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# Valley Courier

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LOCAL NEWS... LOCAL VIEWS

MAY 20, 2020

\$1

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SLV Today

## Graduation information

ALAMOSA — Schools of the San Luis Valley, please submit the details of your 2020 graduation to the Valley Courier to help get the word out to family and friends on how they can safely view their seniors finalize their high school experience.

## SCSD kindergarten

ANTONITO — South Conejos School District will have preschool and kindergarten registration on May 20th from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm at 13099 County RD G in Antonito. Guardians are asked to bring immunization records and a birth certificate for their child. For more information call 719-376-7001.



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SLV WEATHER



Sunny/Windy 76/30

Thurs: Mostly Sunny 73/31

Fri: Partly Cloudy 77/37

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## Second valley outbreak adds to cumulative case count total

### SLV Emergency Daily COVID-19 update

SAN LUIS VALLEY — Tuesday, including results returned from the outbreak in Center, there is now a total number of positive cases for the SLV of 106. Sixteen of those cases were hospitalized, and 32 have completed isolation. County case counts and other San Luis Valley data are updated weekdays at [slvemergency.org/slv-covid-19](http://slvemergency.org/slv-covid-19).

Public health agencies in Rio Grande County and Saguache County

continue to follow up on the outbreak at the Mountain King Spud Growers potato warehouse facility in Center. An outbreak is defined as two or more positive COVID cases in a workplace or other non-household facility or group. Valley-Wide Health Systems collaborated to support employee testing. So far 25 positive test results have been received related to this outbreak. Those results will affect overall COVID-19 case counts in Saguache, Rio Grande, and Alamosa Counties. Mountain King has decided to voluntarily close the facility for an additional 14 days for

cleaning, as well as to encourage needed isolation and quarantine to prevent further spread of the virus. Employees who have tested positive should be isolating themselves from others. Household members and other close

contacts of those who have tested positive should also self-quarantine at home. Those in isolation and those in quarantine should not leave home for any reason except to seek medical care as directed by their medical provider.

### Reopening the SLV:

It has now been a few weeks since our first non-essential businesses reopened and both the public and business owners have started adjusting to this new phase.

See COVID page 3

## SLV Small Business is ready for action



Courier photo

The SLV Small Business Coalition stands behind Representative Don Valdez (front left) and Senator Larry Crowder (front right) figuratively and literally. More than 25 small business owners and their spouses showed up to Cole Park on Tuesday to film a video to raise awareness about the problems small business owners face in this unprecedented crisis. Look for the video to be released Thursday on the SLVSB's Facebook page @slvbusinesscoalition.

## Two counties receive variance on state orders

By KEITH R. CERNY

Courier Publisher

VALLEY— Both Rio Grande and Mineral counties are among the early recipients of a variance request on specific sections of the latest public health order from the state, "Safer at Home," related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Variances were submitted to and considered by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

Emily Brown, director of the Rio Grande County Public Health Department, announced Tuesday that the variance will allow specific types of businesses to reopen with specific restrictions including restaurants, gyms, places of worship and RV parks. All four

areas will be allowed 30 percent capacity.

Mineral County's variance request filed on May 7th specified restaurants and places of worship reopening with guidelines but did not include bars. Restaurants will be allowed to sell alcohol with food/meal orders only, and take-out and delivery are still highly encouraged.

Creede places of worship are encouraged to continue online services as much as possible and when offering on-site services to operate with strict physical distancing practices, separating families by at least six feet.

Non-essential travel to and from Mineral County is still being discouraged and notice has been made to appropriate property owners prohibiting short-

term vacation rentals for less than 30 days for non-essential workers. Hotels, guest ranches and B&Bs were given specific guidelines per local, state and federal health recommendations.

In Rio Grande County, the CDPHE specifies that the variance can be rescinded if positive tests exceed 10 percent of overall tests conducted. The number of active positive cases

for investigation cannot exceed 10 at one time and the use of COVID-19 hospital beds available in the valley does not exceed 60 percent.

Brown's email notice to the Rio Grande community specified that employees must still wear facial coverings, provide accommodations to support vulnerable employees and customers, maintain physical distancing and

monitor for symptoms, etc.

"Please -- remember we are still under the Colorado 'Safer at Home' Order," Brown wrote. "In order to protect our community and to continue to allow businesses to operate safely for you and their employees, please follow local and state guidance, as well as practicing the common sense and generosity for others that I know this County possesses."

## COVID-19 Rapid Response and Recovery Fund launched to aid small businesses and nonprofits in rural Colorado

ALAMOSA — In partnership with ZOMA Foundation, Catena Foundation, and Gates Family Foundation, nonprofit First Southwest Community Fund (FSWCF) is establishing a \$3 million COVID-19 Rapid Response & Recovery Loan Fund to offer affordable loans to rural businesses and nonprofits affected by the COVID-19 crisis, with the goal to protect jobs and invest in our communities in the short, medium and long-term.

"We are seeing an immediate need in our rural communities for access to capital to cope with the crisis situation and recovery efforts," said Cass Walker, FSWCF Executive Director. "We're thrilled to partner with ZOMA Foundation, Catena Foundation and Gates Family Foundation to help rural Colorado have

access to the flexible and affordable capital it needs right now."

The fund will expand access to loans with deferred interest and low-fixed interest rates thereafter, similar to state and federal relief programs. Businesses can apply for loans from \$10,000 to \$100,000 at a 3.5% interest rate, for a 7-year term, and payments will be deferred for the first six months. Capital can be used for working capital and operating funds. The loan fund will serve all of rural Colorado, with a focus on the Southwest and Southern counties. The fund is open to for-profits and nonprofits, with a focus on those who are having difficulties accessing traditional financing including industries highly-affected by COVID-19; businesses providing essential services to their

communities; women, minority, and veteran-owned businesses; businesses creating impact through job creation and retention, and businesses with environmentally sustainable practices.

"Small and medium businesses are the lifeblood of rural communities across Colorado. It is critical they have access to working capital to manage this crisis and build resiliency long-term," said Ben Walton, co-founder of the ZOMA Foundation. "FSWCF has been a long-time champion, highly engaged with rural Colorado communities in economic development and job growth efforts. We're excited to partner with them again to swiftly meet the urgent needs of more businesses statewide."

"Small businesses are the engines of Colorado's rural economies, yet too

often these owners have little to no access to capital to weather financial storms," said Sue Dorsey, Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration at Gates Family Foundation. "This Fund will get low-cost, flexible capital flowing to Colorado's rural communities, and we are excited to collaborate with FSWCF, Zoma, and Catena to help ensure small busi-

nesses can survive and ultimately thrive through this crisis."

The Rapid Response and Recovery Fund is supported by ZOMA Foundation, Catena Foundation and Gates Family Foundation and will launch with \$3 million in capital. For more information please visit [www.fswcf.org/covid-19](http://www.fswcf.org/covid-19). Other funders interested in partnering on this fund, or creating



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OBITUARIES

Harold Gilbert Skinner



ALAMOSA — The Reverend Harold Gilbert Skinner age 92 of Hickory North Carolina passed away Friday, May 8, 2020, with his loving wife Nancy by his side.

1, 1953. Harold and Nancy moved to Chicago where he received his Masters in Divinity from Chicago Lutheran Theological Seminary in 1956 and was ordained as a Lutheran pastor on June 10, 1956, by the North Carolina Synod.

from 1956-1958. He was pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in Cañon City, CO and was the first manager of Rainbow Trail Lutheran Camp in Hillside, CO from 1958-1962.

The family moved to Greenville, SC where he served as pastor of St. Michael Lutheran Church from 1962-1973.

From 1973- to 1982 Harold was pastor of Wittenberg Lutheran Church and Director of Karl W. Kinard Conference Center in Leesville, SC.

South Carolina Lutheran Synod Executive Committee and two terms on the North Carolina Lutheran Synod Council. He was a delegate to two National Church Conventions and served as District Dean in the South Carolina Synod and Conference Dean in the North Carolina Synod.

He and Nancy retired to Hickory, NC, returning to live near their beloved Lenoir-Rhyne College where they attended countless football and basketball games, music

concerts and plays. He and Nancy were very active in the Lenoir-Rhyne College Alumni Association, serving as national co-chairs of the Annual Fund. They were both conferred the Trustee Award of Lenoir-Rhyne on August 5, 2005.

Survivors include his wife of 66 years, Nancy Foil Skinner; daughter Elizabeth Skinner (Chris Wilmot) of New York City; son David Skinner (Fae) of

Dallas, TX; and son Mark Skinner (Lou Ann Cheslock Skinner) of Alamosa, CO. He is also survived by a former American Field Service Exchange Student from Sweden, Maja Jansson Åberg (Christer & children Magda and Simon) of Säffle, Sweden and a nephew and three nieces.

He was preceded in death by his parents, his sister Ellen Rogers, and two brothers, Edgar D. Skinner & Clarence G. Skinner. A celebration of his life will occur at a future date.

Memorials may be given to The Rev. Harold G. and Nancy Foil Skinner Endowment Fund, Lenoir-Rhyne University, Hickory, NC.

Mary Louise Espinoza



SANFORD — Mary Louise Espinoza, 78, passed away May 17, 2020, at her home with her loving family by her side. Mary was born on January 10, 1942, in La Jara, Colorado, the daughter of Venceslao Gonzales and Estella Valerio Gonzales.

Survivors include her husband Julian Espinoza of Sanford, CO; daughters Loretta Espinoza of Sanford, CO; Julie Espinoza of Alamosa, CO; Kathy Sutphen of

Denver, CO; sons Steve (Monica) Espinoza of Carmel District, CO; Allen (Jeanette) Espinoza of Pueblo, CO; Edwin Espinoza of Sanford, CO; Daniel (Lorraine) Espinoza of San Antonio, CO; Julian (Dee Ann) Espinoza Jr., of La Jara, CO; 19 grandchildren, 16 great-grandchildren, sisters Eleanor Cruz, Bar-

bara Gonzales, Pauline (Lawrence) Candelaria all of Capulin, CO; brothers Venceslao (Margaret) Gonzales of Romeo, CO; Dennis Gonzales of Capulin, CO; Gene (Stephanie) Gonzales of Beloit, WS. She is also survived by numerous nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

Mary was preceded in death by her parents Estella and Venceslao Gonzales, siblings Marie Quintana, Theresa Gonzales, Asisclo Gonzales and Joseph Gonzales.

Cremation was chosen and a private family service will be held at a later date. To leave online condolences please visit romerofuneralhomes.com. The care of arrangements has been entrusted to Romero Funeral Home of Alamosa.

Blanca Olivia Garcia-Flores



MONTE VISTA — Blanca Olivia Garcia-Flores, 51, passed away May 16, 2020, at her home under Hospice Care surrounded by her loving family. Blanca was born on February 28, 1969, in Chihuahua, Mexico, the daughter of Gregorio Garcia and Delfina Flores-Garcia.

mother Delfina Flores of Chihuahua, MX; sons Luis (Jayne) Ramos, Hector Ramos (Angela Ortiz) both of Monte Vista, CO; granddaughter Camila Ortiz of Monte Vista, CO; sis-

ters Georgina (Esteban) Beltran of Monte Vista, CO; Lupilla Garcia of Chihuahua, MX; brother Gregorio (Alicia) Garcia of Chihuahua, MX. She is also survived by numerous nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

Blanca was preceded in death by her father Gregorio Garcia.

A private family service will be held at a later date. To leave online condolences please visit romerofuneralhomes.com. The care of arrangements has been entrusted to Romero Funeral Home of Monte Vista.

Robert Dee Myers

DELNORTE — Robert Dee Myers, 91, of Del Norte, CO died March 14, 2020.

Robert, better known to the community as Bob was born September 7, 1928, in Monte Vista, CO to Dee Archie Myers and Nell Eurica (Mellott). He spent most of his grade school years in Summitville and then graduated from Del Norte High School.

They married May 14th, 1949 in Santa Fe, NM and were able to celebrate their 70th anniversary before Norma passed away. Bob had many talents that included: Mechanic at the Car Dealership in Del Norte, Master

Electrician, Farmer/Rancher, State Electrical Inspector, dude ranch wrangler at Sky Hi Dude Ranch near Creede, CO, plus helping to raise 5 children. He worked 2 jobs most of his life to help support this family.

His favorite of these jobs was the cattle ranching where he rode horses and checked on cattle in the pastures and on the range. He always had a story for family and friends about his life either in Summitville, the dude ranch or on the home place.

He and Norma were graceful dancers in their younger days and the kids enjoyed watching them when they had

a chance. He was an avid reader until his eyesight failed enough that he was unable to continue that hobby. He was president of the San Luis Valley Cattlemen's Association and was awarded the honor of

Outstanding Cowboy of the Year in 1993. He also was a member of the Knights of Pythias, Del Norte Chapter.

Robert (Bob) is survived by his children: Myrna Patterson, of Albuquerque NM, Sharon Furukawa (Dave) of Alamosa, CO, Myron (Jennifer), of Monte Vista, CO, Ric (Diane) of Monte Vista, CO, and Dale (Janice) of Monte Vista, CO. Grandchildren include Jennifer Patterson, Alicia

(Bryan) Vigil, Rebecca (Nicolas) Baca, Tiffany (Dan) Carson, Curt (Annie) Furukawa,

Courtney Furukawa, J.D. (Audra) Myers, Denton (Jessie) Myers, Craig (Stephanie) Myers, Kelli (Michael) Jennings, Scott (Erin Rose) Myers, 21 great-grandchildren, three great-great-grandchildren.

Bob is preceded in death by his wife: Norma Myers, and his parents: Dee & Nell, his sister: Elizabeth McIntire and infant brother, Dale.

A celebration of life will be announced at a later date.

Arrangements in care of Strohmayer's Funeral Home.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS MEETINGS

VALLEY — The San Luis Valley offers many Alcoholics Anonymous groups. A.A. members' primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

Following are District 3 San Luis Valley AA 12-Step Meetings. The 6th Tradition states that we are not affiliated with any outside organizations, but in the spirit of cooperation, we list these meeting schedules for friends and family. For information, call 719-937-5083.

SUNDAY 5:30 p.m. Sacred Heart Parish Center at 3rd and Edison, Alamosa 7 p.m. Town Hall at 108 W Galena Ave., Crestone

MONDAY 12 p.m. St. Thomas Episcopal Hall at 607 4th St., Alamosa 5 p.m. Women's Meeting at Masonic Hall, 598 Spruce St., Del Norte 7 p.m. Community Church on Main St., Creede 7:30 p.m. Creative Resource Center at 304 Walnut St., La

TUESDAY 12 p.m. First Christian Church at 1st and State, Alamosa 8 p.m. Mountain View Presbyterian Church at 2nd and Broadway, Monte Vista

WEDNESDAY 12 p.m. First United Methodist Church at 2005 Mullens, Alamosa 6 p.m. Senior Citizen's Building at 710 Main St., Antonito

6 p.m. Amistad of San Luis at 403 Main St., San Luis 7:15 p.m. RV Park in Blanca 7:30 p.m. Masonic Hall at 598 Spruce, Del Norte. 8 p.m. St. Thomas Episcopal Church at 607 4th St., Alamosa.

THURSDAY 12 p.m. First Christian Church at 1st and State, Alamosa 12 p.m. Crestone Baptist Church, County Rd. T, Crestone 7 p.m. Community Church on Main St., Creede 7:30 p.m. Creative Resource Center at 304 Walnut St., La Jara.

7:30 p.m. Ables/Disables, Baptist Church at 751 Lincoln St., Monte Vista

FRIDAY 7 p.m. Sacred Heart School at 3rd and Edison, Alamosa.

SATURDAY 5:30 pm. at 929 State Ave., Alamosa

6 p.m. Senior Citizen's Building at 710 Main St., Antonito. 8 p.m. Mountain View Presbyterian Church at 2nd and Broadway, Monte Vista

For schedule changes, please contact your group service representative (GSR)

AL-ANON

TUESDAY 8 p.m. 15 Country Club Dr. Monte Vista WEDNESDAY 5:30 p.m. SLV Behavior Health Group at 8745 CR 9S., Alamosa

THURSDAY 5:30 p.m. First Christian Church at 518 1st St., Alamosa 7 p.m. Crestone Town Hall, downtown Crestone (second and fourth Thursdays)

ONGOING VALLEY MEETINGS

ALAMOSA — The San Luis Valley Military Family Support Group meets the fourth Tuesday at 7 p.m. in Alamosa. For more info call Vicki Jones at 852-3123.

ALAMOSA — Sierra Blanca Chapter #43, Order of The Eastern Star, meets on the first and third Mondays, at 7:30 p.m. at the Alamosa Masonic Hall, 512 San Juan Ave. Call Sharon at 589-4320.

ALAMOSA — La Leche League of the San Luis Valley holds its monthly meetings on the fourth Saturday at 11 a.m. at Hospice del Valle, 524 Main St. in Alamosa. Pregnant and nursing women are welcome to attend with their children and babies. Please call 587-3657.

ALAMOSA — The Alamosa Kiwanis Club meets on the second, third and fourth Thursdays at noon at IHOP. Contact: Amanda Wilkinson, 719-589-2564 or email amanda@alamosastatebank.com

ALAMOSA — The Optimist Club of Alamosa meets at Nino's Restaurant in Alamosa the first and third Tuesdays at noon. Contact the club at alamosaoptimistclub@gmail.com or President Dawn Melgares at 719-

580-0178. Visitors and new members are welcome.

ALAMOSA — The Alamosa Rotary Club meets every Monday at noon at Juanitos in Alamosa. Contact Dean Swift, 589-3499 or dean@deanswiftseed.com

ALAMOSA — Veterans Therapeutic/Support Group meets every Monday from 5-6:30 p.m. at 315 State Ave. Ste 101, Alamosa. Call 588-8885 to register or email d.counselingservices@hotmail.com

SOUTH FORK — Kiwanis meets every Thursday at 8 a.m. at the Feelin' Good Coffeehouse in South Fork. Contact: Karen Miller, 719-873-5466 or email mkmiller-mink@aol.com

ALAMOSA — The Alzheimer's Caregiver's Support Group meets on the second Thursday from 11 a.m. to noon. at the Alamosa Public Library, 300 Hunt Ave. Call the Southern Colorado office at 719-544-5720, ext. 304.

ALAMOSA — TOPS (Taking Off Pounds Sensibly) CO 568, Alamosa, a non-profit weight loss organization, meets every Tuesday evening at the College Heights Baptist Church at 2035

Church Avenue in Alamosa. Weigh-in is at 5:30 p.m. with an informative meeting at 6:15. Anyone interested in having weight loss support is welcome to attend a free meeting or call Doris at 589-6396 for more information.

ALAMOSA — Search and Rescue meetings are the fourth Tuesday at the Alamosa County Sheriff's Office, 1315 17th St., at 6 p.m. Anyone interested in becoming a volunteer is welcome. Call Suzi at 719-588-9236.

School Menu - Wednesday - May 20, 2020

NO SCHOOL School Bus illustration

COVID-19 To sponsor the School Menu call 589-2553

# Valley News

## David Tandberg appointed to Adams State Trustees Board

ALAMOSA — Colorado Gov. Jared Polis has appointed Thornton resident and Adams State alumnus David A. Tandberg to the Board of Trustees for Adams State University. He will fill the seat held by Cleave Simpson, who resigned from the board as of June 12, 2020. Tandberg was appointed to the board for a two-year term expiring December 31, 2022, which is the remaining time of Trustee Simpson's term.

Tandberg, Senior Vice President of Policy Research and Strategic Initiatives at State Higher Education Executive Officers Association, earned a Bachelor of Arts from Adams State,

in 2002. While a student, he was elected President of Adams State's Student Government and was a member of Adams State cross-country team under Coach Vigil. He is excited to give back to his alma mater. "My entire professional career has its roots in the incredible experience I had as a student at Adams State. I hope to use my time and experience working within and studying higher education to bring some value to the board and to assist my fellow board members in helping guide the institution through this unprecedented, challenging time."

Tandberg joined SHEEO in July 2016. He leads

SHEEO's policy evaluation and research initiatives and SHEEO's efforts to connect empirical research to state practice and policy. He also helps lead SHEEO's strategic direction and partnerships. He is the lead editor of a book dedicated to the investigation of the state higher education executive officer that was published July 2018 by Teachers College Press.

Previously, Dr. Tandberg served as an associate professor of higher education and an associate director of the Center for Postsecondary Success at Florida State University. As an academic researcher, his research was published in numer-

ous peer-reviewed outlets. Before joining Florida State University, Tandberg served as a special assistant to the secretary of education in the Pennsylvania Department of Education, focused on postsecondary policy development and implementation.

Board of Trustee Chair Michele Lueck said she is "pleased to welcome (back) Dr. Tandberg to Adams State and looks forward to tapping his extensive expertise in higher education to assist the Board in guiding the University."

Tandberg earned a master's in political science and a Ph.D. in higher education from Penn State University.



Photo courtesy of ASU David Tandberg

## Stage 2 fire restrictions initiated on Rio Grande National Forest

MONTEVISTA — The Rio Grande National Forest is initiating Stage 2 fire restrictions beginning May 20. The low snowpack and warm temperatures have created unusually dry conditions for this time of year within the San Luis Valley.

These restrictions are a slight change from the regional fire restrictions initiated on April 17, which are being rescinded on May 20.

Stage 2 fire restrictions prohibit:

1. Igniting, building, maintaining, attending or using a fire, including fires in developed recreation sites (campgrounds and picnic areas), charcoal grills and barbecues, coal and wood-burning stoves, and shepherd-er's stoves.
2. Smoking, except within an enclosed vehicle, trailer, or building.
3. Blasting, welding, or operating acetylene or other torches with open flame.
4. Operating or using any internal combustion engine without an effective and properly installed USDA- or Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE)- approved spark arrester.
5. Operating a chainsaw without an effective and properly installed USDA- or SAE- approved spark arrester, a chemical pressurized fire extin-



guisher (with a minimum of 8 oz. capacity and rating of 2A) kept with the operator and a round point shovel with an overall length of at least 35 inches readily available for use.

6. Using an explosive. This includes but is not limited to fuses, blasting caps, fireworks, rockets, exploding targets, tracers, and incendiary ammunition.

7. Possessing or using a motor vehicle off established roads, motorized trails or established parking areas, except when parking in an area devoid of vegetation within 10 feet of the vehicle.

As a reminder, the use of explosives and incendiary devices, including fireworks, are prohibited year-round on all federal lands.

For more information, contact the Rio Grande National Forest at (719) 480-3364. Please also follow us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/USFSRGNF](http://www.facebook.com/USFSRGNF) and Twitter [twitter.com/RioGrandeUSFS](http://twitter.com/RioGrandeUSFS).

## COVID

Continued from Page 1

Many businesses are working hard to keep their workplaces healthy for customers and their staff, and more people have returned to work. In the coming weeks, we anticipate seeing more gradual re-openings. The Great Sand Dunes National Park in Alamosa County announced they will begin a phased reopening on June 3rd. On May 25th, the State will decide if restaurants can begin reopening and at what level. In June, the State will decide what additional things can be phased back in. In the meantime, the State is continuing to review proposals submitted by Colorado counties to vary from the Governor's Safer-at-Home Order, primarily seeking looser restrictions. So far, four counties in the SLV have submitted variances, and two have been approved.

### Why submit a variance?

Many local communities in Colorado, particularly rural areas, differ greatly in their economic dynamics from the Front Range or from the state as a whole. What works best for them is not necessarily what will work best for us. Local governments have the freedom to implement rules that are more restrictive than the state order, but loosening restrictions requires a formal variance approved by the state. Each County considers the risks and benefits inherent in applying for looser restrictions, including the at-risk populations living there, as well as the economic consequences of keeping businesses closed. Some counties decide that a variance is in the best

interest, and decide to pursue a variance.

### How does the variance process work?

County governments determine the requirements necessary to meet goals that balance the risk of disease exposure with economic recovery. If the decision is to pursue a variance from the current statewide orders, it is drafted, reviewed by the County Attorney, and submitted to the State. Certain criteria need to be met before approval by the State:

The jurisdiction needs to have very low case counts and/or demonstrate proof of 14 consecutive days of decline of infection of COVID-19 in the jurisdiction.

The application must include a written COVID-19 suppression plan approved by the appropriate local public health authority, all hospitals within the jurisdiction and elected leadership.

More information on the variance process can be found here: <http://ccionline.org/health-and-human-services/resources-for-counties/>

### What about the SLV variances?

Currently, Mineral County and Rio Grande County have approved variances. Today, Rio Grande County Public Health released a new Order in line with the variance. The variance is specific for RV parks, places of worship, restaurants, and gyms, and each has a separate set of restrictions which must be met. These entities may now open at a specified capacity, but that may change if a certain data threshold is reached in the future,

## SLV COVID-19

These cases have been identified by public health agencies as of 5:30 p.m. on May 19, 2020. All numbers are cumulative. If there are discrepancies between these numbers and those showing on the state's data website, use these local numbers.

### 106 SLV POSITIVE CASES

- Alamosa County - 48
- Conejos County - 1
- Costilla County - 4
- Mineral County - 2
- Rio Grande County - 14
- Saguache County - 37

### 16 HOSPITALIZED

### 32 ISOLATION COMPLETED

These are SLV positive cases that have completed their isolation period and have been free of symptoms for more than 72 hours.

### 2 DEATHS

### 681 TOTAL TESTS

Total number of diagnostic test samples submitted as of May 18. This number is cumulative and is provided

as determined by the Rio Grande County Board of Health. The full text can be found on their website: [www.rgcpd.org](http://www.rgcpd.org). Alamosa and Saguache Counties have also submitted variances and these are still being reviewed by the State.

### More on Testing:

Yesterday Governor Polis emphasized the expanded availability of testing in Colorado. In the San Luis Valley, public health and local partners have determined that the most efficient way to do testing for the general public is through our local health care providers. The State's map for testing sites omits our local providers in the

SLV, and we are working to correct that omission. Earlier in the pandemic, supplies were more limited and the criteria for testing was much more restrictive than it is now. Symptomatic individuals are encouraged to call one of the nurse-lines below to start the screening process.

Rio Grande Hospital 719-657-4990  
SLV Health Nurse Line 719-589-2511 ext. 9  
Valley-Wide Health Systems 719-589-3658 ext. 9

SLV COVID general questions 719-480-8719. You may also email your questions to [slevepr@alamosacounty.org](mailto:slevepr@alamosacounty.org).

## SLV graduation details



### Centennial

Date: May 23  
Time: 11 a.m.  
Location: Centennial High parking lot  
Details: The actual graduation ceremony has been postponed until a later date, but the school still wanted to celebrate seniors' accomplishments. So, on May 23, they will have a parade.

### Center

Date: August 1  
Time: 10 a.m.  
Location: Center High school gym

### Creede

May 21 • 7 p.m. • Star Drive-In, Monte Vista  
Date: May 21  
Time: 7 p.m.  
Location: Star Drive-In, Monte Vista

### Del Norte

Date: June 6  
Time: 9 a.m.  
Location: TBA  
Details: To be announced

### Moffat

TBA

### Monte Vista

Date: August 1  
Time: 10 a.m.  
Location: Monte Vista High school gym

### North Conejos Alternative

Date: May 21  
Time: 7 p.m.  
Details: Attendance is restricted.

### Sanford

Date: June 5  
Time: 6-7 p.m.  
Location: Sanford High School

### Sangre de Cristo

Date: July 3  
Time: 6 p.m.  
Location/Attendance: TBA

### Sierra Grande

Date: May 22  
Time: 6 p.m.  
Location: Dunn Gym  
Details: The actual graduation ceremony will be held at a later date, but the school still wanted to celebrate seniors. So, on May 22, a parade will be held.

### Trinidad State Junior College

Date: TBA  
Time: TBA  
Location: Are considering other options including a virtual graduation or a commencement at a later date.

### Academic Recovery Center & Center Virtual Academy

July 6 • 10 a.m. • Center School Auditorium (No public ceremony)

### Adams State University

Date: June 6  
Time: 12 p.m.  
Location: Online  
Details: Virtual Commencement

### Antonito

To be Announced • High School Gym

### Byron Syring DELTA Center/Monte Vista Online Academy

To be Announced • Central Auditorium

### Centauri

Date: May 23  
Time: 10 a.m.  
Location: Centauri Middle School  
Details: Attendance is restricted, please see the North Conejos School District website for more information

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# Opinion

## Amarah's Corner

Hi! My name is Amarah. Kids are important to Jesus, and they're important to me, too.

Jesus said in Matthew 25:40 (KJV), "Whatever you've done unto the least of these (kids or adults), you've done it unto me."

Kids like me are kids and adults of all ages whose parents are, or were, drug addicts and alcoholics, kids who have suffered, or who are suffering, abuse and neglect on multiple levels (trauma), and kids who are victims of bullying.

(Message from Brittany: My mother has been addicted to meth for as long as I can remember. It has affected my life in so many bad ways. I wrote this and put it into her mailbox as a way to tell her that I will have nothing to do with her anymore):



### My Mother Vs. Meth

Written by Brittany  
 Most days I feel like screaming at the top of my lungs.  
 I want my mother back; who is this monster you have become?  
 I really haven't known who you are for quite a while,  
 But I try to act tough, so I force this fake smile.  
 You love something else way more than me.  
 Its name: Crystal Meth and I don't think you'll ever be free  
 It's had you in its grip for about 10 years, But all of those years are nothing compared to my fear.  
 Fear of you lying,  
 Fear of you dying,  
 Fear of having so much faith in you and just being left crying.  
 You wrote me letters from prison and promised the sky.  
 More than 3 years later - nothing but lies.  
 Nothing but heartache, pain, and misery...  
 I GET IT NOW; you chose meth over me. You've told me to my face that it was drugs over me.  
 Even that wasn't enough to make me see. Today you will tell me that you are clean. You give me so much hope, then tomorrow it's the same ole' dope-phene.  
 I'm telling you now that I am through with you.  
 This comes from my heart and every word is true.  
 I can't promise that I will be around to see, But when you get tired of that meth, you will see.  
 All along you had something way better, And it was your family.  
 I do thank you so much for one thing. Thank you for showing me how important a good mother should be  
 And to never show my children the pain that you showed me.  
 So, today I officially set myself free Because I know there's a stronger woman in me.~Brittany

### Mom Becoming A Different Person

Written by Ellen  
 (After my parents divorced, my mother wanted to be young again, so she started going to bars 4 nights a week. She started getting into drugs and heavy drinking. She took her anger out on me when she got home from the bar. It was my job to protect my younger siblings. The last stretch was when she attacked me in my own room and choked me. My siblings and I filed a TRO and we have all moved in with other family members. Poetry helps me express what I can't say to her):

**I'll Be Fine**  
 Being born into your arms,  
 I felt my life was out of harm.  
 Felt that you would never hurt your baby.  
 Now that never has turned to maybe.  
 You've grown out of the old life and into a new life.  
 Not my father's but someone else's wife.  
 Your new choices we just couldn't hinder.,  
 Your heart is now cold as a block of cinder.  
 The new decisions you've chosen to make  
 Have turned the woman I loved into a fake.  
 Which face do you use when you go out?  
 The same face you use when you pout?  
 Fake as the lips on your face of two,  
 How could you throw your life away just out of the blue?  
 Three human beings have part of your heart.  
 Every time you raise that glass to your lips,  
 You're tearing them apart.  
 This is the path that you have chosen.  
 The blood in your veins is now frozen.  
 Leave this life of mine.  
 I promise, Mommy, I'll be fine.  
 I have learned from you  
 exactly what not to do.  
 And I'll watch over and guide the other two  
 though we'll never get over what you put  
 us through.  
 Enjoy the life you lead with your new half  
 While everyone joins in for the laugh.  
 Keep bringing that glass to your lips.  
 Listen to the band and move your hips.  
 Don't worry about me in the meantime.  
 Don't worry, Mommy, I'll be fine.~Ellen  
 Thank you for reading my column.  
 If you would like to share your story, poem,  
 or anything about addiction, write to me at  
 P.O. Box 354, Alamosa, CO, 81101.  
 Until next time, remember, Jesus Loves  
 You, and Jesus is Lord!



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 sjiron@alamosanews.com

### Letters policy

Letters are welcome and encouraged. All letters submitted for publication in the Valley Courier must be typewritten, signed by the author, and must include a phone number and address where the author can be reached. Letters must not be libelous. The Courier will not run letters that are negative to specific businesses. The Courier's editorial board reserves the right to reject a letter for reasons it believes are appropriate. Letters may be subject to editing to fit available space, or exclusion from the Opinion Page. Please, no poetry. Please send signed letters to P.O. Box 1099, Alamosa, CO 81101 or email them to news@alamosanews.com. Letters to staff, not for publication, should be marked "personal."

## Mean Moose procession

Alamosa, known for the historic and unusual, has just run off the charts. On Saturday, Alamosa High School had its first drive-by commencement.

It was aired over YouTube and people at home were able to watch almost all of it.

I was all geared up to be disappointed, but the format turned out to be a blessing.

Some vehicles were decorated and some graduates leaned out the windows of the cars driven by parents, older siblings and dear ones and horns took the place of shouts from bleachers in a crowded gym.

My granddaughter decorated her mortarboard with some symbols of her honors during school, but it wasn't really visible, yet the family car was about third in line and the announcer noted she had complied with all the requirements as to safety. She's that way.

Mother Nature applauded with wind, blew some carefully placed balloons down on the school areas set up for commencement and caused a delay in the beginning.

I decided to fiddle with the TV and drew comments from my son, who had given up

his seat in the car so his oldest daughter could share the actual diploma presentation.

For once, it wasn't my fault.

It was a blessing for me since I was sniffing through a spring allergy attack. I could watch without shaking people up. It's not easy to have an allergy attack behind a mask.

An aunt and uncle, both Maroons, couldn't have attended, but stayed in cell chat touch, talking about whose child each graduate was, if they knew.

When I graduated in 1961, everyone knew everyone.

When my eldest son graduated in 1980, he observed, it wasn't as nice.

Nice? He reminded me of the firecrackers set off during the slide show. The next year's display caused cancellation for some time.

An interesting facet of this is that some of that year's grads had children receiving diplomas that year.

Our graduate is the daughter of a 1982 graduate whose class was serious in the gym.

The uncle and aunt who watched on

TV graduated in 1984.

New people have moved in, but the feel of Moose Nation was in the air.

There were beautifully decorated cars and trucks, some regular family cars, a classic car that needed to be jumped and simple decorations everywhere.

There also was silly string, another standard on local rites of passage.

The nice touches after all the cars had passed, were separate films of the very talented Edynn Lucero singing the National Anthem, the obligatory Valedictory and Salutatory Addresses, individual photos of each graduate, some candid shots and other touches to be shared.

The diplomas were presented via a reaching device, graduates accepted them with gloved hands and people lined the streets for an impromptu parade of cars as the graduates and their parents — plus two guests — drove from Adams State to Alamosa High.

A drive-by commencement worked and worked well, despite the electronic glitches.

No matter what, the Moose came out on top.

**Native Writes**

**Sylvia Lobato**

## Save the bees with flowers – part 3

In parts one and two, I discussed appropriate flowers to plant for bees in Alamosa from the first of the season through July. I also wrote about what bees need and what plants might do well if you don't want bees. In this installment, I'll discuss bee-friendly flowers for August through the end of the season. Bees need flowers throughout the growing season. I'm writing information on late summer/fall flowers in May so folks have time to plant for fall bloom!

In our garden, we have fewer new blooming flower specimens in late summer/early fall than in earlier season months. So, I will first list flowers that may start in late July, depending on the year, but are at their height in August or later. Then, I'll discuss flowers that continue to bloom throughout the late season that I didn't mention earlier.

I love to see tall and medium height annual sunflowers (*Helianthus* species) show their glory during this season. I haven't planted new seeds in the last few years, so mine are yellow that reseed from previous years. They end up being mostly 3 - 4 1/2 ft. tall and I pull them out where ever I don't want them. If you want tall, big sunflowers in various hues, plant new seeds. While bee-friendly, the birds really love sunflowers, also.

I always look forward to the pink blooms on autumn joy sedum (*Sedum telephium* 'autumn joy'). Unlike many other sedums, the plants are erect. My favorite description of them by a friend's children is pink broccoli!

Fall is the time for perennial tall purple asters (*Aster* ?). Mine tend to bloom from late August until the first hard frost. They tend to be from 1-2 ft. tall. A lovely vase cutting flower for that last bouquet of the season! Some years I also see a bit of re-blooming short, white alpine asters (*Aster* ?) - these were given to me so I don't know the species.

Yellow Maximilian daisies (*Helianthus maximiliani* - also called Santa Fe daisies in this part of the world) are another tall fall bloom. I love these at the back of the garden border - if we have a windy fall I do stake the plants that can grow from 3-4 ft. tall depending on weather conditions. I just realized I don't have them on the AlamosaFlowers.net website! The rest of the flowers listed here are on the website and all photos were taken in our Alamosa garden.

Fall really is the time for purple and yellow blooms. Purple sea holly (*Eryngium*) and blue mist spirea (*Caryopteris x clandonensis*) actually start blooming in our garden in late July, but come into their glory in August and often stay until the first hard freeze. They are both bee-friendly. Sea holly is a type of thistle with flowers smaller than those of the globe thistle. It grows about 1- 1 1/2 ft. in our garden now. It has persisted for at least 20 years without adding additional plants. Also, it works well in dried arrangements.

I've had to replace several blue mist spireas over the years as they tend to "not

return' after several years - I have no idea why. However, I really like them as they are easy to care for while they exist.

I have compact, low, white buckwheat perennial (*Pagopyrum* ?) that is bee-friendly and has persisted for at least 18 years. It is still only about 2 x 2 ft. and 10 in. high at the edge of a rock garden. I love it, but do not remember where I got it! I do recommend it as it has made it through some tough drought years.

I'm am also mentioning two flowers that are wonderful in August that I couldn't verify whether they are bee-friendly or not. However, I love them so am including them here. Sea Lavender (*Limonium latifolium*) is a light feathery purple perennial that does well in part shade. It has large leaves so does well under our cottonwood tree and I love the large leaves when it isn't blooming. We have a white hydrangea (*Hydrangea arborescens* 'Annabelle'), planted in 2007, that I keep in one of our wetter beds. It has large white blooms that persist for a month.

It only failed to bloom one year.

Flowers that continue to bloom in the late season or come into their height during the late season include yellow *Gloriosa* daisies (*Rudbeckia hirta* - last flowers to bloom in our sunny sidewalk garden), lavender Russian sage (*Perovskia atriplicifolia*), and purple butterfly delphinium (*Delphinium grandiflorum* 'blue butterfly' -- also called perennial larkspur).

"When you take a flower in your hand and really look at it, it's your world for the moment." Georgia O'Keeffe

**LETTERS**

## Variance examination

Alamosa County Commissioners have finally filed a variance with the Governor's office a month after several other counties in Colorado filed theirs! A variance is a request from the County Commissioners sent to the Governor's office to reduce restrictions on Alamosa businesses.

I was so excited to see that the Commissioners' were going to do to fight for our community, and then I read it...

Page 2, Section 4: Alamosa County Commissioners promise to tighten restrictions if more than 3 people are hospitalized at a time and "the number of active cases for case investigation" must be 13 or fewer.

Let that sink in.

If more than 3 people get hospitalized or there are 13 active cases the County Commissioners promise Governor Polis that they will "tighten restrictions"

Alamosa Commissioners want the bar set so low it's as if they want the reopening to fail.

But I digress. What did Alamosa County Commissioners ask for?

The commissioners asked for restaurants and gyms to be open but limited to 1 'customer' per 144 sq feet. Alamosa County Commissioners will require all customers to wear a mask at a gym or restaurant.

They asked that the movie theater be open but: "customers must be separated by a minimum of three seats to the side, and rows must be alternated".

Alamosa County Commissioners 'encourage' churches to stay closed. If churches open they are limited to "1 person per 144 sq feet" Furthermore the variance states that "Individuals are not allowed to socialize in the lobby or waiting areas before or after services". Also,

"worshippers shall wear a non-medical mask or face covering at all times while on the premises".

Alamosa County Commissioners mandate that Campgrounds are limited to 50% of the total number of spaces. The County Commissioners also want to ban the "rental of ATV/UTVs"

Alamosa County Commissioners request swimming pools remain closed. Eagle County already had their variance approved and swimming pools in Eagle County will open there 5/25.

Alamosa County Commissioner@Helen Sigmond is the only one up for election in June. I think we will all be safer when she is at home and no longer collecting her \$75000 + per year salary as a failed County Commissioner.

- Patrick Crowder

# Lawn and Garden

## The dangers of mowing too low

Spring marks the return of many things. Trees and flowers begin to bloom again in spring, while warmer temperatures are welcomed back with open arms. Grass also begins to grow again in the spring. That means it's not too long before homeowners have to dust off their lawn mowers and get to work. Those who don't necessarily enjoy mowing the lawn may be tempted to cut their grass very low, as doing so can mean longer intervals between mow-

ing sessions. However, mowing grass too low can have a very adverse effect on a lawn.

- Cutting too low can injure the grass. Cutting grass too low can injure the grass, creating what's essentially a domino effect of problems to come. Injured grass will focus on its recovery efforts, thereby making it vulnerable to other issues.

- Cutting too low promotes weed growth. Injured grass is vulnerable to invaders, including weeds and insects. Weeds and in-

sects can attack grass as it recovers from injury, and before homeowners know it, their lawns are overcome with a host of problems.

- Cutting too low allows crabgrass to thrive. Crabgrass needs ample sun-

light to grow. By cutting grass too low, homeowners may unknowingly be promoting crabgrass growth. Crabgrass is unsightly and can rob surrounding grass of the moisture it needs to grow. So lawns cut too low may not only

lose their lush appeal thanks to the unattractive appearance of crabgrass, but also because areas surrounding the crabgrass patches might turn brown due to lack of water.

- Cutting too low can stress the grass. Cutting

too low also makes lawns vulnerable to summer heat. Without blades tall enough to block some of the summer sun, grass can quickly succumb to summer heat, leading to dried out, discolored lawns. GT204794



Courtesy photo

Mowing grass too low can have a very adverse effect on a lawn.

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## 3 perennial gardening pointers

Gardening is an engaging hobby that can provide a host of benefits, some of which may surprise even the most devoted gardeners. For example, the Harvard Medical School notes that just 30 minutes of gardening activities burns 135 calories, making gardening a fun and simple way to incorporate more exercise into your daily routine. In addition, scientists have long proven that gardening releases the hormones serotonin and dopamine in the brain, each of which are associated with improved mood.

Perennial gardens can be especially attractive to seasoned gardeners and novices. Perennials are plants that come back year after year, and committing to a perennial garden can ensure people stick with gardening for the long haul, reaping all of the rewards that come with making such a commitment.

Before planting a perennial garden, those new to gardening may want to consider these three tips.

### 1. Make a plan.

A perennial garden comes back year after year, which means any mistakes you make when planting are likely to haunt you year after year as well. Factors like space and location must be considered before planting. Many gardeners utilize garden planning applications like GrowVeg to make the process of planning a garden simpler and more organized. Such applications can be especially useful for novices.

### 2. Consider aesthetics.

Gardens can be awe-inspiring, especially when gardeners consider aesthetics prior to planting. The DIY Network advises gardeners to consider scale before choosing which perennials to plant. Tall plants and wide beds tend to look best outside large homes, while short plants in small beds tend to look better outside small homes.

### 3. Work with a professional.

Local garden centers can be excellent resources when planning perennial gardens. Representatives at such businesses can offer tips on native plants, which will be more likely to thrive year after year than non-natives. Such representatives also can help you choose the right plants based on the amount of sunlight the plants will likely get after being planted. Each of these factors can be easily overlooked by people without much gardening experience.

Perennial gardens can provide years of joy and inspiration, especially when gardeners give ample attention to certain details prior to planting. TF206038



Courtesy photo

Local garden centers can be excellent resources for gardeners planting perennial gardens for the first time.

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# Comics

## CROSSWORD PUZZLE

**ACROSS**

1 Use a jimmy  
 4 Country addr.  
 7 Watercraft  
 11 Yves' yes  
 12 Memorable times  
 14 Former science magazine  
 15 Recipe amt.  
 16 Unconscious state  
 17 Novelist — Uris  
 18 Put in a lawn  
 20 Type of sausage  
 22 GI support org.  
 23 Kenya's loc.  
 24 Frisbees, e.g.  
 27 Let know  
 30 Norwegian name  
 31 Big pet  
 32 Famous mummy  
 34 Long-tailed animal  
 35 Longest arm bone

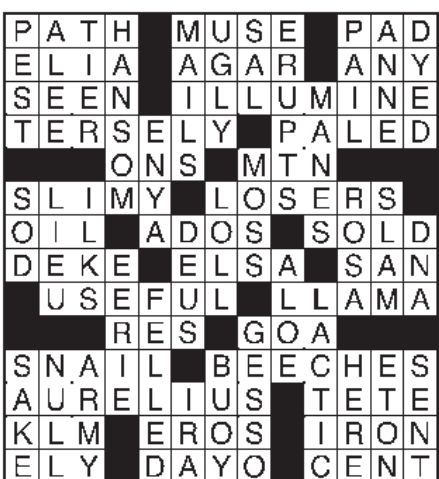
36 Give out sparingly  
 37 Target amounts  
 39 Gave medication  
 40 Gentle bear  
 41 Atlas page  
 42 Least green  
 45 Worried  
 49 Auction site  
 50 Pantyhose color  
 52 Twosome  
 53 — noire  
 54 Lackluster  
 55 Quick turn  
 56 Pink-slipped  
 57 Olsen of vaudeville  
 58 Incoming plane stat

**DOWN**

1 Stew cooks  
 2 Stratagem  
 3 Exclamation of dismay  
 4 School break  
 5 Tolkien hero  
 6 Block, as a stream

7 Spanish dance  
 8 Auspice  
 9 Presently  
 10 Singer — Turner  
 13 Grassy plain  
 19 Canvas-back  
 21 Uncertain  
 24 "The," to Wolfgang  
 25 Mesopotamia, now  
 26 In — (as found)  
 27 Charged particles  
 28 AAA suggestions  
 29 Speechless

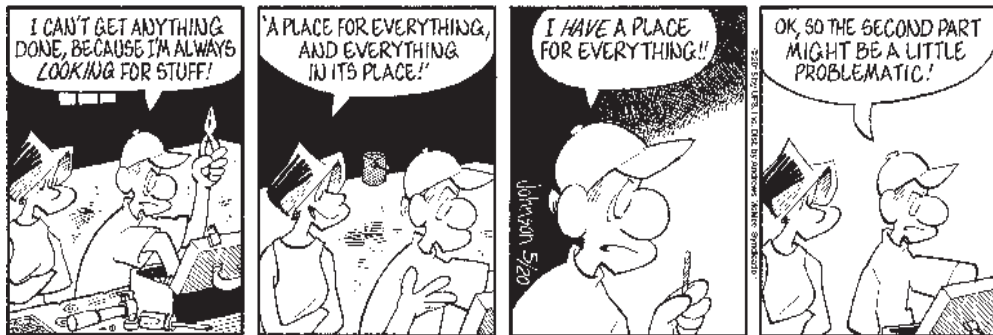
31 Made a garden  
 33 Danson or Kennedy  
 35 Navajo neighbors  
 36 Brood  
 38 Yielded to  
 39 River in a waltz  
 41 Wall decoration  
 42 "Fancy" singer  
 43 Wild goat  
 44 Top of the head  
 46 Woodworking tool  
 47 Hearts or spades  
 48 Spa class  
 51 — -Magnon



## ALLEY OOP



## ARLO & JANIS



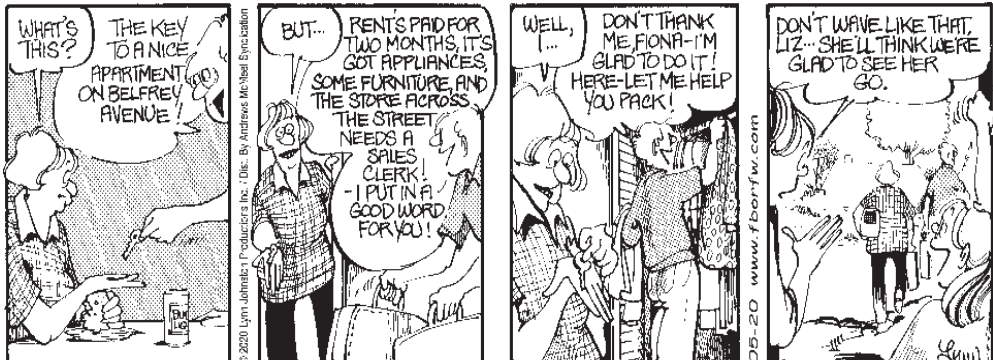
## BIG NATE



## THE BORN LOSER



## FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE



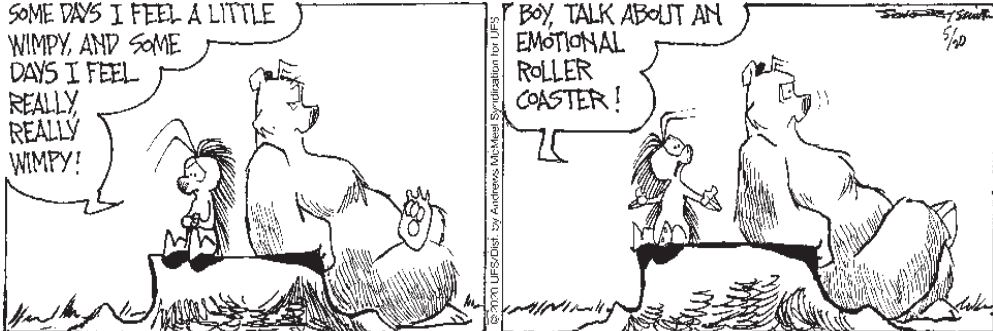
## FRANK & ERNEST



## GARFIELD



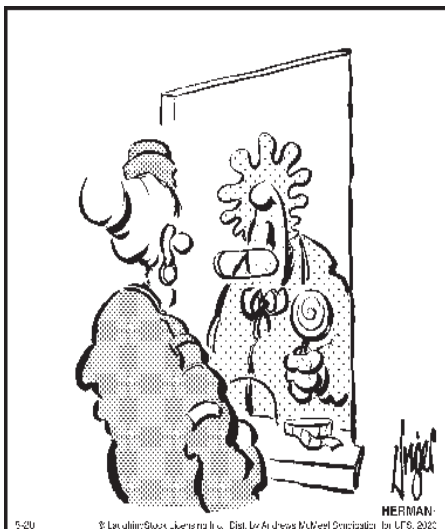
## THE GRIZZWELLS



## PEANUTS



## HERMAN



## CELEBRITY CIPHER

by Luis Campos

Celebrity Cipher cryptograms are created from quotations by famous people, past and present. Each letter in the cipher stands for another.

"OK CWIBXUE YPZBH, VIBWULBH, WUB  
 WXH EYBCU ULBWUBI. ... SITJPXS  
 MC, ULB MXIBWY LWH WE OMFL  
 POCTIUWXFB WE ULB IBWY."

TODAY'S CLUE: F stands for

Previous Solution: "During bad circumstances ... disasters remind us we are world citizens, whether we like it or not." — Maya Angelou

# Woman's focus on fitness is hard for friend to bear

DEAR ABBY: I've been friends with "Lorraine" for 30 years. Actually, the friendship is kind of one-sided because she bugs the hell out of me.

She's a super-skinny health nut who constantly posts health advice and "uplifting" mantras on social media. Her Instagram feed is filled with pictures of her bland-looking vegan food and her doing yoga poses or running 5Ks in midriff tops so we can all see her six-pack abs. She regularly donates blood plasma and posts pictures of that, too.

Dining with her is embarrassing because she grills the waiters on how the food is prepared, even in vegan restaurants that list all ingredients. She comes off -- to me, anyway -- as thinking she has every facet of life figured out. She has been married twice to two jerks, keeps breaking and making up with "Harry," a seemingly nice guy, because he's fat (he's slightly plump yet attractive) and drinks too much (not sure about that). Her son, whom she treated as an annoyance and inconvenience when he was young, is now a gun-toting drug dealer.

I'm not perfect (I know I'm lazy, impatient and drink too much), but I don't portray myself as otherwise. My husband, a nicer person than I am, doesn't understand my resentment of Lorraine and keeps reminding me how much she loves me. She does. We're both in our 50s, but I

feel like I've outgrown our friendship.

By the way, I don't think I'm jealous of her because I'm very happy in my marriage and feel that I am more attractive than she is (despite outweighing her). Must I stay friends with Lorraine? If not, how do I end it? -- CANCELING HER IN KANSAS CITY

DEAR CANCELING: It appears you have a love/hate relationship with Lorraine. Nothing is wrong with you, and no law says you must maintain a friendship with her. When contact becomes more of an annoyance than a pleasure, many people begin editing their circle of acquaintances. The way to end your relationship with her would be to make yourself less available when she calls or wants to get together. If she asks you why, explain that you have fewer of the same interests than you used to, while omitting the part about her six-pack abs.

DEAR ABBY: I am a widow. My husband passed away three years ago after 43 years of marriage. I met a widower who was also married for 43 years. His wife passed five years ago.

My grown children and grandchildren refuse to accept him. My therapist and psychiatrist tell me to stand my ground because I'm in love with him, as he is with me. Even my priest, who officiated at my husband's funeral, said I should consider this relationship as heaven-sent.



ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

We get along beautifully, and it breaks my heart that my family wants me to choose between him or them. I am devastated over this because this is not how my family is. We are in love and although I love my family with all of my heart, I don't think they have the right to gang up against me. May I have your opinion on this? -- DEVASTATED MOTHER

DEAR DEVASTATED: What a painful situation. You say this isn't how your family is. Open your eyes, dear lady, and recognize that this is EXACTLY who they are. Then open up your ears and pay attention to the psychiatrist and the therapist you are paying good money for, as well as your priest. My opinion is you must live your life, and my advice is to GET ON WITH IT.



# Lifestyle

## Governor Polis proclaims 2020 the year of Colorado local food

**BROOMFIELD** — Governor Polis issued a proclamation declaring 2020 to be the Year of Local Food in Colorado. Created in collaboration with the Colorado Department of Agriculture (CDA), the proclamation highlights the value of local agriculture to the state and the appreciation for all who grow, harvest, process, and distribute food.

“Now more than ever it’s important that we support our small Colorado businesses who are key for our local economies,” said Governor Jared Polis. “Thanks to the hard work and dedication of our farmers and ranchers we continue to grow delicious Colorado food to feed our families.”

The proclamation,

which encourages consumers to purchase Colorado fruits, vegetables, grains, meats, and beverages, also addresses the importance of healthy soils, safe workplaces, fair prices and wages, farmer and rancher compensation and CDA’s Colorado Proud program.

“Food and agricultural businesses can provide an economic boost to rural areas that were suffering even before the pandemic struck,” said Kathryn Bedell, member of the state Agriculture Commission and initiator of the proclamation. “Local and regional food systems are essential for security both from pandemic related food shortages and climate disasters. Buy Local!”

An enhanced focus

on and the formation of local agricultural production, processing and food distribution systems are intended to increase the economic sustainability of farming and ranching, shorten supply chains and increase the ability of every person in Colorado to access safe, healthy, and abundant local food systems.

“Supporting local agriculture is a simple way to support the success of Colorado’s ag producers,” said Colorado Commissioner of Agriculture Kate Greenberg. “That success has a ripple effect that impacts small businesses, rural communities, the availability of farmland and water, and equitable access to nutritious food for all people in

Colorado.”  
Read the proclamation at <https://drive.google.com/file/d/15FsQjVHOQKV8mj/view>



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# Lifestyle

## Well it's that time again

ALAMOSA — Alamosa County and the Northwest Weed District would like to inform you that they will be starting the Noxious Weed Control Season mid-May 2020. They will start out the year spot spraying and mowing on county right-of-ways. They have teamed up with the State of Colorado to do multiple bio-control releases around Alamosa County in early to mid-May. If you are interested in allowing your property to be used for the release of bio-control species please contact us

on their property. There are "No Spray" signs available for purchase on our website at [www.alamosacounty.org](https://www.alamosacounty.org). WE WILL SPRAY all right-of-ways that have not registered AND posted "NO SPRAY" signs... Alamosa County Code Enforcement will be issuing notices to property owners on the "NO SPRAY" list who do not control noxious

weeds along county right-of-ways adjacent to their properties. For questions please contact the Alamosa County Noxious Weed program at:  
8999 Independence Way Ste 100  
Alamosa, CO 81101  
[bmaestas@alamosacounty.org](mailto:bmaestas@alamosacounty.org)  
Office: (719)-589-3812  
Cell Phone: (719)-480-9923



for more information. This year, all organic farmers, organic pastures, beekeepers, and chemically sensitive citizens are asked to register to be on the "NO SPRAY" list on the following website <https://field-watch.com/>. Regardless of whether you have registered with the county before, you must now register every year and post signage along your property boundaries. Being on the "NO SPRAY" list obligates the property owner to control noxious weeds

## 2020 Willow Pit schedule

MANASSA — The Conejos County Willow Pit will open to county residents on Saturdays, May 16, June 6, June 20, July 18, August 1, August 15, September 19, and October 17 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The

property is located 4.5 Miles east of manassa on HWY 142. We accept yard waste - tree branches < 5", willows, limbs, leaves, shrubbery, and grasses. No household trash, tires, furniture, construction/demolition debris,

no large tree stumps will be accepted. Donations of non-perishible food items will be accepted at the entry. (Please no expired food!) Call Jarret 719-496-6615 or the land use office 719-376-2014 if you have any questions.

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# Lifestyle

## Open everything now! Really?

**By JERRY BRADY**

Open a business now and stay the course? Sacrifice lives or sacrifice jobs?

The issue is almost as fraught as the simple choice facing all of us: Do we wear a mask to protect others or go bare-faced in public?

Those willing to take risks that seem reckless to others include Lauren Boebert, the always-a-rmed owner of Shooter's Grill in Rifle, Colorado, who served patrons despite Gov. Jared Polis's order, and Doug and Christine Lohman, owners of Hardware Brewery in Kendrick, Idaho, who made a big deal of opening May 1, also against a governor's order.

Kendrick, population 307, is where Doug and Christine Lohman poured their life's savings into a pub fashioned out of a former hardware store. The bar depends almost entirely on customers from somewhere else, like the University of Idaho, 30 miles away, or Lewiston, about 60 miles away.

Their Hardware Brewery would be recognized in most towns as a pleasant local Cheers, except it's not in anybody's neighborhood.

Under a plan published by Idaho Republican Gov. Brad Little, the pub could have reopened as a restaurant May 16 and as a bar June 13. It likely would also have received \$10,000 from a small business relief fund created by Little with federal dollars.

Instead, the Lohman's said they had to open early or go bankrupt. Feeling that they're "as safe as McDonald's," the couple invited some Very Important People to their opening.

Janice McGeachin, the Republican lieutenant governor, traveled 500 miles from Idaho Falls to attend. She said she'd been incensed from the start that only establishments providing food, medical care, public protection or construction were deemed "essential."

All businesses are essential, the lieutenant governor said, including pubs — such as the one she also operates — and should be open as a constitutional right of assembly.

With her was Raul Labrador, the chairman of the Idaho Republican Party and a recent member of Congress who lost a close primary election to Little in 2018, plus two state legislators from Lewiston.

Labrador wanted the state open in April. All opposed the governor from the first, as did the speaker of the Idaho House, many other legislators and numerous sheriffs and county commissioners — opponents similar in other Western states.

You have to hand it to Little, who has negotiated the pandemic with patience and skill. New cases are trending downward, crushing the curve at least for now, and testing is expanding rapidly. A recent poll by the Idaho Association of Commerce and Industry found nearly 80 percent of Idahoans support the

governor's four-stage re-opening plan, with even higher support among Republicans.

Like other small states, Idaho received \$1.2 billion in federal funds, among the highest amounts per-capita nationally, on top of payroll protection and enhanced unemployment insurance. Little is using \$300 million for grants of up to \$10,000 each to small businesses like Hardware Brewing and most recently, to daycare centers.

With the minimum wage an abysmal \$7.25 an hour, Idaho wages are so low unemployment payments can be more attractive than working.

For a few months at least, about half of the 100,000 unemployed Idahoans have caught a rare break in life.

Notably, protestors chose not to stage their rebellion in nearby Nez Perce County where 20 of its 95 infected county residents have died, or at a meatpacking plant south of Boise where 23 workers have been sent home after testing positive.

The "open now" leaders have championed near-absolute freedom versus what they label as government oppression. Little has cast his decisions in soft language, advising residents to shelter in place "as best you can" or saying of the Kendrick protesters, "they certainly aren't making this any easier."

Recently, however, he suggested that those who open bars or hair salons prematurely "could lose their operating licenses." But the governor took no action as six businesses opened early in Idaho Falls. In Colorado, Shooter's Grill was handed a cease and desist order — no ambiguity there.

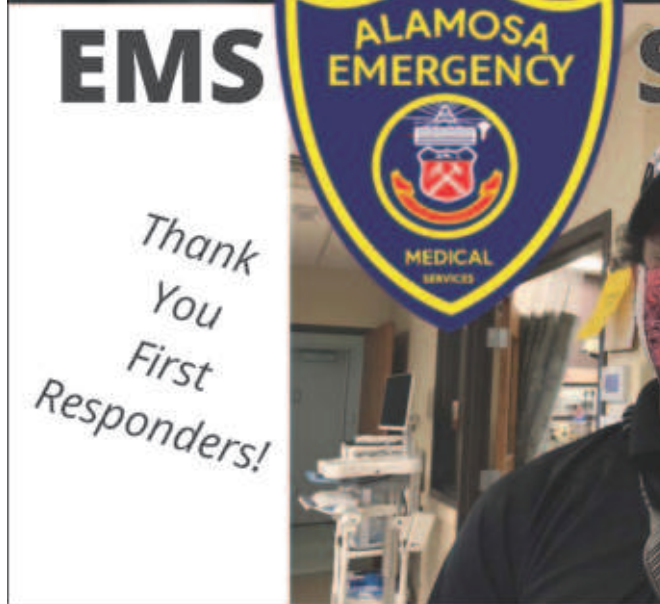
When this all began, we might have assumed it would only last a few months. Instead, it could turn out to be like World War I, an epic slog that ended with

vastly more people dying from flu than combat.

This pandemic likewise requires wartime-like unity, goodwill and clear thinking.



Courtesy photo  
**Jerry Brady**



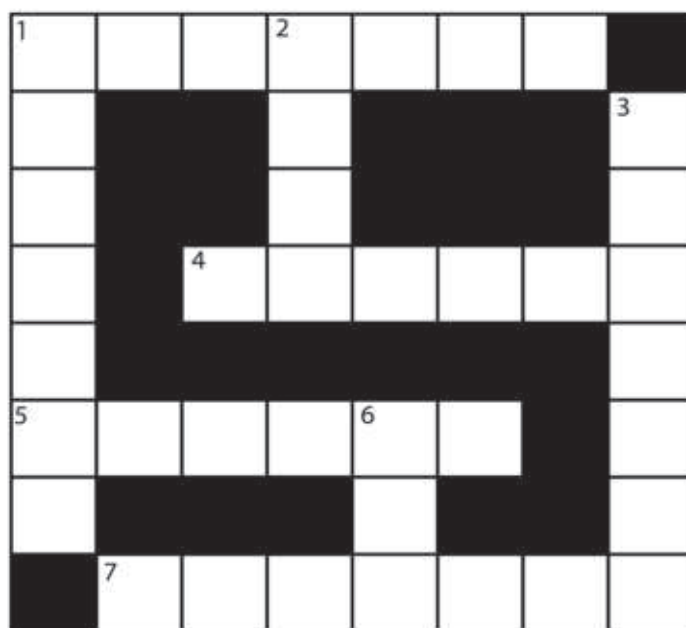
**kids' corner**

**FOOD FACT!**

THIS TYPE OF CUISINE IS OFTEN SLOW-COOKED.

ANSWER: BARBECUE

### Crossword Puzzle



#### ACROSS

- 1. Slope of land
- 4. Petaled plant part
- 5. Sweet liquid
- 7. Soil fertilizer

#### DOWN

- 1. Places to grow plants
- 2. Knob for tuning
- 3. Pick crops
- 6. Short for ampere

Answers:

- Across: 1. Grading 4. Flower 5. Nectar 7. Compost
- Down: 1. Gardens 2. Dial 3. Harvest 6. Amp

### THIS DAY IN...



### HISTORY

- **1568:** ENGLAND'S QUEEN ELIZABETH I ORDERS THE ARREST OF MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS.
- **1950:** EGYPT ANNOUNCES THAT THE SUEZ CANAL IS CLOSED TO ISRAELI SHIPS AND COMMERCE.
- **1963:** MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.'S "LETTER FROM BIRMINGHAM JAIL" IS PUBLISHED IN THE NEW YORK POST SUNDAY MAGAZINE.



### BASTE

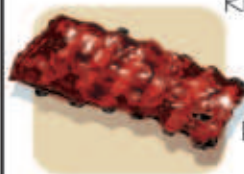
pour juices or melted fat over meat during cooking to keep it moist

### How they SAY that in...

- ENGLISH:** Charcoal
- SPANISH:** Carbón vegetal
- ITALIAN:** Carbone
- FRENCH:** Charbon de bois
- GERMAN:** Kohle

### Did you Know?

FALL-OFF-THE-BONE RIBS ARE ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR FOODS SERVED AT BBQ RESTAURANTS.



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Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

ANSWER: BARBECUED FOOD



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# Lifestyle

## Expanding access to higher education can help Colorado meet the demand for nurses

By **TONYA DRAKE**  
WGU Regional Vice President Northwest and WGU Washington Chancellor

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, we've seen hundreds of people across the country join together to show appreciation for healthcare workers and first responders by cheering and making noise from rooftops, balconies and windows. We've seen hashtags like "#ClapBecauseWeCare" and "#Solidarityat8" sweep across social media, often accompanied by videos of people joining in the celebration. Nurses and healthcare workers on the front lines of the pandemic have seen renewed appreciation for the work they do, as they face risks to their own health and safety.

Unfortunately, we're experiencing a nursing shortage that is projected to worsen in the coming years. Before the coronavirus pandemic, Colorado was projected to have a shortage of 12,900 nurses by 2025.

The novel coronavirus has exasperated the nursing shortage as more patients require care. As hospitals face an influx of COVID-19 patients, they are ramping up their bed capacity, but they might not have enough nurses to staff them. Because nurses are such an important part of the healthcare system, a shortage poses serious implications for healthcare organizations and the patients they serve. The importance of increasing the pipeline of qualified medical professionals is more important than ever.

Expanding access to education is a crucial step in meeting the need for qualified nurses. Outlined below are three ways to make education more accessible for those interested in pursuing a degree.

### Embrace Online Learning

Online learning has a way of cutting through what can seem like a vast tangle of out-of-date requirements. While going to college online is often just as rigorous and challenging as attending a traditional, on-campus school, students earning a degree online don't face the same kinds of time and space restrictions. Online learning opens doors to students whose work schedules don't sync up with traditional on-site college courses or students who can't commute to a local campus. Technology also streamlines learning for working adults, with round-the-clock access to learn at their own pace.

### Implement Competency-Based Learning

Competency-based education (CBE) measures skills and learning rather than time. Students progress through courses as soon as they can prove they've mastered the material, rather than advancing only when the semester or term ends. If a student can learn faster, spend more time on schoolwork, or lean on knowledge they already have from previous work or school experience, they can accelerate. Given the financial burden placed on students pursuing higher education, competency-based models offer a quicker, and therefore more affordable, alternative.

### Create Pathways to Success

According to research, 36 million people in the U.S. have some college credit but no degree. Creating clear pathways to transfer existing credits can encourage students to re-engage with higher education and finish their degrees. Transparency and assistance are two vi-

tal components of helping students get the most out of their transfer credits. Partnering closely with community colleges and other universities also helps build clear articulation agreements so students avoid losing credit.

Nursing schools across the country are struggling to accept and graduate enough registered nurses to keep up with the current healthcare demand. Online schools like Western Governors University help registered nurses earn their bachelor's degrees or master's degrees while continuing to work. WGU is well-positioned to support an influx of students interested in pursuing degrees in healthcare. For example, WGU can scale up easily to take on more students given the flexible cap on enrollment. WGU is also one of the most affordable models in healthcare across the entire nation. Rather than charging tuition per credit, the university charges per term, which helps students control the ultimate cost of their degrees. In addition, WGU offers the Nurses Appreciation Scholarship, which awards nurses who are ready to earn a bachelor's or master's degree with up to \$2,500.

In order to increase the pipeline of skilled nurses and healthcare professions, we must first increase access to accredited education and training. By leveraging technology to support online learning, implementing competency-based learning models and creating clear pathways to degree completion, more people will achieve their educational goals and advance in their careers.

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## A cold concoction perfect for summer nights

Summer is synonymous with many things. Vacations, warm weather and al fresco dining are part and parcel of many people's summertime routines.

Another beloved routine is enjoying a cold beverage on a warm summer evening. As summer breezes invite scores of people outside to relax on their patios, decks or balconies, a cold beverage can be just what's needed to take such relaxing nights one step further. The following recipe for "Summer Cantaloupe" from Andrew Schloss' "Homemade Liqueurs and Infused Spirits" (Storey Publishing) is easily whipped up and can go a long way toward making summer evenings especially sweet.

Summer Cantaloupe  
Makes about 1 quart

- 1 fifth (31/4 cups) 80-100 proof vodka
- 4 cups cantaloupe chunks
- 1 cup Simple Syrup (see below)
- Finely grated zest of 2 lemons

1. Muddle the vodka, cantaloupe and lemon zest with a wooden spoon in a half-gallon jar. Stir to moisten everything.
2. Seal the jar and put it in a cool, dark cabinet until the liquid smells and tastes strongly of melon, four to seven days.
3. Strain the mixture with a mesh strainer into a clean quart jar. Do not push on the solids to extract more liquid.
4. Stir in the Simple Syrup.
5. Seal and store in a cool, dark cabinet. Use within one year.

Simple Syrup  
Makes 3 cups

- 21/4 cups water
- 21/4 cups granulated cane sugar

Mix the water and sugar in a small saucepan until the sugar is all moistened. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Stir to make sure the sugar is completely dissolved, then remove from the heat and let cool. Refrigerate for up to three months. SL206017

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Congratulations



**Joann Thong**  
We are so proud of you!  
Congratulations!  
Love you, Mom, Dad, Ken & Sam



Submit a high quality, scannable baby photo and senior photo of your favorite graduating senior, a message with up to 15 words and a \$20 placement fee to the Valley Courier office at: 2205 State Ave. or mail to P.O. Box 1099, Alamosa, CO 81101. Emailed photos\* can be sent to [lsveum@alamosanews.com](mailto:lsveum@alamosanews.com). Please call 589-2553 to arrange payment.

**Deadline is 5:00 pm on Friday, May 15**

**This special feature will be published on Saturday, May 23, 2020.**

Photos may be picked up at the Valley Courier office after the May 23 publication date or we can mail back to you in a self-addressed stamped envelope.

\* Make sure emailed photos are at least 200dpi.

## ENTRY FORM

GRADUATE'S FIRST/LAST NAME \_\_\_\_\_

15-WORD MESSAGE (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Person submitting photo:

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

Photos may be picked up after May 23, 2020. Entries must be received by 5:00 pm on Friday, May 15, 2020. Mail a high quality, scannable photo and payment(\$20) along with this completed form to:  
**The Valley Courier • 2205 State Ave. or mail to P.O. Box 1099, Alamosa, CO 81101**  
719-589-2553  
Emailed photos\* can be sent to [lsveum@alamosanews.com](mailto:lsveum@alamosanews.com)

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