing east.

Driver of Vehicle #1 Ernesto Velaquez died on scene as a result of the injuries he sustained from the crash. Arturo Romeo and Desiree Van Hartesrett in Vehicle #2 were not injured.

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